

Civil Rights Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 16, 2021 @ 6:45 p.m.

APPROVED

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, Valerie Deveraux, Miriam Esch Levanos, Keyla Alston-Griffin, Kim Monaghan, Jim Sparks, Melanie Thomas, Rachel Davis (Director, Thomas Memorial Library, Committee Secretary)

Absent: Dheeraj Khare

1. Welcome and Call the Workshop to Order: Keyla called the meeting to order at 6:48 p.m.
2. Acceptance of minutes from the June 2 meeting
 - a. Jim made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted; seconded by Keyla; unanimously approved.
3. Citizen Comments of items not on the agenda (15 minute limit): none
4. Continued discussion of the Personnel Code assessment:
 - a. Rachel will highlight the use of male pronouns throughout the document, and include the recommendation at the beginning that male pronouns be substituted with the non-gendered “they/them”
 - b. The Committee discussed the purpose and wording of the summary section in the cover document to go with the review of each policy.
 - c. It was recommended that the report include the source for the definitions we choose to use for terminology used in the report.
 - d. The summary section for the Personnel Code was finalized as the following:

“Having reviewed the Personnel Code, we recommend revisions to address:

- The use of gendered pronouns.
- Aspects of the policy that are open to interpretation or in conflict with one another.
- Standards in practice and procedure that are based on subjectivity that could lead to bias and prevent inclusivity.
- Problematic and inconsistent guidelines with regard to the dress and appearance of employees that could lead to discrimination based on biased cultural norms or expectations.”

5. Workflow, meeting schedule, group preferences on task management:
 - a. Jim made a motion to
 - i. Set the next meeting for June 30, and to schedule it to be a workshop
 - ii. Not meet in July
 - iii. Meet once in AugustSeconded by Melanie; unanimously approved.
 - b. At the August meeting, the Committee will prepare a workflow document to chart a path forward to ensure that all the tasks the Committee needs to take on are completed efficiently.
6. Water Body Naming Project:
 - a. Action Item: Rachel will seek clarification from the Town Planner about the work the Committee is expected to do with regard to this project
 - b. Action Item: For the next meeting, Committee members are asked to look at the list of proposed names, including the longer Excel spreadsheet, to identify any names that might be problematic.
 - c. Action Item: Given that there are some Indigenous names on the list, Rafina will reach out to a contact in the Wabanaki community for input on whether it is appropriate for an outside group to use Indigenous names in this way.
7. New business:
 - a. Melanie alerted the Committee to the Juneteenth Event organized by the South Portland Human Rights Commission in Mill Creek Park on June 19 at 3:00 p.m.
 - b. Melanie also reported that the DEI School Task Force is becoming permanent, and they would like to extend an invitation to include one of our Committee members on their committee
8. Citizen Comments of items not on the agenda (15 minute limit): none
9. Next meeting: A workshop on June 30 at 6:45 p.m.
10. Keyla made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Jim; unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rachel Davis, 6/24/21