

Commission for Diversity, Inclusion & Community Relations

Wednesday, March 17, 6:30 - 8:30pm

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_Q8M1zSk0TsqC4A8yQWpBqA

Or an H.323/SIP room system:

H.323: 161.199.138.10 (US West) or 161.199.136.10 (US East)

Meeting ID: 161 231 9289

Passcode: 56241311

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

AGENDA

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| 6:30 - 6:40 | Welcome & Vote on Minutes of February CDICR Meeting |
| 6:40 - 7:00 | Presentation from Brookline Library Trustees requesting to send a Liaison to CDICR
- Q & A, and Possible Vote |
| 7:00 - 7:15 | Public Comment |
| 7:15 - 8:15 | Discussion & Possible Vote on a CDICR Statement in Support of Select Board Member Raul Fernandez pertaining to comments by Dr. Fernandez, comments by two police officers, and by the Select Board during Select Board meetings on Jan. 12, 2021; Jan. 19, 2021; and subsequent statements by the Brookline Police Chief and Police Union
Statement is located on the bottom of this agenda. |
| 8:15 - 8:30 | Discussion of CDICR Goals for 2021 |

Statement

DRAFT: CDICR Response to Public Attacks on Raul Fernandez for CDICR 3/17/2021 Meeting

As members of the Commission for Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations, we stand in full support of Select Board member Dr. Raul Fernandez. No individual should

suffer the abuse such as that which was directed at Dr. Fernandez in response to the statements made by the President of the Brookline Police Association (BPA), Detective Michael Keaveney, and by his colleague, Sergeant Casey Hatchett, during the public comment period of the January 19 Select Board meeting. The following day, Detective Keaveney also posted a copy of the BPA's January 19th letter to the Select Board on their Facebook page. In the days immediately following the January 19th meeting, and the January 20th Facebook post, Dr. Fernandez and his family began to legitimately fear for their safety, receiving multiple threats of bodily harm.

On January 19, Dr. Fernandez was accused by Detective Keaveney of making "some of the most divisive and intolerant comments I've ever heard from a public figure." In his letter to the Select Board, Detective Keaveney continued, "While everyone has a right to their opinion, he [Dr. Fernandez] politicized the situation, and demonized police officers as Trump supporters..." "He should not have labeled us as a whole and in doing so is sending a message to the community that we are a "clear and present danger." "Was it really worth it to put a target on their backs [BPD officers] to serve his own personal agenda?" Dr. Fernandez was also accused of making comments "clearly directed to incite and rally those who hate law enforcement." And that "he has made his mission to inflict damage on the town." Sergeant Hatchett characterized Dr. Fernandez's comments as "hateful, insidious, and dangerous rhetoric," and that "it was yet another meeting that SB Member Fernandez launched an assault on the character and integrity of the Brookline police for something we had nothing to do with." Both Detective Keaveney and Sergeant Hatchett concluded that Dr. Fernandez's comments lumped all Brookline police officers as Trump supporters and "portrayed all of us as racist."

Select Board Members as well as Detective Keaveney (January 19th letter) rightly condemned the January 6th assault and the "terrible acts of violence that took place at the U.S. Capitol" in Washington, D.C. as well as the hateful speech that was unleashed on Select Board member Fernandez, separate from, but following the comments made by the two members of the BPD during the January 19 Select Board meeting. In a February 1 Facebook post, the author indicated that "The Brookline Police Union vehemently condemns any and all communication (derogatory and hateful messages) made to him (SB Member Fernandez) or his family."

Aside from Dr. Fernandez, the other Select Board members have been conspicuously silent on the inflammatory and baseless rhetoric used by the police officers in both their January 19 letter to the Select Board, as well as in their statements made during the January 19 public comment period.

We therefore call on the other four members of the Select Board (in their dual roles as Brookline's elected executives and police commissioners) as well as on Acting Chief Mark Morgan to go beyond their condemnation of the public and private harassment suffered by SB member Fernandez as well as their general statements of support for Dr. Fernandez, to publicly (reject?) (condemn?) (denounce?) (repudiate?) the inaccurate comments made by the two BPD officers on January 19.

In addition, we ask that the Select Board and the Brookline Police take the concrete action of investigating whether any members of the Brookline community may have contributed directly or indirectly to the harassment of Dr. Fernandez following the January 19th statements.

For Dr. Fernandez and his family, as well as for the entire Brookline community, words alone are insufficient. Actions matter.