

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 5, 2021

**Present:** George Bitzas - Chair  
Anthony Suffriti – Vice Chair  
Cecilia Calabrese  
Gerald Smith  
Robert Rossi

**Also Present:** Councilors Cavallo, Mercadante, Sandlin and Tedeschi and Solicitor Buoniconti (via zoom)

**Called to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Chairman George Bitzas at 6:20pm AJHS Teachers' Conference Room

### AGENDA

#### **1. Approval of the minutes dated March 15, 2021**

Motion to approve made by Councilor Smith and seconded by Councilor Suffriti.

The vote was **5 Yes, 0 No** approving the minutes.

#### **2. TR-2021-20 - A Resolution in support of voter identification and legal absentee ballots and in opposition to universal mail-in ballots for every registered voter (Sponsored by Councilors Bitzas, Calabrese and Tedeschi)**

This Resolution is non-binding with the intent to express our opinion as a Council regarding voter laws. The State legislators already extended the waiver for mail-in balloting to be done with the intent to make this permanent. Councilor Rossi disagreed about the purpose of the mail-in ballots. He stated signatures should be watched and believes this to be safe. Massachusetts has always had identification with the registration process and we cannot mandate a photo ID. Councilor Bitzas said this is to assure integrity in every vote and mentioned a situation where multiple ballots were sent to a single voter. Councilor Rossi mentioned former President Trump and stated that there was no voter fraud proven anywhere. Councilor Bitzas stated that the basis of this Resolution was to assure safe and credible voting. Councilor Smith said the 11% of the population does not have photo IDs per Newsweek Magazine. Councilor Mercadante noted that the MLB was pulling out of Georgia and that is a cop out. Why is everyone afraid of a photo ID to vote? Councilor Cavallo said you have to produce a picture ID no matter where you go.

Motion to send a no recommendation to the Full Council made by Councilor Suffriti and seconded by Council Vice President Calabrese. The vote was **5 Yes, 0 No**. After this vote, Councilors Rossi and Smith wanted it noted that they sent a negative recommendation but the vote was already taken.

**3. TR-2021-21 - A Resolution in support of permitting sports gaming in local businesses (Mayor Sapelli)**

Councilor Rossi stated the millions of people are getting public aid and gambling and we are endorsing gaming??

Motion to send a positive recommendation to the Full Council made by Councilor Smith and seconded by Councilor Suffriti. The vote was **5 Yes, 0 No**

**4. TR-2021-24 - A Resolution supporting House Bill No. 1359 calling for the creation of a state funded grant program to increase participation in Robotics and STEM (Councilors Calabrese and Letellier)**

Motion to send a positive recommendation to the Full Council made by Councilor Smith and seconded by Councilor Suffriti. The vote was **5 Yes, 0 No**

**5. Any other business that may legally come before the Committee.**

None.

**6. Adjournment.**

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

George Bitzas, Chair  
Community Relations Sub-Committee