

Commission for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations Meeting Minutes:

January 27, 2016

6:30 – 8:30 PM

Brookline Public Health Building – Denny Room

Commissioners Present: Sandy Batchelder, Malcolm Cawthorne, Wesley Chin, Alex Coleman, Ernest Frey, Brian Myles, Anthony Naro, Kelly Race, Dwain Tyndal, Kea van der Ziel, Ginny Vaz, and Enid Shapiro (via telephone)

Liaisons Present:

Lloyd Gellineau – Director of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations

Bernard Greene – Board of Selectmen

Liaisons Absent:

Ben Chang – School Committee

Michael Gropman – Police

Meeting minutes authored by: Wesley Chin

Meeting called to order by Alex Coleman, Chair at 6:36 PM. AC announced that Enid Shapiro was participating via telephone as per the Open Meeting Law. All votes will be taken by role call, speakers will identify themselves, and Open Meeting Law requirements for remote participation will be followed.

Vote to appoint Wesley Chin to take the minutes for tonight's meeting

- Commission members vote 12-0-0 in favor to adopt meeting minutes with edits
 - In favor: SB, MC, WC, AC, EF, BM, AN, KR, ES, DT, KZ, GV

Special Statement by Bernard Greene

- Bernard Greene was unable to stay for the duration of the meeting, but provided an individual statement in response to the statement read by AC on behalf of CDICR at a BoS Public Hearing on January 5, 2016
- A copy of the BG statement is attached to the end of these minutes

Confirmation of future meeting dates

- CDICR meetings scheduled during school vacation weeks in February and April will be held as originally scheduled on February 17, 2016 and April 20, 2016

Diversity Employment Committee – Update provided by Kelly Race

- Sandra Debow-Huang, Human Resources Director, met with this committee to review feedback from a labor attorney for proposed changes to the Town's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy Statement
- The committee hopes the new EEO statement will be more prominently displayed on the Town's webpage for employment opportunities and that an abbreviated version of the EEO statement will also be included with the description of each job opening
 - The abbreviated version of the EEO statement will read: *"The Town of Brookline is an equal opportunity employer and dedicated to a diverse workforce and strongly encourages applications from protected classes."*
- Commission members vote 12-0-0 in favor to the new EEO statement with minor changes proposed by CDICR members:
 - In favor: SB, MC, WC, AC, EF, BM, AN, KR, ES, DT, KZ, GV
- Commission members vote 12-0-0 in favor to the new abbreviated EEO statement to be included with the description of each job opening
 - In favor: SB, MC, WC, AC, EF, BM, AN, KR, ES, DT, KZ, GV

Vote to Adopt Meeting Minute from December 16, 2015

- Commission members vote 8-0-4 in favor to adopt meeting minutes with edits

- In favor: SB, MC, WC, AC, EF, KR, DT, KZ,
- Abstain: BM, AN, ES, GV

Review of Comments Regarding the Police and Fire Racial Climate Survey

- LG distributed a list authored by MC with questions and comments about the survey
- Many members of CDICR voiced the following questions and concerns about the survey:
 - How can a PowerPoint be considered a survey?
 - Why was the response rate so low?
 - Why was there resistance to participate in the survey?
 - Why did so many individuals start the survey, but fail to complete it?
 - What does the PowerPoint tell us about the actual racial climate? And, the potential level of racism?
 - Is the BoS pleased with the results of the survey?
 - What can be done to improve future surveys?

Review and Discussion of the Commission's Statement to the BoS

- AC provides background on letter from Joslin Murphy, Town Counsel, discouraging CDICR from going forward with reading a statement at BoS meeting on January 5, 2016 that was believed by Town Counsel not to be fact based and a later request from Town Counsel to redact the statement
- Discussion was held to discuss CDICR statement and if it should be amended or redacted
- A decision was not reached on how to respond to the request of Town Counsel
- This topic will be discussed further at the next CDICR meeting in February

Vote to Extend terms of Commission Officers by one month

- Commission members vote 11-0-1 in favor to extend the terms of current Commission officers by one month
 - In favor: SB, MC, WC, AC, EF, AN, KR, ES, DT, KZ, GV
 - Abstain: BM

Public Comment

- Neil R. Gordon, Town Meeting Member/Concerned Resident, circulates an individual letter addressed the CDICR and urging it to reconsider its vote on the statement drafted at a meeting held on January 4, 2016 - this statement will be posted with the minutes of this meeting
- Fred Levitan expressed opposition to the January 4 statement of the CDICR

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM by AC.

**SELECTMAN BERNARD GREENE'S STATEMENT
TO THE
DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION**

January 27, 2016

As you know, I am the Board of Selectmen's non-voting designee to this Commission. Tonight I am speaking in my individual capacity as that designee, not for the Board.

Allegations that White police officers in the Brookline Police Department made racist comments to two Black police officers and engaged in racist actions have been made. These are serious allegations that the Board of Selectmen takes very seriously. And as the first African American Selectman in Brookline's history, you know that I especially take them very seriously. The Board is taking active steps to determine the facts and address any problems that we find. I am taking additional steps. If we confirm such comments and actions, after affording everyone their full due process rights, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Unfortunately, early this month this Commission drafted a Statement that was subsequently read at a meeting of the Board of Selectmen on January 5 that has not been helpful to any efforts to deal with these problems. That Statement hurt the Town, it hurt Town institutions, it hurt Town officials, and it hurt private citizens of the Town.

I had originally planned to give a blistering critique of the Commission's Statement and level a stinging rebuke to the Commission for the pathetic process that produced the Statement. But others will do that later in this meeting quite adequately.

I want to go directly to the point of my presence here.

I am respectfully requesting that this Commission vote to rescind the Statement and disavow it to the Selectmen and the public. If that is done, maybe the Commission can begin to play a thoughtful and useful role in assisting the Town to address the serious issues of race that we face, which is one of the things that this Commission was established to do.