

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

September 8th, 2022 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was conducted virtually over Zoom in accordance with Governor Baker's June 16th, 2021, executive action extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the state of emergency. The committee chair Mrs. Wendy Alexis-Janvier started by welcoming everyone and calling all committee members and liaisons to confirm their attendance.

Attendance:

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

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Approval of previous meeting minutes:

Not Available

Email Correspondence:

Julie Rowe send email to DEIC committee, but intended it for just Wendy Alexis-Janvier, which she said she would address shortly.

DEIC Updates:

Wendy Alexis-Janvier asked each committee member to come up with a list of top priorities for the committee, in regard to what each committee member wants to focus on. Requesting 2-5 minutes per committee member to present ideas to the group.

Margie Mitlin -

- Getting the word out that the DEIC exists. Although our meetings are televised, many do not know about us. Creating a blurb or summary of what we do to be shared with others in the town, or mission statement etc.

- Educate the DEIC members to the current demographics in the community. Engage more people about all groups, not just the ones that speak up the most. Reaching out to those groups to let them know we are here and there for them. Faith groups and others included.
- Thinks we should revisit DEIC charge.

Julie Rowe, School Committee Liaison -

- Agrees with Margie, what Margie said about outreach is what was enclosed in her previously mentioned email to the DEIC.
- More people should volunteer in local committees, thinks more beyond the usual people that volunteer.
- Meeting with new Director at DEI Metco, will meet with them first then get back to group.

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Shelly Keimach

- Still trying to learn what the DEIC has done in Sharon and what its goals are. Requests and in-depth history on that.
- Agrees with Margie about outreach, wants more training and education.
- Thinking about how to lend an ear to the groups in the Town.
- Asking about Sharon Day table, as deadline approaches.

Toben Asklar, vice chair –

- Wants to see a strategic plan with 1-5 distinct goals for the year. With the goal to see that we've made a difference.
- Wants Indigenous People's Day change to happen, addressing institutional racism.
- Address all forms of "Isms"
- Studies of Gender-Neutral bathrooms go forward.
- Reach out to our own strengths, use our personal experiences to teach the group.
- Sharon Cultural council might have funds to help with a speaker for the children.

Alison Kellom, clerk –

- Creating a curriculum to teach local business about hostile work environments as an example.
- Sharon Day table for community outreach

Bill Kondrath

- Kiana organized a forum for different groups to speak. Thinks we should do that again to give visibility to the groups presenting. Educates others.
- Differences matter and are highlighted through a forum experience.
- Training is a constant maintenance, not a one-time situation, as new hires come in often and need to be trained.

- Being able to assist students, teachers, school admin, departments in town, when they need help with certain issues.
- In the past the DEIC worked with the Police Department to have a forum to welcome POC into a discussion about needs and resources and opportunities in the Town. Would like that to happen again.

Lajos Kamocsay

- Joined Committee to advance DEIC in Town of Sharon.
- Agrees with previous members.

Kiana Pierre-Louis, Select Board Liaison –

- Reminds committee members that DEIC was created to Advise the other Town Committees.
- Get the word out on what the DEIC does
- Recommends the DEIC committee members attend other committee meetings to represent as a resource and to be made aware of.
- On Resource page on website, define the words that are used in DEIC.
- Reminds DEIC committee members that there are parameters when it comes to requesting funds from other committees in the town.

Scott Leonard

- Reiterates what Bill said to have another forum for people to have discussions with the community and the Police.
- Agrees about the Sharon Day table to increase visibility
- Reiterates what others said, educate the town on what we do and our goals.

Julie Rowe, School Committee Liaison –

- Thinks coming up with a strategic plan, so that we're clear on what we are and what we do.
- Communication with the school PTO to set up Speakers for the children.

Wendy Alexis-Janvier, chair –

- Had conversation with Toben about a strategic plan. 22 items that they are passionate about.
- Each voice is heard, and their priorities are addressed.
- Discuss where we want to focus, what is the purpose of the DEIC etc.
- DEIC charge is definition of what we do, we need to ensure that we stay within those parameters.
- Diversity in each of the committees in town
- Advising the Select Board on the proclamations around Juneteenth, Black History Month and Indigenous People's Day, etc. Following up on budget to have a panel/event to educate the public about Juneteenth etc.

- Work with School Committee and Civics History teacher to have Ruby Bridges come to school to talk, reasonable rate of \$2000. Focuses on CRT and would be a good speaker for students.

Update on Social Media Code of Conduct Policy for Town members that Serve and Boards and Committees:

Margie Mitlin has created a draft that has been sent to Kiana for edits. Kiana suggests that the DEIC use the current version that was used previously, until it can be updated.

Margie wanted to clarify that that there was communication from members in the town about concerns about town committee members acting inappropriately online towards certain groups. The Code of Conduct was created based on other town social media policies, edited with the Town of Sharon in mind. Margie will send a draft to the committee for input, that will be edited, then sent to the Select Board once it is ready. Kiana thinking November/December would be a good time for presentation to Select Board.

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Announcements Community upcoming events:

Toben mentions the upcoming date of October 11th as National Coming Out Day.

Margie shares that October 23rd, from 4-6pm, the Sharon Pluralism Network is sponsoring "True Story Theater". An improv group that takes current issues in the group and act out them out.

Margie talks about Sharon Day on October 2nd, hopes DEIC has presence at event. Jule Rowe mentions Trunk or Treat on October 30th at Everwood. Great for families with small children.

Kiana talks about SREA having Claudia Foxtree come for a talk on Indigenous People's Day on October 13th at 7pm, on Zoom.

Scott talks about Sunday, September 11th, 9/11 memorial at the Fire Department, names are read starting at 8:30am.

Topic Not Anticipated within 48 hours:

Chair to vote on Table for Sharon Day. Deadline to submit application quickly approaching. Lajos motions to have a table at the Sharon Day event. Margie Seconds. 7 members voted Yes (Shelly Keimach, Margie Mitlin, Alison Kellom, Toben Asklar, Bill Kondrath, Wendy Alexis-Janvier, Lajos Kamocsay)

Bill Kondreth motions for the October DEIC meeting be held on October 6th, due to scheduling conflicts. Lajos Seconds it. Six members voted Yes (Margie Mitlin, Shelley Keimach, Alison Kellom, Toben Asklar, Lajos Kamocsay, and Wendy). Motion Passed.

Kiana reminds Alison that there will be a transcriber to prepare the minutes. Logistics about Sharon Day event, table, who will be there and what time etc. discussed.

Bill recommends a public interactive board that represents a person's difference. Alison offers to create a board that can be used at the event.

Kiana asks that we make a board with current openings of committees and boards, with the hopes of expanding diversity.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was seconded and approved by all members attending, at 8:12 pm the meeting was adjourned.

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