

Diversity, Racial Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Town of Chelmsford, MA
January 12, 2021

Members in attendance (remote via Microsoft Teams):

Phil Hicks, Chair

Latosha Dixon, Co-Chair

Susan Mackinnon, Clerk

Lauren Cochran, Rachel Donovan, Tricia Dzuris, Jennifer Giannino, Cherrice Lattimore, Joseph Mason, Brian Petro-Roy, Carly Reim

Absent: J. Dave, M. Feeney

Also present: John Tubridy

Meeting Called to Order at 7 pm.

This meeting is being recorded.

Acceptance of minutes of 01-05-21 meeting

T. Dzuris made a motion to accept, with a change from the term “Sub-committee” to “Working Group.”

Second by C. Lattimore. Unanimously Approved

Fireside Chat

The meeting on January 19 will be a “fireside chat” with Chief of Police J. Spinney. He will give a presentation based on questions that were provided to Chief Spinney ahead of time. The presentation is expected to last the full hour and we do not anticipate asking additional questions beyond those presented to Chief Spinney.

FYI-Westford has a Q&A with their police chief posted on their town website.

Working Group Reports

Culture B. Petro-Roy, L. Dixon, R. Donovan, T. Dzuris- A calendar of events is posted on the town website. There was a request to add a form people can fill out to add information. Should religious holidays be added? Political holidays will require deeper conversation among committee members. Next focus – March 31 - International Transgender Day of Visibility.

#ChelmsfordTogether will be the logo. We still do not have a graphic. The idea is to emphasize “together,” with pictures showing many diverse groups/hands. Donation money from Lowell 5 Cent Savings Bank might be used to make pins, or signs. [Note: C. Lattimore wants to join this working group.]

Education S. Mackinnon and L. Cochran met with Asst. Superintendent Linda Hirsch. Dr. Hirsch described quite a few endeavors she and her staff have worked on and continue to work on to update curriculum. For instance, the new elementary Reading program uses authentic texts with teacher support for discussing diverse topics including Civics and Social Justice. Professional Development was recently offered to read and discuss the book *How to Be an Antiracist*. This was optional for teaching staff and required for all administrators. Dr. Hirsch welcomes input from the DREIC about additional Professional Development opportunities. She has a solid budget for PD and outreach and brought up ideas that she is interested in planning with other town groups. A town wide book group, possibly collaborating with the Chelmsford Public Library, could kick off an event with a speaker. Perhaps the Council of Chelmsford Schools could bring in a speaker to help parents think about How to Talk to Your Kids About Race. There are several Chelmsford student and alumni groups actively seeking ways to promote equity and inclusion in town. Inviting students to talk to staff about their experiences in the Chelmsford Schools and throughout town might be a way to initiate thinking about bias. Finally,

regarding hiring a more diverse staff, this is difficult when the applicant pool is not diverse. Dr. Hirsch will speak to people at UMASS Lowell to inquire about grants or teaching fellowships to attract interns and teaching staff to Chelmsford Public Schools. This working group will be in contact with Dr. Hirsch for a follow-up meeting.

Communication T. Dzuris, C. Reim, L. Dixon, P. Hicks, and C. Lattimore met regarding **Black History Month Planning**. Each week in February there will be a group of people featured on the Diversity, Racial Equity, and Inclusion Committee webpage: 1) Artists and Authors, 2) Innovators and Educators, 3) Science and Medicine, 4) Activism and Politics. C. Lattimore will add information about the African Meeting House in Boston. All reports from DREIC committee members about notable African Americans in the USA are due Jan 22. On January 25 Phil Hicks will give an update to the Select Board and include BHM events. Hicks will contact Maria Pelacio to ask if the town library will cross post our information about BHM on their site.

Please sign up for notifications to the Diversity, Racial Equity, and Inclusion Committee page on the Town of Chelmsford website, and to the Diversity calendar.

BHM and Blues/CTM

Pete Pedulla at Chelmsford Telemedia is still putting a program together, seeking blues bands to perform at the CCA.

The Communications working group were concerned that bringing speakers in might be difficult to plan for this year, but P. Hicks, C. Lattimore, L. Dixon, and L. Cochran will try to connect some people with P. Pedulla to see if they can create programming.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 7 pm meeting will feature Chelmsford Chief of Police James Spinney. Beginning in February this committee will meet every other week.

Adjournment

C. Lattimore and J. Giannino proposed a moment of silence for those who lost their lives at the US Capitol last week.

T. Dzuris made a motion to adjourn the meeting. L. Dixon seconded. Meeting adjourned 8: 10p.m.

Minutes submitted by Susan Mackinnon, Clerk,
Diversity, Racial Equity, and Inclusion Committee