

Scituate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (SDEIC)

Tuesday, August 2, 2022 6:30pm MINUTES
via Remote Participation due to COVID-19

Governor Baker's declaration of a public health emergency and the related Emergency Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 has been extended until March 31, 2023. 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.

Members

Non-voting Members:

Bob Clark
Maura Curran
Amanda O'Shea

Voting Members:

Elena Gulotta
Angela Ribeiro-Dray
Celia Richa
~~Jim Six-Tiger~~ (has stepped down from position)
Thomas Secaur
Natasha Stewart
Kate Swope
Ruth Yasin

Members Absent: Natasha Stewart, Amanda OShea, Bob Clark

AGENDA

1. Chairperson Secaur - Called the meeting to order, read the Scituate DEI Commitment Statement and the remote participation and viewing options.
Motion made to open the meeting by Chairperson Secaur at 6:31 pm - seconded by Ms. Richa.
Roll call vote - unanimous approval
Elena Gulotta - yes
Angela Ribeiro-Dray - yes
Celia Richa - yes
Thomas Secaur - yes
Natasha Stewart - absent
Kate Swope - yes
Ruth Yasin - yes
2. Review and Acceptance of Minutes - 6/21/2022
Motion made to accept the proposed minutes by Chairperson Secaur, seconded by Ms. Richa.
Roll call vote - unanimous approval
Elena Gulotta - yes
Angela Ribeiro-Dray - yes
Celia Richa - yes
Thomas Secaur - yes
Natasha Stewart - absent
Kate Swope - yes
Ruth Yasin - yes
3. Liaison Reports and Community Announcements
 - a. SSB - Both Chairperson Secaur and Selectperson Curran noted that there was unanimous approval of the Beach Commission proposal to the SSB for resident priced Beach Stickers for Metco students' families. Selectperson Curran reported

that not many people have applied for the Cape Verdean Sister City Committee, so they will repost the application. Vicechair Dray mentioned that there was very little lead time before people thought the application process was closed. She will share this information via Social Media and through her other contacts. Selectperson Curran suggested it go out via a variety of channels in Social Media. The Sister City meetings may be virtual or hybrid, but will be up to the committee to decide how they will meet. Vicechair Dray wanted clarification if people can belong to more than one Sister City committee - Selectperson Curran will check on that.

- b. South Shore Unity Council - Mr. Adams passed on an Open Letter from the SSUC Unity Council (8/1/2022 - The South Shore Unity Council - Tom Secaur shared via email and at meeting). Jean Shildneck from STRIDE noted that the letter was generated and disseminated to local communities because of the white nationalist organizations which are quite active in MA. These hate organizations post stickers, create graffiti, and engage in activities and recruitment; stickers have been seen in Scituate. These organizations often mask their intentions by speaking about their patriotism. Chairperson Secaur also showed the SSUC open letter about the dissolution of the Pembroke DEI Committee (6/2/2022 - South Shore Unity Council - Letter to Pembroke Select Board re: Dissolution of DEI Commission - shared via email and at the meeting) which supported the reinstatement of a DEI committee in Pembroke. We did not have an SDEIC meeting in time to vote on the June SSUC letter, so we were not able to put the SDEIC name on that letter as a supporter. Selectperson Curran noted that because of open meeting laws, if there isn't time for a meeting, then individuals can put their names and positions on a letter, but not sign for the committee. Ms. Gulotta suggested that we vote to add our name to the SSUC open letter of 8/1/22. Will address this during other business.

4. Public Comment - none

5. Review of In-Flight Opportunities and Projects

- a. IP Day Scituate - Chairperson Secaur reported that we had submitted an article on June 21 and asked if it could be put on the Special Town Meeting warrant. A working group helped formulate the document, and we had planned to present it to the SSB at a subsequent meeting on Aug 9. However, at the July 12 SSB meeting, the SSB members decided that the IP Day article should not be on the Special Town meeting warrant in September. The SSB members felt that there needed to be more education on the topic before putting it on the warrant. SDEIC still plans to bring this to the SSB, as an educational presentation. An SHS student noted that students want to help this process go forward. Ms. Yasin noted that from our original proposal (Proposal for Indigenous Peoples Day Scituate to Scituate Select Board June 2022 - Ms. Yasin), Ms. Mahtowin Munro of UAINE advised that we remove the Land Acknowledgement section in order to focus on IP Day. Selectperson Curran noted that we can change the resolution wording with which we are comfortable, and Ms. Yasin confirmed that we will have room in the Advisory Booklet to provide back-up and justification. The Advisory Committee will weigh-in as well. Ms. Yasin suggested that we can offer up a couple of options to the SSB, and this information presented could be used as background

information. Ms. Yasin shared another draft (Updated Draft Proposal for IP Day Scituate to SSB 2022- R. Yasin). Selectperson Curran again suggested that the educational piece be the focus of the SSB meeting, with follow-up details presented at a follow-up SSB meeting. With discussion, Chairperson Secaur suggested that student involvement in presentation wait until October where there will be a more robust response from students once school has begun. Selectperson Curran also clarified that there are a couple of ways to get an article on the warrant for a Town Meeting - the Select Board or Planning Board can propose articles, or there can be a citizen's petition. Any committee which has an initiative is submitted to the SSB for them to sponsor it. The Advisory Board is an independent board which evaluates the fiscal and fiduciary impact of any articles brought forward.

- b. Hybrid Town Meetings - Ms. Richa, Ms. Gulotta, and Chairperson Secaur have been having meetings about this topic - article was shared via email to the group (Make remote access to public meetings permanent: Going back to the days when people had to show up to public meetings in person makes local governance less accessible, and, as a result, less democratic. The Editorial Board of The Boston Globe. Updated August 1, 2022). They have done this in Cohasset. It is an equity issue because it is difficult for many people to attend Town Meetings in person - especially for many sub-groups e.g. single parents, younger parents, people who need to work early in the morning, senior citizens/disabled to stay so late. For example, a recent town meeting only had 275 people present vs 3000 who voted in a recent election - certainly not a representational democracy. Boston University research has studied town meetings and the majority of the attendees at in-person meetings are over 65, white, male, and homeowners - not representative of all town voters. Peabody, Yarmouth, Franklin, Newton, and others are working to implement remote participation. Ms. Richa noted that she would propose that we consider all options for hybrid participation - listening, viewing, and voting. They will be discussing with an organizer from Cohasset to learn more about their process. Questions to consider - what change to current structure, vs ideal form? What are things to consider - including things like childcare, transportation, reviewing moderator DEI training and their role e.g. enforcing speaking limits, who would moderate the online portion, budgets - e.g. different costs to update the meeting system. Are state funds or grants available? Data on voter participation and what has it been - what would our goal be? We have seen that online participation in town committee/board meetings has greatly increased with the ability to hold remote meetings. Is there demographic data on who attends town meetings in Scituate? All these are questions/issues to be developed further. Selectperson Curran suggested that we do not propose this using a petitioner's article, instead she suggests that we get info from Kathy Gardner, our Town Clerk. Seth is a member of the Cable Committee and is a good resource for information - The Cable Committee is an existing committee with IT looking at elevating our outreach. The State also has a role in how/if this can be enacted. We may need to discuss how to enact a change - through the SSB, and perhaps need interaction with the Charter Review Committee and perhaps Bylaw Review Committee. Selectperson Curran also noted that there is also a citizen committee group looking to change the form of government to a representative town meeting.

6. Other Business (that may properly come before the Committee after agenda is posted)
- a. Chairperson Secaur moved that SDEIC add our committee's name to the open letter from the SSUC of August 1, 2022. Ms. Gulotta seconded the motion.

Roll call vote - unanimous approval

Elena Gulotta - yes
Angela Ribeiro-Dray - yes
Celia Richa - yes
Thomas Secaur - yes
Natasha Stewart - absent
Kate Swope - yes
Ruth Yasin - yes

7. Administrative

- Reminder of the SDEIC presentation to the SSB on Aug. 9.
- Heritage Days will have a Cape Verdean band playing at 1pm on Sunday, 9/7.
- Future Meeting Dates - August 16*, September 13, October **11**, November 15*, December 13
- Selectperson Curran would like an update on the gender neutral bathroom signage. She will reach out to Mr. Clark for details to be presented in the Aug 16 meeting.

8. Close Meeting and Adjourn - Motion made to close the meeting at 7:45pm. Seconded by Ms. Dray.

Roll call vote - unanimous approval

Elena Gulotta - yes
Angela Ribeiro-Dray - yes
Celia Richa - yes
Thomas Secaur - yes
Natasha Stewart - absent
Kate Swope - yes
Ruth Yasin - yes

List of Documents:

- 8/1/2022 - The South Shore Unity Council - Open letter - T. Secaur
- 6/2/2022 - South Shore Unity Council - Letter to Pembroke Select Board re: Dissolution of DEI Commission - T. Secaur
- Proposal for Indigenous Peoples Day Scituate to Scituate Select Board June 2022 - R. Yasin
- Updated Draft Proposal for IP Day Scituate to SSB 2022 - R. Yasin
- Make remote access to public meetings permanent: Going back to the days when people had to show up to public meetings in person makes local governance less accessible, and, as a result, less democratic. The Editorial Board of The Boston Globe. Updated August 1, 2022

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Yasin