

**Franklin Township Human  
Relations Commission Meeting  
Minutes of June 26th, 2024**

**Present:** John Tibbs, Gary Rosenthal, Quinlan Paris, Rohan Kalidas, Elangkathir Elamaran, Councilman Alex Kharazi,

**Excused:** Shubhendu Singh, Pete Clark, Stan Rozario, Linda Montgomery Williams, Edna Arguello Hitchner,

**Absent:** Nora Catiis, E Poustchi, KJ Sharma, Sam Vela

**Police Officer:** Officer Marcelo Dos Reis

**Guest:** Michele Petersen

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM. There was no quorum, could not approve  
Minutes

**Guest Report:** Michele Petersen opened with a presentation on homeschooling and the New Jersey National Guard. She says that she and her husband homeschooled their kids in Franklin for thirteen years. On a paper handed out, it states that there are 3.1 million homeschoolers in the US who come from various ethnic, racial, and secular backgrounds. On standardized tests and other academic achievements, these kids have been shown to have the same if not higher quality of education. Petersen says that the best thing that comes out of homeschooling is teaching your kids to teach themselves. It takes way less time to homeschool children alongside the other numerous benefits. Another plus is the large amount of field trips that homeschoolers may go on. There are also many different ways and interpretations that students being homeschooled can engage in, like the Charlotte Mason method which cultivates a love for learning through engagement and hands-on education. This style of homeschooling allows for a lot of nature study, book study, and crafts and activities. The classical method is modeled after ancient Greece and Rome. This is done through grammar, logic, and rhetoric in elementary, middle, and high school equivalents respectively. A big concern when it comes to homeschooling is the debate regarding socialization. Petersen states that sometimes, kids who are homeschooled are often better socialized when compared to kids who go to traditional schools. They learn how to interact with

kids not only in their own age groups, but also other types of kids. Homeschooled kids learn manners, are involved in community events, and are involved in leadership. Homeschooling allows for a lot of co-ops. Both parents have the opportunity to be involved in their kids' education. Homeschooling also allows for early access for college, for example community college courses. Homeschooled kids can graduate with an associates degree by the time they're 16. Traditional homeschooling is very similar to conventional schooling; it incorporates structured lesson plans and materials for a variety of subjects. The grammar stage happens during elementary education, and it involves helping the kids memorize certain topics which will help them in their later education. This stage also involved phonics, foundations of math, and more. The middle school stage is called the logic stage, and this is when students develop their critical thinking and analytical skills. They are allowed to examine various events throughout history and delve deeper into the reasoning behind them. Students are given primary sources in order to enhance their analytical skills. There are also a lot of fictional historical texts involved in the logic stage. The middle school years involve a lot of advanced mathematics as well. The final stage is the rhetoric stage, which occurs during high school. During this stage, students are given the opportunity to refine their communication skills and articulate their ideas in an effective manner. Students are involved in debating, essay writing, and public speaking. FTPL (library) offers multiple programs, such as toastmasters, chess, and more. In conclusion, homeschooled kids succeed and perform statistically significantly better than those who attended conventional schools. They are involved in local community service more frequently, vote and attend public meetings more frequently, and succeed at college at an equal or higher rate. Councilman Kharazi asked what the biggest challenge is when it comes to homeschooling. Petersen responded as to how many parents say that it takes "too long" to teach their kids all the information necessary. She reflected that the teaching style is different. Mr. Tibbs stated that it would take an inquisitive move when it comes to homeschooling and approves of the idea to teach kids to teach themselves. New Jersey is very lenient when it comes to homeschooling due to the high test scores when it comes to them. This further shows the strong backbone of the homeschooling community. Petersen said that a struggle when it came to teaching was choosing what

resources to use when teaching. She indicated that it is law that you must school the children and if it is carried out correctly, nothing illegal is being done. Mr. Kharazi questioned the cost when it comes to homeschooling. Petersen stated that the money goes towards the materials but educational books do tend to be expensive. When it comes to projects, materials do need to be bought but they can also be shared within families of the homeschooling community. Mr. Rosenthal asked how to present to colleges that a child is homeschooled. Petersen answered that it is quite easy when using a transcript and that a homeschooler may even have a more developed transcript in comparison with the average highschooler. Officer Marcelo Dos Reis asks how the time is spent throughout the day. Petersen advocates further for the flexibility of homeschooling where lessons can be taught in a few hours.

Petersen then reported about the New Jersey National Guard. They deploy soldiers in the middle east where there is a conflict. The majority of the national guard go to an air base in Iraq. A lot of the members were recruited right in our community. Since they rotate from place to place, it is possible for them to go from extreme weather conditions to extreme weather conditions. A negative of this operation is that the members are expected to bring their own money to get food and other supplies.

**Police Report:**

Officer Marcelo Dos Reis reported about our National Night Out. There will be fireworks on July 3rd and our food distribution will be on the same day. The food being distributed comes from the food bank. There is also a police youth academy that runs from July 11th to July 19th.

**Other Business:** Mr. Rosenthal introduced Elangkathir (Kathir) Elamaran as the new Junior Commissioner. Councilman Khrazi will present his name at the next Council Meeting.

The Chairman reported that Junior Commissioner Quinlan Paris has graduated and this will be his last meeting. A very sincere thanks was extended to Quinlan for his service to the HRC. All wished him good luck and success in his college years.

The Chairman stated that the next K-mart shopping center meeting will be held on August 1st. Mr Tibbs questioned the need for affordable housing. Edna is still working on the flags for soldiers which will be discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Kharazi reminded all about an event on Saturday, June 29th for an Eid celebration which will be held at the Franklin Middle School. Over 500 people have signed up for the event.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45

The next meeting will be on July 24th. The new proposed YMCA will be on the agenda with a guest presenter.

Respectfully submitted,

Junior Commissioners Rohan Kalidas, Quinlan Paris, and Kathir Elamaran