

MINUTES
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee
June 17, 2021

The meeting of the Sharon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee was called to order at 7:02 by Chair Mrs. Kiana Pierre-Louis remotely via Zoom in accordance with Massachusetts Law pandemic policy extension. The following, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee members were in attendance:

Members Present

Chair:	Mrs. Kiana Pierre-Louis
Vice Chair	Ms. Dru Ledbetter
Clerk:	Mrs. Wendy Alexis-Janvier
Other Members:	Ms. Marjorie Mitlin Zainab Mohammed Rev. Dr. Bill Kondrath

Members Absent

Lt. Stephen Coffey
Mr. Lajos Kamocsay
Ms. Ellie Zinno

Others Present

Select Board Member Hanna R. Switekowski

Administrative Items

Approval of meeting minutes 3/18/21

MOTION: (Ledbetter - Kondrath) To approve the regular session minutes of 3/18/21.
VOTED: 6-0-0 **PASSES**

Mrs. Wendy Alexis-Janvier	Yes
Rev. Dr. Bill Kondrath	Yes
Ms. Dru Ledbetter	Yes
Zainab Mohammed	Yes
Mrs. Kiana Pierre-Louis	Yes
Ms. Marjorie Mitlin	Yes

Approval of meeting minutes 4/22/21

MOTION: (Ledbetter - Kondrath) To approve the regular session minutes of 4/22/21.
VOTED: 5-1-0 **PASSES**

Mrs. Wendy Alexis-Janvier	Yes
Rev. Dr. Bill Kondrath	Yes
Ms. Dru Ledbetter	Yes
Zainab Mohammed	Abstain
Mrs. Kiana Pierre-Louis	Yes
Ms. Marjorie Mitlin	Yes

Email Correspondence Update

Wendy Alexis-Janvier shared the email correspondence received from May 20, 2021 through June 20, 2021.

Message on Sharon Facebook Pages

Ms. Mitlin shared the concern of a town member on the negative discourse on Sharon Facebook groups, specifically Sharon What's Up and Everything Sharon. There is a person who has been spewing hostile, disrespectful, racist, and anti-Semitic speech online. The person in questions serves on 2 town committees. The town member has contacted the Select Board, Town administrators, and Facebook group administrators. She feels that there has been no repercussion on this matter. This is concerning to her because the person represents our town. The DEIC discussed their opinions, ideas, and experience with the social media groups. Vice Chair Ledbetter shared her negative experience with the such groups. She noted if there is someone representing our town who is engaging in negative manner, the power is in our vote. We need to elect them off. Due to free speech, there is nothing we can do to hinder the persons actions. Select Board Member Switekowski clarified that elected, not appointed officials can be voted out. She also shared that the town is aware and Fred did address it. She has reached out to the individual. She also reiterated free speech and the social media groups are not town sanctioned Facebook groups. She suggested creating a social media policy for town officials, that we can encourage, similar to the town of Easton's policy. Ms. Mohammad shared that in addition to policy, it is important for committee members and town officials to lead by example. Ms. Mitlin asked if the DEIC can make a public statement on the matter. The resolution is that Ms. Mitlin will write a draft statement that we can vote on to decide whether we will share it on social media platforms on behalf of DEIC.

Juneteenth Celebration Discussion

Ms. Alexis-Janvier shared her thoughts on Juneteenth. There has been a tremendous increase in interests in celebrating Juneteenth. Due to timing, we cannot host an event this year, but hopefully next year the committee can take the lead for an event for the Town of Sharon. The goal is to remember that Juneteenth is not just a moment to celebrate, but an opportunity for allies to learn. Vice Chair Ledbetter shared that SREA has done activities and agrees that we should share and educate our community. Rev. Dr. Kondrath shares that he is all for learning more, however, he would like this linked to the John Lewis voting rights act. His feeling is that Congress was quick to give a holiday and not pass the voting rights act. He would like Juneteenth and the voting right linked to the July 3rd event. Chair Pierre-Louis shared that budget is also a consideration.

Discussion about DEIC future, mission, charge, and next steps -update and changes

On June 8th the Select Board voted to continue with the DEIC. The committee revisited the mission and charge updates provided by Frederic Turkington , the Town Administrator. Rev. Dr. Kondrath shared an idea of staggering the committee composition.

MOTION: (Alexis-Janvier - Mitlin) To approve the amended committee charge and committee composition per final edits June 14, 2021 from Town Administrators office. .

VOTED: 6-0-0 **PASSES**

Mrs. Wendy Alexis-Janvier	Yes
Rev. Dr. Bill Kondrath	Yes
Ms. Dru Ledbetter	Yes
Zainab Mohammed	Yes
Mrs. Kiana Pierre-Louis	Yes
Ms. Marjorie Mitlin	Yes

Announcements and updates

- a) Indigenous Peoples Day October 2021
Chair Pierre-Louis shared that the Select Board unanimously took our advisory opinion to change Columbus Day 2021 to Indigenous People's Day.
- b) Crip Camp
Chair Pierre-Louis reminded the community and committee of the Crip Camp event happening on June 24, 2021.
- c) Sharon Historical Society
Meg Winikates shared an update on the Fredrick Douglas reading event happening on July 3, 2021. This update was provided during the discussion on Juneteenth.
- d) Sharon Substance and Resource Coalition
Ms. Mitlin shared an upcoming survey that will be executed by the Sharon Substance and Resource Coalition.
- e) Pride Event
Select Board Member Switekowski gave her thanks to committee members who attended the Pride event.
- f) DEIC Committee update
Select Board Member Switekowski gave her appreciation to committee members for their work on the DEIC.

Topics not anticipated within 48 hours of posting

There was some confusion on the agenda and posting. Chair Pierre-Louis shared that the Governor's order ended on the 15th and there were plans to host it lives. Since the law was passed the next day, we were able to host the event virtually. We can decide if we want to meet in person.

Adjourn

MOTION: (Kondrath – Mitlin) To adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

VOTED: 6-0-0 **PASSES**

Mrs. Wendy Alexis-Janvier	Yes
Rev. Dr. Bill Kondrath	Yes
Ms. Dru Ledbetter	Yes
Zainab Mohammed	Yes
Mrs. Kiana Pierre-Louis	Yes
Ms. Marjorie Mitlin	Yes