

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

APPROVED

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

Absent: Valerie Deveraux, Kim Monaghan

1. Welcome and Call the Workshop to Order: Keyla called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m.
2. Acceptance of minutes from the June 30 workshop
 - a. Melanie made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted; seconded by Dheeraj; unanimously approved.
3. Citizen Comments of items not on the agenda (15 minute limit): none
4. Consideration of an Emergency Remote Meeting Policy: Rafina made a motion to adopt the Town Council's Emergency Remote Meeting Policy; seconded by Jim; unanimously approved.
5. Select the next department policy for review: There was discussion which department policies to review per the Committee's original charge; Community Services and Public Works were identified as departments that have policies that might be viewed through a DEI lens regarding inclusivity, and best practices with regard to addressing issues that might cause harm. Rafina suggested that Committee members research what other states and communities are doing with regard to policies in these departments. Rachel offered to get copies of policies from these departments for the next meeting. Melanie made a motion to acquire relevant policies from Community Services and Public Works so the Committee can make a decision about which to review first at the November meeting; seconded by Keyla; unanimously approved.
6. Discussion about affordable housing in Town through a DEI lens: Keyla initiated a discussion about what the Committee's role is regarding affordable housing initiatives in the Town. Some Committee members felt it was important to view this issue through a DEI lens, and to discuss the implications of the lack of affordable housing and what it means for the Town. Jim suggested there is a moral and justice perspective to the issue. Dheeraj wondered if the Committee might look at current rental policies through a DEI lens.
7. Rafina felt the Committee does not have a role in addressing the current affordable housing proposal, and suggested that the Town has already addressed issues related to affordable housing through the Comprehensive Plan. Jim wondered if that plan addresses the issue through a DEI lens. Keyla felt it was important to expand the idea of DEI beyond racial diversity to include income diversity, equity and inclusion, and that it was important not to conflate affordability and race. Rafina felt that we already have

economic diversity in the Town, and that it was more important for the Committee to ensure that the Town does not have antiquated policies, and that we promote diversity through raising awareness through outreach. Jim proposed we have a workshop on affordable housing and how we can promote a vision of Cape Elizabeth that is more accessible.

8. Discussion about the Town Council meeting that approved our DEI Committee as permanent and what that means/looks like: There was discussion of how the new permanent DEI Committee that begins in January will be composed. Current members who wish to be on the Committee will need to apply as they had done before.
9. 21 Day Anti-Racism Challenge: Melanie proposed tabling this initiative until the new Committee is in place.
10. Review of the Committee's work up to this point, planning for the future: The Committee discussed what each member felt had been the most important aspects of the work that had been done up to this point. Most members cited the learning process, and the opportunity to get to know one another and work together toward a common goal.
11. New Business: none
12. Meeting Schedule and Next Meeting Date: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 10 at 6:45 p.m.
13. Citizen Comments of items not on the agenda (15 minute limit): none
14. Adjourn: Melanie made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Jim; unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rachel Davis, 11/4/21