

Civil Rights Committee Workshop Minutes
Wednesday, June 30, 2021 @ 6:45 p.m.

DRAFT

As a result of the COVID-19 virus, the Civil Rights Committee conducted the meeting via Zoom remote access as provided by Maine law. Zoom allowed all Civil Rights Committee members and members of the public to hear all discussion as required by law.

Present: : Rafina Alonzo-Young,, Miriam Esch Levanos, Dheeraj Khare, Jim Sparks, Melanie Thomas, Rachel Davis (Director, Thomas Memorial Library, Committee Secretary)

Absent: Keyla Alston-Griffin, Valerie Deveraux, Kim Monaghan

1. Welcome and Call the Workshop to Order: Melanie called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m.
2. Acceptance of minutes from the June 16 meeting
 - a. Rafina made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted; seconded by Melanie; unanimously approved.
3. Personnel Code Report finalization
 - a. The Committee discussed whether the section of “working definitions needed to be included in the cover sheet for the report, and all agreed that it was unnecessary.
 - b. There was a discussion about whether to send this report to the Town Council immediately, or wait until all of the policies have been reviewed; all agreed that each report should be delivered as it is completed.
 - i. Jim made a motion to send the report to the Town Council; seconded by Dheeraj, unanimously approved.
 - ii. Melanie made a motion to submit each policy to the Town Council as it is completed; seconded by Jim, unanimously approved.
4. Water body naming project
 - a. Jim raised the question of whether any effort had been made to discover if any of the bodies of water to be named already have a previous Native name that could be restored.
 - b. Rafina reported that she had spoken to the historian for the Penobscot Nation about this issue, and received the advice that the Town should choose names that are meaningful to the Town and its citizens, or have a direct historical connection to the Town, and not try to choose Native names in an attempt to be inclusive or well-meaning.
 - c. The Committee identified and discussed names that might be problematic in meaning, reference, or pronunciation. A memo was prepared summarizing the Committee’s work (see attached memo.)
 - i. Rafina made a motion to submit the memo to the Town Planner (correction after the fact, by Rachel Davis, it should be submitted directly to the Town Council;) seconded by Jim; unanimously approved.

5. 21 Day Challenge: Discussion tabled until August meeting.
6. New business
 - a. Dheeraj wondered if the Committee should make a statement with regard to the proposed Dunham Court housing project; Melanie clarified that Committee members could as individuals comment on items such as this, but it was not the Committee's role to do so as a group.
 - b. Rachel reported that she had been copied on an email reply from the Town Manager to citizens and representatives of the South Portland Human Rights Commission about the possibility of Cape Elizabeth organizing a Juneteenth Celebration for next year, and that this is an initiative that the Committee would likely develop.
7. Next meeting: Wednesday, August 25 at 6:45 p.m. (no meeting in July)
8. Melanie made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Jim; unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rachel Davis, 7/2/21