

Scituate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (SDEIC)

Previously known as: Advisory Committee on Equity and Justice for All

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 6:30pm (Eastern time)
via Remote Participation due to COVID-19

In response to Governor Baker's declaration of a public health emergency and the related Emergency Executive Order dated March 12, 2020, Town of Scituate public meetings shall meet remotely until further notice. This meeting will be recorded by Scituate Community Television and can be viewed live on Scituate Community Television Facebook Live. The recorded meeting will be available the following day on Comcast Channel 9 and YouTube Scituate Community Television. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFIIVOXmAcY>

Members Present:

Non-voting Members:

Bob Clark
Maura Curran

Voting Members:

Angela Riberio-Dray
Ewuniki (Nikki) Sanders
Thomas Secaur
Lucia Silveira
Natasha Stewart
Kate Swope
Ruth Yasin

Absent: Celia Richa, Amanda O'Shea

AGENDA

1. Call the Meeting to Order, Read the Remote Participation and Viewing Options, & Tribal Acknowledgement - Madame Chair Sanders.

- Madame Chair Sanders called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and read Governor Baker's declaration about remote meetings along with viewing information (posted above). Made mention of the Wampanoag of New England Pow Wow, a celebration of Wampanoag culture - it is open to visitors in late summer/early fall.
- Motion made to open the meeting by Rev. Stewart. Seconded by Ms. Yasin. Unanimous approval 6/0 (2 absent).
Angela Riberio-Dray - yes
Celia Richa - abs
Ewuniki (Nikki) Sanders - yes
Thomas Secaur - yes
Lucia Silveira - yes
Natasha Stewart - yes
Kate Swope - abs
Ruth Yasin - yes

2. Safe Space and Norms

- This is a safe space for people of color and for all underrepresented people and communities. Any comments that are inappropriate or have an animus in racism or bias will not be allowed. Will turn off sound if your comments are offensive to the meeting.
- This is a safe space where people can bring up challenges and questions without fear of repercussion or hostility
- Take the learning, but leave the story, so that people feel comfortable sharing their

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experiences

- Assume best intentions. All participants are embarking on this journey at different starting points
- Listen/read and be kind
- Use respectful language - ask when you are unsure.
- Administrators may remove anyone with inappropriate content or acting inappropriately
- Closed Captioning can be turned on or off by clicking the "CC" icon at the bottom of your Zoom Screen

3. Acceptance of Minutes of 5/4/2021

- Correct spelling to - Erica Souris on p. 3
 - Correct spelling to Robin Ochs
 - Select Person Curran (not Salesperson Curran)
- Motion made to accept the Minutes as amended by Madame Chair Sanders. Seconded by Vice Chair Secaur.

Unanimous approval 7/0 (1 absent).

Angela Riberio-Dray - yes

Celia Richa - abs

Ewuniki (Nikki) Sanders - yes

Thomas Secaur - yes

Lucia Silveira - yes

Natasha Stewart - yes

Kate Swope - yes

Ruth Yasin - yes

4. Public Comment

- Chairperson Sanders introduced Jamele Adams, the new DEI director for Scituate Public Schools (see liaison report below).
- Ms. Yasin update on STRIDE - ScituateStride.org - next meeting on May 26th for the end of year review - survey on website to talk about program planning for next year. And will also welcome Mr. Jamele Adams, new Director of SPS DEI to speak on restorative justice.
- Sheena Smead - Vice President of Scituate PRIDE - open PRIDE month in June. Can go to the website ScituatePride.com for more information. On June 4 is a Scituate Harbor event with remarks, a moment of silence, and will distribute flags as a fundraiser and will accept donations. Also Kinky Boots Drive-in movie on 6/18. There will be a Straight Talk on June 10th. On June 26th a PRIDE walk. Also are working with a contact with DCFS for at risk youth who are aging out of the system. Mr. Adams suggested hosting an open mic or poetry night and other activities to celebrate within the schools.

5. Old Business

- Liaison Reports
 - Jamele Adams - new DEI director SPS - excited to be part of the Scituate family and bring folks together. Chalk the Walk at Gates was a positive experience with messages of love and support, and now will follow-up with the LIT (Love, Inclusion, & Trust) Response Team - a group who will respond to help support the community in times of stress. Currently there is faculty involvement, and want students and community members to be involved. Also, he is visiting all the

district schools and is talking with other student and community groups. Plans to establish student advisory groups and affinity groups for students of color - both of these initiatives will all be established in elementary, middle, and high school before the end of the academic year so that they will be able to get started in the new academic year.

- Select Person Curran - opening of Senior Center this week. SSB is closing out the end of the year - the year ends on July 1. Election is this Saturday, May 22- one contested election for School Committee.
- Review of Finance Video from Mr. Boudreau
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ZBwE05OoOU> 11:00 start)
 - Madame Chair Sanders reminded the committee that budgeting is important when deciding what questions to ask and what recommendations can be made. Include budgets in the discussions with the small groups - where is money flowing within the town? Is there equity in this flow?
- Review of the Town Charter
 - The Town Charter is under review and there are proposed changes to this document. Look for this update once the redlined document has been made public to see if there are updates/changes we can recommend to the SSB.
- Discussion of Warrant for Next Town Meeting
 - Happens twice a year, so it is important to keep track of recommendation schedule so that we can discuss with the SSB in time for them to consider issues in time to put on the warrant.
- Discussion/Vote of Proposed Projects
 - Referred to DEI Project Plan 05 17 2.excel document - Proposed Projects section. Discussion on how we proceed concerning incidents based in bias. We need to evaluate - is there a gap in coverage about who to go to if there is an incident based in bias, which includes incidents which may not be a problem that the police would handle? Who/what could potentially fill this gap? This also is noted in the HUC survey as a gap - people do not know where to go if they see a problem or experience a problem. On the document, there are proposed ideas of: DEI Director, Human Rights Commission (external to SSB), Victim Advocate, Increased use of Town Social Worker, or other...?
 - Vice Chair Secaur noted that this topic is being discussed in working groups, so is still an ongoing discussion.
 - Madame Chair noted that the Hingham Unity Council (HUC) Survey noted that many people did not know what to do when faced with an incident that is discriminatory in nature. We need a process to see what services can be offered to the person so that assistance can be offered, whether it be police involvement, or other services.
 - Mr. Adams suggested that a Freedom Team be formed - it answers the questions, who needs to come together in the community to help resolve a crisis? Who needs to be pulled into the conversation? The Freedom Team consists of 10 points of contact, customizable in every community, including parents, students, someone from the educational network, Chief of Police, a political representative, a lawyer, someone able to use the therapeutic trauma lens, a person to help with

restorative justice, a clergy member, and a social media navigator. If there is a problem, then this group is contacted. They also meet monthly so as to be proactive, reactive, and retroactive. There are Freedom Teams in Natick, Waltham, Franklin, Hopkinton. and Wellesley. They now act as a network to help connect and support each other. It is meant to be a complement to any groups already in existence - and it would need a website and phone number, preferably provided by the town. Madame Chair Sanders noted that this is a process which offers safety, support, and resources to victims to help mend problems rather than only being focused on the perpetrators. We should add Freedom Team to the Project Plan document to discuss further.

- Discussion/Vote on Next Steps for Evaluation of Initial Departments
 - We surveyed the 22 department chairs in the Town of Scituate, and will now target three teams: Social Services/Board of Health/ FACTS/Veteran Services; Police Dept; and DPW. Small working groups are developing follow-up questions. The objective for these meetings is to come up with recommendations that we will make to the SSB.
- Update on HUC Survey - no update at this time - next meeting

6. Administrative

7. New Business

- Mr. Adams noted that the SPS Central office is hiring an administrative support person for the new Asst. Superintendent and Mr. Adams. The job description is on School Spring.
- Ms. Silveira has resigned from the DPW, so will be resigning from this committee also. Had joined this committee because she had experienced an incident based in bias and there was no accountability or diversity group to show the compassion that she would have liked to see. She feels that Scituate people in general showed love and compassion and uplifted her, and had seen that the town is not just the negative experience that she had. She advised that people not focus on social media commenters who are often so negative and don't understand the DEI process. She also noted that although there is only one person in the town of Scituate HR department, rather than a whole department. Mr. Clark has been amazing - completely capable, responsive, experienced, and involved in this mission. DEI needs to be acknowledged, and that we need to continue to have the uncomfortable discussions, hold people accountable, but also show love and compassion. Thanked the SDEIC for its actions, and desires to continue to keep in touch.
- Select Person Curran will work on getting another Town Liaison nominee from the SSB.

8. Other Business (that may properly come before the Committee after agenda is posted)

9. Future Agenda Items

- Visit from Representative Joan Meschino on June 15, 2021.

10. Future Meeting Dates - 6/1, 6/15, 6/29, 7/13, 8/17

11. Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Ms. Yasin. Seconded by Madame Chair Sanders. Meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.

Roll call vote - Unanimous approval 7/0 (1 absent).

Angela Riberio-Dray - yes
Celia Richa - abs
Ewuniki (Nikki) Sanders - yes
Thomas Secaur - yes
Lucia Silveira - yes
Natasha Stewart - yes
Kate Swope - yes
Ruth Yasin - yes

List of Documents:

- DEI Project Plan 05 17 21.xls - Ruth Yasin

**Public comments will be limited to one (1) minute per individual. "Public Comment" time will be limited to 10 minutes total. Any time beyond that will be at the discretion of the Chair so the Advisory Committee on Equity and Justice for All can proceed with items on the agenda. Any person making a comment that is deemed by the Chairperson to be offensive or inappropriate may be silenced. The committee will take items under advisement and items raised may, at the discretion of the Chairperson, be added to a future agenda. At the Chairperson's discretion, public comment may be allowed on today's agenda items when they occur during the meeting. If no public is present at the public comment section, this section may be concluded early.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Yasin