



# **HABTF**

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

### **Zoom 1 pm**

**1. Meeting was called to order at 1:05.**

**2. Attendance**

Dr. Ken Bossert, Superintendent, Elwood SD

Helen Boxwill, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington, H2Empower,  
[hboxwill@gmail.com](mailto:hboxwill@gmail.com)

Dr. Joseph Centamore, Deputy Superintendent, South Huntington SD

Regina Cohn

Brenden Cusack, Principal, Huntington HS, [bcusack@hufsd.edu](mailto:bcusack@hufsd.edu)

Norman Gomez Vasquez, Director at Contract Surety, [Ngomez1030@gmail.com](mailto:Ngomez1030@gmail.com)

Susan Dewey-Hammer, Huntington Cold Spring Harbor United Methodist Church,  
[SDeweyham@aol.com](mailto:SDeweyham@aol.com)

Denise Ham, CCS P.L.I Director, [deniseham1@aol.com](mailto:deniseham1@aol.com)

Eve Krief, Long Island Inclusive Communities Against Hate, Huntington Jewish Center,  
[founderliicah@gmail.com](mailto:founderliicah@gmail.com)

Dr. Rory Manning, Superintendent, Harborfields

Dr. Marie Netto, Principal, Harborfields SD

Jane Pashman, Social Justice Ambassadors, [jpashman1@gmail.com](mailto:jpashman1@gmail.com)

David Pinkowitz, Temple Beth Torah, Melville, JCRC-LI, [dpinkowitz@gmail.com](mailto:dpinkowitz@gmail.com)

Dr. Jim Polansky, Superintendent, Huntington UFSD, [jpolansky@hufsd.edu](mailto:jpolansky@hufsd.edu)

April Poprilo

Eric Rubin-Perez, Huntington Family Pride, [rubinperez@verizon.net](mailto:rubinperez@verizon.net)

Bruce Segal, [bsegal14@gmail.com](mailto:bsegal14@gmail.com)

Sara Siddiqui, Huntington Pediatrician, Elwood, Masjid Noor, LWV, [sarayasmine@hotmail.com](mailto:sarayasmine@hotmail.com)

Bette Schneiderman, [bes@durhamplace.net](mailto:bes@durhamplace.net)

William Scrima, Inspector, 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct SCPD, [William.scrima@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:William.scrima@suffolkcountyny.gov)

Prafulba Vaghela, [yacs2008@gmail.com](mailto:yacs2008@gmail.com)

### **Town of Huntington**

Carmen Kasper, Human Services Director

**3. Minutes were approved from August 24, 2022**

The minutes were approved without amendment.

**4. Introductions**

Names and affiliations were shared.

**5. Reports from Inspector Scrima and Carmen Kasper**

Inspector Scrima reported no significant incidents since our last meeting.

Eve Krief asked for follow up on last month's report that Huntington Jewish Center and other synagogues had interrupted online meetings and Inspector Scrima said they were considered aggravated harassment calls and there was no new information. No leads. No progress.

Carmen had no reported incidents.

**6. HABTF Youth Ambassador Program**

Jane described the program. Six to ten students and an advisor from each TOH school districts are welcome to participate. The purpose is to fight bias while getting to know others who together develop skills to make positive change. All students in the program create projects with their peers and mentors to impact their communities. The Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center (SYJCC) in Commack has a grant to support the program again this year. Jane leads the program in partnership with Kaneez Naseem. This year, some of the sessions will be held in the schools where school participants help to define content with Jane and Kaneez. Last year's ambassadors and mentors suggested hosting some sessions this year and that will be part of the model. Opening and closing sessions will be at the SYJCC and the rest in the schools.

The program was hugely successful last year and school leaders await this year's opportunity. Jane hopes to open with a welcome session in November and then a first full session in December.

Dr. Jim Polansky, Huntington Schools Superintendent, discussed with other school leaders the huge problem districts are having with bus transportation. "After school" buses are not available. Even mid-day, when the buses may be available for some districts, there may not be enough bus drivers.

Jane said the timing would be from 10 am to 1 pm and include lunch. Some of the school leaders said that might work. They might, though, have different students participate on different dates so students would not be pulled from the same high school classes repeatedly on all event dates.

David Pinkowitz said he has materials from the students and school personnel from last year that he has permission to share. If anyone would like him to send them a link, they can contact him.

**7. Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration**

Carmen invited all to attend the Town's event on October 21<sup>st</sup> at Town Hall to celebrate Hispanic Heritage.

At this event, members of the community will be honored and students will be awarded scholarships and given proclamations from the Town Board. Funds have been donated by companies and through a fund raiser running now. Twenty student applications have been received and will be reviewed shortly. This is more interest than ever before. The event will be attended by community members.

## **8. Dual Language Program**

Carmen described the 100% immersion Dual Language program. One bilingual teacher teaches in both English and Spanish. Students are mixed culturally and linguistically with half English speaking and half Spanish speaking. Academic content and culture are taught some days in English and some in Spanish or half day English and half day Spanish. Students need to learn from whatever language is spoken. Material is not repeated in both languages. Content must be understood no matter which language it was taught in.

There is a systemic approach to the program with a focus on elementary grades through grade 5 and then advanced Spanish offered through middle and high school to sustain and develop competency. Bruce Segal shared his perspective as a parent of children in the program, saying that his daughters attended, thrived in it, and his older daughter is now enrolled in Hispanic studies in college.

## **9. Carmen Kasper's journey from Peru to the United States**

Carmen told about her journey from Peru to the United States.

To set the mood and start the presentation off, Dr. Jim Polansky shared a video of his Huntington LatinX students and staff telling what it means to them to be Latino or Latina in the community. Each person shared a love of heritage and great enthusiasm for speaking up to others.

Carmen told her story next. She was an only child in a family with so many aunts and uncles. She told about the political and social context of her life in Peru and of what she sought when given the opportunity to come to the United States. She felt so fortunate to have a scholarship to attend NYU and spoke about her experiences navigating the many differences between Peruvian and New York cultures. Carmen spoke of the small and large ways she learned to adapt, to learn, to become part of her new land. There were language challenges as words meant different things in each language and sometimes could not be easily translated. Some English words had confusing multiple meanings. There were cultural challenges as day-to-day life was different. She learned and she considered how others who come to this country might learn and thrive here. She applied her insights from her own experiences into her work throughout her career.

Many people with opportunities such as Carmen's return to their home country to share what they learned and live again back home. Others, though, stay. Carmen loves Peru and yet found opportunities she sought here. She shared her warm and positive feelings about her journey and her new country.

## **10: Other Items**

**Scott Richman at next HABTF meeting.** Scott Richman, Regional Director of Anti-Defamation League, will speak on hate and antisemitism in New York State at our next HABTF meeting on October 26, 1 pm.

**Elwood Schools.** Dr. Ken Bossert, Superintendent of Elwood schools, spoke of recruiting with an eye toward representing the diversity in the community in his next group of hires.

**NIOT Northport.** “Not in our Town Northport,” will have its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual event, “NIOT in the Park,” October 16, 10 to 2, at Cow Harbor Park in Northport Village. NIOT is part of a national movement to bring people together to take a stand.

**Cinema Arts.** The Cinema Arts Center will hold a two-day series, “Extremism: Confronting Hate Without Fear” on November 4 and 5. Speakers, films, and discussions will address the rise of extremism.

**June 2023 Pride Picnic.** Eric Rubin-Perez shared plans for next year’s Pride event scheduled for June 25, 2023. It will be built upon the success of the 2022 picnic and expand on it.

## **11. Meeting Adjourned**

The next meeting will be on October 26<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm. Scott Richman from the Anti-Defamation League will present.