

MINUTES of the Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (CDEI) Meeting 12/14/23

Items highlighted indicate CDEI member action needed.

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was scheduled at 7:00 pm

What: Town of Hadley – Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)

When: December 14, 2023 @7:00 pm

Where: Hadley Senior Center

Who: Mark Dunn (MD), Joanne Goding (JG), Crystal Jackson (CJ), Pat Rissmeyer (PR) and Sarah Strong (SS). Absent: E. Wayne Abercrombie (WA), Megan Relin (MR), C Randy Izer, (RI)*

*Non-voting member/SB liaison

- **Welcome, call to order, technical support for meeting** – MD called the meeting to order @ 7:14 pm.
- **Opening reflection** - The group acknowledged the great teamwork that launched the meeting in a new room with unfamiliar technology. Special thanks to CJ, MD, Jane Nevinsmith and Niki Liquori.
- **Clerk's report** The group reviewed the 11/16/23 minutes. JG moved to approve the minutes and SS seconded. The minutes were approved 5-0.
- **Old Business**
 - a. **Selection of questions for meeting with HR Director** - MD shared, and the group reviewed and proposed edits to the draft letter and list of questions for HR Director Troy Brin. JG asked about 'next steps.' CJ will send the letter to PR. PR will send it to MD. MD will forward the letter to Troy and invite him to our January 18, 2023 meeting.
 - b. **Potential month for co-sponsored Movie Matinee with the Senior Center** – PR recommended the CDEI co-sponsor a film in June to recognize Juneteenth and suggested the documentary *High on the Hog: How African American Cuisine Transformed America* (season 1, episode 4, Freedom) that honors Juneteenth may be appropriate. PR will follow-up with Violet Suska, the Senior Center Program Director and report at the next meeting.
 - c. **Update on potential CDEI collaboration with Hopkins** – The group expressed enthusiasm for supporting the Hopkins faculty in their May 2024 program honoring the diverse cultures in the Hopkins school community. Given their work schedules, no CDEI members are available to attend the 7 am program planning meetings. PR will communicate this information to teachers Ruthann Fitzgibbons and Kelly Lamberto.
- **New Business**
 - A Feast for Peace in the Middle East* sponsored by the Diversity Club/Hopkins Academy – SS attended the event on 12/5/23. It was beautifully organized, and the food was presented on beautiful dishes with accompanying recipes. SS was very impressed by the students who gave her hope. CJ affirmed this perspective noting that young people also give her hope.
- **Open Agenda**
 - JG reiterated her interest in the Haitian students enrolled in the Hadley school system and inquired if the students/families have any needs. JG asked if MD could ask the Town Administrator for a statement or join us at a meeting to discuss the situation.
 - The group discussed the changes on Russell Street including the razing of the motel, the addition of sidewalks and bus stops. CJ affirmed the positive impact on those who travel by bus.
 - JG and SS agreed to take responsibility for the agenda and minutes in February and March. JG asked PR to develop a template of good instructions for them to follow. PR agreed to confirm that the CDEI has a meeting room reserved through May 2024.
- **Closing Reflection** – MD reflected on the conflict in the Middle East acknowledging its lengthy history. CJ recognized the current suffering on both sides. SS raised the issue of colonization and CJ acknowledged the systematic and institutional impact of racism that perpetuates privilege.
- **Dates upcoming meetings** – MD reviewed the CDEI future meeting dates 1/18, 2/15, 3/21, 4/18, 5/16.
- **Adjournment** CJ moved to adjourn. SS seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm by a 5-0 vote.