

Scituate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

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

MINUTES

Tuesday, February 16, 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=LEgsQAoG48M>

Members Present:

Non-voting Members:

Bob Clark

Maura Curran

Amanda O'Shea

Lucia Silveira

Voting Members:

Kim Harriman

Angela Riberio-Dray

Celia Richa

Ewuniki (Nikki) Sanders

Thomas Secaur

Natasha Stewart

Ruth Yasin

Ms. Curran absent. All other members present.

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 6:34 and read Governor Baker's declaration about remote meetings along with viewing information (posted above). Motion to convene the meeting - Ms. Yasin. Seconded by Ms. Harriman. Voted through a roll call vote - Unanimous yes vote - 7-0

Kim Harriman - yes

Angela Riberio-Dray - yes

Celia Richa - yes

Ewuniki (Nikki) Sanders - yes

Thomas Secaur - yes

Natasha Stewart - yes

Ruth Yasin - yes

2. Safe Space and Norms

- a. This is a safe space for people of color. 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.

- b. This is a safe space where people can bring up challenges and questions without fear of repercussion or hostility
 - c. Take the learning, but leave the story, so that people feel comfortable sharing their experiences
 - d. Assume best intentions. All participants are embarking on this journey at different starting points
 - e. Listen/read and be kind
 - f. Use respectful language - ask when you are unsure.
 - g. Administrators may remove anyone with inappropriate content or acting inappropriately
3. Acceptance of Minutes - Corrected Minutes of 2/2/2021 - Accepted as presented. Motion to accept the minutes by Rev. Stewart, Second Ms. Dray. Unanimous vote yes 7-0.
- Kim Harriman - yes
 Angela Riberio-Dray - yes
 Celia Richa - yes
 Ewuniki (Nikki) Sanders - yes
 Thomas Secaur - yes
 Natasha Stewart - yes
 Ruth Yasin - yes

Updates from previous meetings:

- Noted that the name change for this committee was approved by the Select Board on 2/9/21. The new name of the committee is: Scituate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.
 - Mr. Clark updated the information to note that SFD has 5 openings and one vacancy in SPD, and they are actively recruiting.
 - Madame Chair Sanders voiced concerns about Civil Service giving priority to Police Department applicants who were descendents of members killed in action that there might be difficulty for them to be unbiased in their service. Lt. O'Shea confirmed that there is psychological screening, and also that this is a very small population. Madame Chair Sanders also clarified that when referencing black people, she was also referring to all underrepresented populations in this community in particular.
4. Old business
- a. Discussion on voting vs non-voting members - Ms. Silveira stated that she feels the employee position should have a vote on this committee especially since the recommendations will affect town employees. The question was raised about how a tie vote would be handled if there were an even number of voting members, and what would be the mechanism of making her a voting member. Multiple committee members spoke in support of Lucia's receiving voting membership rights. Madame Chair Sanders will discuss these issues with Selectperson Curran.
 - b. Ms. Dray is setting up a method of saving documents - keeping in mind that we can not collaborate with more than three people outside of a meeting, Ms. Dray has created a private Slack channel which will be shared with

committee members. Documents will be pdf'd and committee members will be able to have one easily accessible place to store documents. Committee members will not be able to change or comment on the documents (that would be in violation of the open meeting law), but will be able to view them. Ms. Dray will post the documents into Slack.

- c. Timetable for recommendations to Select Board - Q1- Consensus was that we will finalize our presentation to the Select Board during the 3/30/21 Committee Meeting - and present to the Select Board on 4/6/21. By that time we should have our processes to present and perhaps some recommendations. Madame Chair Sanders will check if we can be put on the Select Board Agenda on 4/6. Q2- Will finalize our recommendations by the 6/29 Committee Meeting, with a proposed presentation to the Select Board on 7/6/21.
- d. Discussion of a liaison with SPS DEI Committee - Supt. Burkhead suggested Asst. Superintendent Jen Arnold, the Scituate Public Schools' DEI Response Team Chairperson. The liaison position will facilitate communications and connect initiatives between the school system and this town committee. Madame Chair Sanders will invite Ms. Arnold to the next meeting and will discuss with Selectperson Curran to see if we need to vote this position or apply to the Select Board.
- e. Discussion/Vote - Goals for Committee - Ms. Harriman, Rev. Stewart, Ms. Yasin
Madame Chair Sanders moved to approve the goals as amended through the discussion. Seconded by Vice Chair Secaur.
Unanimous yes 7-0

Kim Harriman - yes
Angela Riberio-Dray - yes
Celia Richa - yes
Ewuniki (Nikki) Sanders - yes
Thomas Secaur - yes
Natasha Stewart - yes
Ruth Yasin - yes

Approved Goals:

1. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion **community education and engagement** -
Goal: Move beyond tolerance to respect, affirmation, solidarity, and action by affirming that DEI has positive effects on the entire community's well-being and success.
 - a. Target audience - Town of Scituate personnel, committees, and boards as well as general community members.
 - b. [Information Gathering & Analysis](#) - *may include surveys, small group meetings, reports by department heads to our meetings,...*
 - c. [Observable Goals](#) - *possible goals would include development of equity initiatives by town boards, pre & post surveys, ...*
 - d. [Actions to meet these Goals](#)- *training sessions, community education forums, cultural events, ..*

2. Goal: **Increase BIPOC representation in Town Employees**, including administrative positions. This would increase diversity within Scituate hires and promotions for greater representation in decision-making processes.
 - a. Target audience - HR department, department heads, and those interviewing candidates.
 - b. [Information Gathering & Analysis](#) - *may include a review of current minority representation across positions and levels, as well as where/how Scituate posts positions, and requirements set for hiring/promotion, ...*
 - c. [Observable Goals](#) - *for example percent increases or other metrics...*
 - d. [Actions to meet these Goals](#) - *may include revised hiring and interviewing standards,...*
3. Goal: Ensure that **diverse communities within Scituate are served equitably** and that individuals who experience discrimination, harassment, or incidents resulting from bias **have recourse and support** through transparent and easily accessible channels.
 - a. Target audience - traditionally marginalized segments of our community, and Town of Scituate entities, including volunteer positions, which service our community.
 - b. [Information Gathering & Analysis](#) - *may include community surveys, and review or development of policies and procedures.*
 - c. [Observable Goals](#) - *pre-post surveys, observable improvements to transparency in channels of recourse, ...*
 - d. [Actions to meet these Goals](#) - *may include developing web/print resources, policies, equity in procurement procedures, training and monitoring to ensure that members of departments and boards are prepared to deliver equitable treatment of all citizens, including those historically marginalized, ...*
- f. Discussion/Vote - Questions to ask Town Boards/Committees - Mr. Clark, Ms. Richa, Ms. Sanders, Mr. Secaur & Ms. Silveira

Mr. Secaur presented an Excel Spreadsheet - "Scituate DEI Committee Questions" (contained in the 2021-02-16 Documents Provided to Committee) noting suggestions for Committee Norms and Approach as well as a format for general and Department specific questions. Ms. Silveira said that she can answer many of these questions and that they have the ability to send out anonymous questionnaires/surveys to town employees. She advised using tact and care in approaching people to respect peoples' hard work. Ms. Richa would like us to approach the process in an organized way and have some of the general questions answered by our in-house resources - Mr. Clark, Lt. O'Shea, and Ms Silveira. She noted that it is especially important to help build trust with the Police Department being thoughtful about the whole process. Mr. Clark noted that it will be important to explain the goal of the committee and what we want to achieve to the departments so we do not seem accusatory. We need to ask how we can help them accomplish their goals. How can we be partners with them to achieve these Select Board goals? Mr. Clark can give this committee diversity statistics, training provided, and other information. Then members of this committee can meet

with the Department Heads and establish working relationships. Madame Chair Sanders stated that she wanted to invite in department chairs for whichever groups we decide to go first in the quarter. There was a discussion about which steps we will take in regards to the process of gathering information and the reporting out from the town departments. Ms. Silveira encouraged the committee to include town personnel in the information gathering process. Vice Chair Secaur with Ms. Richa will put the document into Slack for committee members to view. Members should send their comments/suggestions to either of them to update this document and we will discuss the revised questions at the next meeting. Vice Chair Secaur, Mr. Clark, and Ms. Richa will review the questions with any input from committee members. Ms. Sanders suggested that at least one open ended question be included, that there are fewer questions, and that there be a preface explaining that any questions sent out are meant to fulfill our charge and meet our goals.

- g. Discussion/Vote - setting up a Youth Subcommittee - Ms. Sanders reported that youth members of our community have presented that they want more access to the ability to make change, and have concerns about the lack of DEI in our community. Because of the hour, discussion was brief, but Ms. noted that though we wish to support a youth voice, we need more clarity on what that would look like. Mr. Secaur stated that we do need a youth voice, and part of that will be the SPS liaison's opinion on this topic, but will need more discussion on how. Ms. Yasin agreed that we should have a youth voice, but asked for information about what the charge would be, the structure and membership composition (only students, or other town youth), what oversight it would need, and as per an earlier conversation in the meeting, are we considering adding a youth member to the Scituate DEI committee? Madame Chair responded that the youth committee would report to us about what is going on so we can make recommendations at the town level. Will bring up again next meeting.
- h. Discussion/Vote - setting up a Subcommittee on Hate Crimes- because the police are limited in what they can do, that it is important to establish a place to help support people who experience incidents of hate crimes (whether it is a legal definition of hate crimes or not.) About g & h - Rev. Stewart called for more information about what exists in town already before making a new committee, and that would like more information about what these subcommittees would do. More information gathering would be needed before making a decision. Ms. Yasin asked for clarification about a Sub Committee on Hate Crimes - that if it is part of the Scituate DEI Committee, then it is limited to our scope, which is making recommendations to the Select Board. Other towns have Committees on Hate Crimes that are set up directly by their Select Boards, have budgets, and have their own scope of work. Madame Chair Sanders noted that a Hate Crimes subcommittee

would gather information about Hate Crimes within the community and make recommendations about what responses the town should make, and that there are multiple people who would be willing to work on this. Will bring up again next meeting.

5. New Business

- a. Suggestions for actions that could be easily adopted and meaningful - Ms. Richa suggested that there may be easily identifiable initiatives from Ms. Silveira, Mr. Clark & Lt. O'Shea that could easily be developed into recommendations to bring to the Board. Will bring up next meeting.
- b. The Establishment of a Cape Verde Sister City - Ms. Dray will investigate how this would work and will report back to us.
- c. Public Comment - none.

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

- a. Madame Chairperson Sanders is sending contact information for community members as resources to committee members based on their interests. These community members would like to help committee members with their tasks.
- b. Ms. Silveira noted that the Mariner had an article about the SPD with Police Chief Thompson discussing the new Police Reform legislation.

7. Future Agenda Items

8. Motion to adjourn at 8:56 by Ms. Yasin. Seconded by Ms. Ricca.

Roll call vote-unanimously approved 7-0.

Kim Harriman - yes

Angela Riberio-Dray - yes

Celia Richa - yes

Ewuniki (Nikki) Sanders - yes

Thomas Secaur - yes

Natasha Stewart - yes

Ruth Yasin - yes

9. Future Meeting Dates - 3/2, 3/16, 3/30*, 4/20, 5/4, 5/18, 6/1, 6/15, 6/29*, 7/13, 7/27

* We will finalize our presentations to the Select Board on these dates.

List of Documents: 2021-02-16 Documents Provided to Committee

****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

2021-02-16 Minutes