



## Office of Somerville Commission

Application to the Human Rights Commission

October 26, 2015

200346

Sam Tracy, Applicant to the Human Rights Commission



### Somerville Human Rights Commission

50 Evergreen Avenue, Somerville, MA 02145

Voice: 617-625-6600, x2400

TTY: 866-808-4851

humanrights@somervillema.gov

Fax: 617-629-3040

### Application to be a Commissioner

#### PART ONE

Name: Sam Tracy

Address: 357 Highland Ave, Unit 1R, Somerville, MA 02144

Day time phone: 860-970-6119 Work Phone: "

Cell phone: " Email: sam.j.tracy@gmail.com

Ward: 6 How long have you lived in Somerville? 14 months  
(moved 8/1/14)

#### Applicant Responses for Interest in the Commission

##### Application for membership on Somerville Human Rights Commission: Sam Tracy

##### 1) Why do you want to serve on the Human Rights Commission?

I've always loved being an active member of my community and using my knowledge to help other people. Through growing up as a Boy Scout and attaining the rank of Eagle, I learned the values of civic service and trying to leave things better than you found them. I recognized the privileges I had and wanted to make sure I used that to help other people who were less lucky or faced more obstacles than me. In adulthood, I applied this attitude by becoming heavily involved in fighting for the rights of my fellow human beings, joining and eventually leading organizations like the Connecticut branch of the ACLU and my college's student government.

Since moving to Somerville in August 2014, I've tried to continue this service in my new home, and have volunteered with a number of political organizations working to defend and expand the rights of people in Somerville and throughout the state. I learned about the Human Rights Commission online and thought it was the perfect fit for what I

sought to do, attended an info session, and volunteered at an event where I distributed literature the Commission had created. It's been a great experience so far and I'd like to expand that by becoming a full-fledged member of the Commission.

**2) Tell us about the personal and/or professional experiences you would bring to the Commission.**

My roles on the board of the ACLU, as UConn's president of the student body, and an intern for the president of Connecticut's State Senate had one thing in common: as part of a broader goal of helping others and protecting their rights, I was tasked with fielding inquiries from people facing trouble and connecting them with the right resources to fix those problems. I got a lot of experience communicating with people who were often scared or frustrated with government resources, and am skilled at figuring out the right ones to direct them to and getting them in touch with the right people.

I also have a lot of promotional skills from my work in politics and as a campus organizer, including countless events where I handed out campaign literature or met with people at large public gatherings. I'm not afraid to talk to strangers and love meeting new people and finding out what's important to them, so I would be well-suited to promoting the SHRC at events and online, and making sure people know about the resources that it offers.

**3) The Human Rights Commission is committed to representation from diverse community of Somerville (such as age, economic level, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or gender expression, physical ability, or national origin). How do you see yourself contributing to our goal?**

Somerville is home to many recent residents, of which I am a part, having moved here just over a year ago. Because of this, I can relate to the many people who are new to the city and just learning to navigate its many organizations and resources. At 24, I am also relatively young, and I feel it's important for there to be young people on the Human Rights Commission in a city like Somerville where 44% of the population is between 20 and 34 years old.

Aside from my personal characteristics, I'll also bring an attitude of inclusion and an appreciation for diversity to all of my work. In three years as a resident assistant at UConn, I went through many weeks of social justice training that helped me to understand other people's experiences and communicate effectively with people with different backgrounds.

**4) What three issues concerning human rights in Somerville would you like to see the Commission work on more?**

First, I think it would be very helpful for the SHRC to get more involved in protecting the rights of young people. Youth are disproportionately uninformed about their rights due to their lack of experience dealing with the law and being engaged in the community, so it is important to make sure they are educated on the law and where they are protected. This applies from things like housing discrimination for renters to employment and many other

areas, and I think I would be uniquely positioned to reach out to college students and other young adults thanks to my work with campus organizing and being a young, new resident myself.

Secondly, fighting against discrimination against people of color is incredibly important to me. I appreciate that the city government has taken positive steps like hanging a #BlackLivesMatter banner on the city hall, but we can certainly do more and I would like to help expand those gestures and services.

Third, I would like the SHRC get more involved in educating citizens about their rights in relation to police. Massachusetts has a lot of complicated laws on civilians interacting with police, such as whether you are allowed to film them (yes, as long as you are open about it rather than secretly recording them) or when you can be subjected to a search, that it is important to make sure people understand these rules so that they can comply when appropriate instead of leading to negative encounters, and politely refuse when appropriate as well. There is a lot of national attention on police misconduct but it seems to me that the Somerville police force is a shining example of what police should be, so it will be helpful to showcase that in order to build up public confidence as well. Having an educated citizenry will also be a positive factor in making sure we avoid any incidents like have been seen elsewhere in the country.

**5) Looking at the work of the Commission and utilizing your knowledge from attending recent HRC monthly meetings, what is most interesting to you?**

I am most interested in educating citizens about their rights through events, meetings, and literature. My passion is in helping people understand what their rights are and showing them how to be effective advocates for themselves, so I would love to participate in events that teach people, young and old, about their human rights and how they can protect them. Things like the Youth Empowerment walk are a great way to reach out to residents about their concerns and their rights, and I'd like to continue that work and expand it into other events as well.

## Sam Tracy Resume

# Sam Tracy

357 Highland Avenue, Apt 1R, Somerville, MA 02144 – (860) 970-6119 – sam.j.tracy@gmail.com

<b>Education</b> CT 2013	<b>University of Connecticut</b> <i>B.A. in Political Science with Honors, minors in Public Policy and Sociology</i> • Cumulative GPA: 3.8/4.0, Political Science GPA: 3.9/4.0 • Completed 12 credits of graduate studies with Master's in Public Administration Fast-Track Program	Storrs, Graduated May
<b>Work</b> MA <b>Experience</b> Present	<b>4Front Advisors</b> <i>Business Development</i> • Create a responsible medical marijuana industry by consulting with dispensary operators nationwide • Identify and screen local partners, exhibit at trade shows, manage web accounts, field media inquiries	Boston, June 2014 –
	<b>TechFreedom</b> DC <i>Activism Director</i> • Help improve people's lives by unleashing technological progress and protecting rights in the digital world • Coordinate campaigns with allied organizations and coalition, manage social media presence, write articles	Washington, April 2013 – Present
CT 2011	<b>Connecticut Senate Democrats</b> <i>Legislative Intern for Senate President Donald Williams</i> • Corresponded with constituents on behalf of the Senator, helping state residents with a variety of problems • Prepared briefings and memos on committee meetings, public hearings, and private meetings	Hartford, January 2011 – June
<b>Public Service</b> MA <b>Experience</b> Present	<b>Somerville Human Rights Commission</b> <i>Volunteer</i> • Educated Somerville residents about their rights by distributing pamphlets at a police & community walk	Somerville, August 2015 –
MA Present	<b>NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts</b> <i>Volunteer</i> • Protect Massachusetts residents' reproductive rights through public education campaigns and legislative work • Staffed fundraising events such as annual Chocolate Madness gala, wrote letters to lawmakers	Boston, November 2014 –
2014	<b>Students for Sensible Drug Policy</b> <i>Chairman of the Board of Directors</i> • Grow SSDP's network by hosting events, assisting chapter leaders, and using traditional and social media • Assembled a coalition of students, veterans, doctors, and others to pass drug policy reforms in Connecticut • Organized the 2010 Northeast Regional Conference, with over 100 attendees	Washington, DC March 2012 – September
CT	<b>Mansfield Democratic Town Committee</b> <i>Member</i> 2013 • Strengthened the Democratic Party in the town of Mansfield, especially the UConn campus • Served as a delegate to Connecticut Democratic Party conventions	Mansfield, January 2012 – May
	<b>American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut</b>	Hartford,

2013

*Member, Board of Directors*

*October 2011 – May*

- Organized state residents, especially college students, to defend their civil liberties
- Aided in successful campaigns for death penalty repeal, medical marijuana, and other civil liberties bills

**UConn Undergraduate Student Government**

*Storrs,*

*CT*

*President of the Student Body*

*March 2011 – April 2012*

- Managed a \$1.5 million budget and over 25 employees to improve the campus for nearly 17,000 students
- Drafted press releases, newsletters, blog posts, op-eds, and social media content for the organization
- Lobbied the state and federal government on higher education and other student issues

**Boy Scouts of America**

*South Windsor,*

*CT*

*Eagle Scout*

*June 1996 – June*

2009

- Coordinated significant community service work, such as the “Scouting for Food” food drive
- Planned and executed an Eagle Project in which the troop built a playscape for a local preschool

## Reference #1: Kris Krane

---

From: Kris Krane  
To: Sonja Darai  
Subject: Re: Attachment RE: Reference Request for Sam Tracy  
Date: Monday, October 19, 2015 4:28:47 PM

---

1) How long have you known the commission applicant?

I've known Sam Tracy for around five years. We first served together on the Students for Sensible Drug Policy national board of directors when he was an undergraduate student member and I was an alumni "mentor" member of the board. Sam quickly rose to the ranks of chair of the board, and the two of us co-chaired the organization's hiring process for a new executive director in 2013. I was so impressed with Sam's performance in the process that I recruited him for a position apprenticing with me in business development in my company 4Front Advisors. We have been working together at the company for the past year and a half.

2) Do you feel the commission applicant is able to follow through on tasks?

Sam is incredibly diligent and well organized. As his supervisor at work, I am constantly impressed by his ability not only to follow through on assigned projects in a timely manner, but to take initiative on his own in developing projects and expanding our capabilities as a company.

3) Do you feel this commission applicant stays with a project when there is a time commitment?

Sam is committed to the projects he takes on. I've been extremely impressed with his ability to manage all of his work related projects, while still finding time to engage in extra-curricular activities and projects. Sam donates his time to causes he believes deeply in, helping to manage the alumni association for Students for Sensible Drug Policy while running a well produced weekly podcast, all while finding time to be an amateur science fiction writer. I've never seen Sam take on a project without following through on it to fruition.

4) Do you feel the commission applicant is able to communicate well with diverse listeners?

As board chair of SSDP, Sam's responsibility was to manage a diverse board of people, while trying to achieve consensus among the group. This is especially challenging with such a large group of primarily young people with very strong opinions, but Sam was able to command the respect of both his peers and board members much older than him. He's a natural leader and consensus builder.

5) Please add some thoughts, if you will, of why the commission applicant would fit with the responsibility and position of the Somerville Human Rights Commission

Sam is a social justice warrior. His entire life has been dedicated to fighting for the rights of people far less fortunate than himself. He would be a perfect person for a committee such as this, working for the rights of the less fortunate.

6) Can you please share: your name, title, organization, and contact information?

Kris Krane  
President  
4Front Ventures  
510-387-2440  
[kris@4front-advisors.com](mailto:kris@4front-advisors.com)

## Reference #2: Emily Westerberg

---

**From:** [Emily Westerberg](#)  
**To:** [Sonia Daraj](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Reference Request for Sam Tracy  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015 3:06:48 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)

---

Thank you for your email regarding Sam Tracy's application for an appointment with the Human Rights Commission. It is a pleasure to offer you my assessment of Sam.

1. How long have you known the commission applicant?

I had the opportunity to get to know Mr. Tracy during the 2011 session of the Connecticut General Assembly when he served as the intern to my boss, Senate President Donald E. Williams, Jr. At the time, I was the Senator's Legislative Aide and worked closely with Sam. Since that time, Sam and I have remained in touch and he has updated me on his academic and professional endeavors.

2. Do you feel the commission applicant is able to follow through on tasks?

Yes. During his tenure in the office, Mr. Tracy was assigned to a variety of research and organizational projects. He proved to be a talented, intelligent, highly conscientious, and effective intern. He had no difficulty in grasping relatively complex issues and was able to work independently in reviewing documents, culling out important facts, and organizing these facts in a useful and readable way. His research was done thoroughly and efficiently.

3) Do you feel this commission applicant stays with a project when there is a time commitment?

Yes, Mr. Tracy put a great deal of energy into his work, handling multiple assignments simultaneously, and completing them in a timely manner. He was especially effective in his written correspondence to and on behalf of constituents.

4) Do you feel the commission applicant is able to communicate well with diverse listeners?

Yes. During his time in our office, he regularly interacted with constituents, advocates, lobbyists, legislators and staff on behalf of the Senator. After his internship, Sam continued to hone his leadership skills through the Student Government Association and other campus activities at the University of Connecticut. In his work with his peers, he had the ability to find common ground and bring groups together.

5) Please add some thoughts, if you will, of why the commission applicant would fit with the responsibility and position of the Somerville Human Rights Commission.

Mr. Tracy exhibited many personal qualities that serve him well in life, such as persistence, openness to constructive feedback, and respect for other individuals in the workplace. It is my observation that Sam also has a deep commitment to justice. He has an understanding of various issues and seeks to identify who may be harmed by certain policies and outcomes and he then tries to build consensus to right those wrongs. I believe he is well-suited to work

with the Commission. I strongly recommend him without reservation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions.

6) Can you please share: your name, title, organization, and contact information?

Emily Westerberg  
Executive Assistant to the Attorney General  
State of Connecticut  
55 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

Personal email: [emilywesterberg@gmail.com](mailto:emilywesterberg@gmail.com)  
Office phone: 860-808-5192