

DRAFT

**Minutes of the Diversity, Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee**  
**All participants attended this remote meeting via Zoom**  
**September 29, 2020**

Members in attendance: Lauren Cochran, Rachel Donovan, Tricia Dzuris, Margaret Feeney, Jennifer Giannino, Phil Hicks, Cherrice Lattimore, Susan Mackinnon, Joseph Mason, Brian Petro-Roy, Carly Connor Reim, Latosha Wright.

Absent: Jigarkumar Dave

**Call to order**

As this was the first meeting of Diversity, Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee the meeting was called to order at 6 pm by Tricia Dzuris, Chelmsford Town Clerk.

**Swearing in of members by Town Clerk**

The members of this committee were appointed by the Select Board of Chelmsford. All members in attendance were sworn in for a term ending June 30, 2021.

**Introduction of members**

Each member briefly described their residence in Chelmsford, present and/or past employment and committee work, and additional information relating to the nature of the committee.

**Nomination of Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk**

Tricia Dzuris asked for nominations for the position of committee Chair. There were three nominations for Phil Hicks, two for Cherrice Lattimore, and two for Latosha Wright. Susan Mackinnon volunteered and was nominated for Clerk.

**Vote on Officers**

By unanimous vote Phil Hicks was chosen as Committee Chair. Latosha Wright was selected as Vice-Chair. Susan Mackinnon was elected Clerk.

**Initial discussion regarding the creation of a Mission Statement**

Tricia Dzuris asked for suggestions as to the mission of this committee. The Chelmsford Select Board has given the committee discretion to set its own mission. Phil Hicks took over direction of the meeting at this point.

Latosha Wright suggested a starting point. "The Town of Chelmsford recognizes the value in embracing diversity of races, cultures, and ideals. The Diversity, Race Equity and Inclusion Committee is committed to promoting inclusion within our community, providing guidance to our governing bodies about race relations and encouraging learning about different cultures in our schools." Cherrice Lattimore suggested that the committee aim to build a strong inclusive

community which includes teachers of color, African American studies, books that include children of color. Susan Mackinnon suggested that stronger language be used beyond learning about different cultures in our school, more in line with embedding education about different cultures and viewpoints into the curriculum. Rachel Donovan would like to push the town to break down the systems that prevent true racial equality in our community. Brian Petro-Roy wants to make the community understand that change is imperative. The committee should take small, constant steps to make changes in the way the community does things so that the perception is that it is just the way things must be done. Tricia Dzuris suggested that we use some of the language from Arun Venugopal's speech at the Juneteenth rally, including, "Chelmsford should strive to become a place where white and Black and Asian and all races of people want to live, a place that stands as a shining example of a 21st century anti-racist town that shuns racism in all forms actively."

Tricia Dzuris suggested that members work on their own before the next meeting to develop ideas for the Mission Statement so that the group can finalize the document at the next meeting. Another member suggested that members create pages on Google Docs to share. It is imperative that members do not collaborate or share opinions with each other outside of the public meeting to comply with Open Meeting laws.

#### **Other Business**

Committee members' names, email addresses and phone numbers are published on the town website as a matter of public record.

#### **Discussion on meeting times and frequency**

Most members wish to meet on Tuesday evenings. It was suggested that the committee meet weekly on Tuesdays at 7 pm and perhaps switch to every other week meetings after a month or so.

#### **Next meeting**

Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 7 pm  
Remote meeting via Zoom

**Meeting was adjourned at 7 pm.**