

Town of Sharon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEIC)

April 13th, 2023 Meeting Minutes

This open meeting of the Town Sharon Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee is being conducted remotely consistent with Mass General Law due to the outbreak of the Covid19 Virus. Public access of this meeting does not ensure public participation. This meeting does include public comment. The committee chair Mrs. Wendy Alexis-Janvier started by welcoming everyone and calling all committee members, liaisons, and speakers to confirm their attendance.

Attendance:

Wendy Alexis-Janvier - chair, present
Toben Asklar- vice chair, present
Alison Kellom – clerk, present
Lajos Kamocsay, present
Bill Kondrath, present
Shelley Keimach, present
Margie Mitlin, present
Kiana Pierre-Louis Select Board Liaison, present
Julie Rowe - School Committee Liaison, present
Scott Leonard – SPD Liaison, present
CP – School GSA liaison, present

Email Correspondence:

Between March 9th and April 13th, we received 5 correspondence.

- Committee member emails about the update on the DEIC Website Calendar upcoming events submission form is now live and working.
- A community member emails about an invitation for the DEIC to discuss/present what the DEIC is working on throughout the town at the next Board of Health Meeting on Wednesday, April 26th at 7pm.
- A committee member emails about a get together of all the social justice/equity related organizations in Sharon, at the Town Hearing Room at the Community Center, May 9th from 6-8pm
- A community member emails to thank the DEIC members that attended the Sharon Education Foundation event with Jeffery Blount on March 30th.

- A select board member has emailed to inform the DEIC that the Select board voted unanimously at their meeting of March 28th, 2023, to approve the following requests regarding Pride Month:
 - Display of the Progress Pride flag on the façade at Town Hall during Pride month from June 1 to June 30, 2023;
 - Display of the Progress Pride flag on the flagpole at Veterans' Memorial Beach on June 11, 2023 before the car parade pending submission of required paperwork to the Recreation Department.

Approval of Minutes for December 2022, January

Lajos Kamocsay Motion to approve minutes; Bill seconds the motion. 9 votes for yes (Margie Mitlin, Alison Kellom, CP, Bill Kondrath, Lajos Kamocsay, Shelley Keimaich)

Shantae Holmes Presentation regarding Be Inclusive non-profit located in Walpole. www.beinclusivema.org

Looking to connect with multicultural groups. Juneteenth event created after George Floyd incident, felt moved after the incident to something in their community.

Multicultural books are donated to local schools. Books are picked based on topics that might not be typically be discussed in the classroom. Want to reach marginalized groups and to celebrate the dates that important to each community.

- Juneteenth celebration, June 19th, 2023, from 2-5pm
- The theme is "Lift Every Voice".
- The goal of the event is to educate the community.
- Activities for the kids. Food vendors.
- Table fee is \$40
- Sponsorship package with tiered levels.
- Support from the New England Revolution
- Meeting every two weeks until the event.
- Volunteer link
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfAjR0_QflhokGlmhaOpwWy3N8xL_OXHhMM9y6troU6Gis21UQ/viewform

Shelley is wondering what Shantae would like from the DEIC to help with this event.

- Shantae asks if we are not already celebrating Juneteenth in our town, she asks if we would want to partner with the Be Inclusive group. Financial contribution, people to assist in meetings and planning, people to participate on the day of the event. The DEIC would be added to the partners list if they donate \$500.

Wendy asks Kiana if we can raise funds for other towns.

- Kiana responds that we do have a budget for training, but she will see if we can get funds in other ways.

The Town of Sharon does not have an official event on Juneteenth.

Wendy Alexis-Janvier asks for input from the DEIC

- Shelley Keimach agrees that it is a nice concept that she supports, and at the very least to have a table. She suspects that they might need more money to support the event.
- Margie Mitlin also agrees that it is a wonderful event that is important for the community.
- Toben Asklar agrees with supporting this event financially and with volunteers. They wonder if the support comes from The Town of Sharon, not just the DEIC.
- Wendy asks to take a motion, contingent on the funds, to partner with Be Inclusive and their Juneteenth event.
 - CP adds friendly amendment, initiative be contingent on funds from the Town of Sharon. Shelley and Toben accept the motion. Shelley Keimach makes motion. Toben Asklar seconds the motion.

Votes for Yes 8 (Shelley Keimach, Margie Mitlin, CP, Toben Asklar, Bill Kondrath, Alison Kellom, Lajos Kamocsay, Wendy Alexis-Janvier)

DEIC will have a table. Volunteers to help on the day of the event:

- Shelly Keimach
- Toben Asklar
- Margie Mitlin
- Wendy Alexis-Janvier

Evening of Activists, hosted by DEIC

Date TBD in the Fall

Town Hearing Room, Sharon Community Center

- Lead by Shelley Keimach, to connect the social activist groups in the town. Casual conversation of the multiple groups in the town.
- Shelley is asking the DEIC what other groups could be invited to the event.
- Bill recommends that we have a small group of people meet and talk about current social justice issues that affect the Town. As well as plan a big tent event for a multitude of social justice groups in the fall.

Currently invited:

- SPN
- SIA
- SREA (soon to be invited)
- DEIC

Groups to possibly be invited to larger event

- Clergy Association
- BSU
- ACLU
- Sharon Pride Steering Committee
- GSA from the High School
- Leandra McClean – Sharon Health Department
- Indian Association
- Chinese Association
- The Commission on Disabilities
- The Islamic Center
- Black and Brown Girls
- Black and Brown Young Men
- The Culture Club
- Girls Who Code
- JSU
- Hispanic and Latinx Student Union
- ADL

Training plan for town boards, committees, and employees

DEIC needs to give Select Board plans and next steps.

Wendy asks the DEIC who would like to lead the training plan.

- Bill mentions that there is a training module that costs money, but could be self-administered to ensure compliance. 90 minutes in length.
- He believes that in-person might be more expensive.
- Wendy is willing to help with this.
- Looking for people to help with providing ideas on pricing and scope

Alison speaks about pricing is based on length of time of videos and complexity of the learning provided.

Kiana will get back to the DEIC on budget available.

Discussion on advising the Selectboard on hiring DEI Director dedicated to the Town of Sharon

- Wendy Alexis-Janvier asking the DEIC for thoughts on if the DEIC should advise the Selectboard.
- Toben Asklar mentions that the survey that was recently sent out to town employees was written in a biased fashion. The DEIC director could lookover policy and training for the town to help prevent bias.

Toben moves to advise the Selectboard to hire a DEI Director for the Town of Sharon. Bill Kondrath seconds the motion. 8 votes for yes (Shelley Keimach, Margie Mitlin, Alison Kellom, CP, Bill Kondrath, Toben Asklar, Lajos Kamocsay, Wendy Alexis-Janvier)

Announcements Community Upcoming Events:

- Toben announces that we now have a DEI events calendar on the website, including a submission form for events from other groups.
 - <https://www.townofsharon.net/diversity-equity-inclusion-committee/webforms/submit-your-event-to-be-displayed-on-the-deic-calendar>
- Julie Rowe communicates about a Nubian Square walking tour. Tuesday at 12 and Wednesday at 4pm.
- Julie also shares about Sharon High School PTSO Financial Reality Fair on May 19th, 7:45am – 11:45am. Simulation of an adult financial life for the students.
- Kiana Pierre-Lois, May 4th at 7pm at the Jewish Community Center
- Margie Mitlin talks about the SPN hiring an artist to come to the town in August to beautify the town. Electrical boxes and other areas to be visually improved.

Strategic plan status update led by Toben Asklar

Wendy talks about inviting Ruby Bridges and Dr Jarvis Givens, to invite them to a talk. Unfortunately, our budget might not support that.

Topics Not Anticipated within 48 Hours

Wendy talks about her conversation with Leandra with the Board of Health, regarding a speaker that talks about Black Maternal Health and using AI to improve outcomes. They might be a more economical option.

Wendy talks about a meeting with Leandra McLean, the Town of Sharon Health Department Health Department Administrator. They had discussions regarding mental health challenges. They talked about a Sharon Narcan site. She was looking for input and collaboration with the DEIC.

Wendy asks for a motion to adjourn. Bill motions for adjourn. Margie seconds the motion. 8 votes for yes (Shelley Keimach, Margie Mitlin, Alison Kellom, CP, Bill Kondrath, Toben Asklar, Lajos Kamocsay, Wendy Alexis-Janvier)