

Brookline Commission for Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations Meeting

March 18, 2020 - 6:30-8:30pm

Commissioners present: Irving Allen, Sandy Batchelder, Malcolm Cawthorne, Jessica Chicco, Malcolm Doldrom, Joan Lancourt, Eloise Lawrence, Robert Lepson, Mariah Nobrega, Kelly Race, Kea van der Ziel. **Liaisons present:** Lloyd Gellineau, Raul Fernandez (Select Board)

Not present: Emre Muftu (BHS), Sharon Abramowitz (School Committee), Casey Hatchett (Police), Steven Laduzinski

Meeting called to order at 6:32pm.

Rollcall: Kea - present; Eloise – present; Irving – present; Jessica-present; Kelly-present; Malcolm C-present; Malcolm D-present; Joan-present; Raul-present; Sandy-present; Bob-present; Lloyd-present; Mariah-present.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the January 22, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously by rollcall vote.

February Training Follow Up

There was general agreement that the training was useful, our learning and getting better at talking about issues of diversity and inclusion with each other will help us when talking about these issues out in the community. It was a good beginning, but there is much more work to be done to make it meaningful and translate it into actions. Many expressed an interest in doing more work like this, and Holly is willing to facilitate additional trainings. We discussed the possibility of building something into our April or May meeting. It was also suggested that we incorporate brief related activities into our monthly meetings, and we will explore the possibility of doing a further training retreat sometime over the summer.

WA for Community Complaint Procedure

The charge of the working group to be convened by CDICR is to investigate, research and make recommendations on a Citizen's Complaint Process that would respond to the concerns addressed by WA24. The goal is to encourage the town to create a more formal adjudicatory process to address citizen complaints, and recommend where such a process should be located: currently, the CDICR lacks the necessary expertise to perform such a role, nor does it see itself in that role.

There was a discussion about who should be part of this working group. Suggestions included Arthur Conquest (WA petitioner), the Town's HR Director, someone from the School department, the School's HR Director, etc. No decisions were made as to the working group's composition, but Anne Braga (the Town's Director of HR) joined the call and asked for clarification on the difference between the current system and the process called for by WA24. The distinction is that the current processes don't have an opportunity for adjudication. Next

steps are to form the working group, start meeting, and report back periodically to the Commission.

Mariah moved we establish a working group to develop the community complaint procedure. Seconded by Kea.

Roll call vote: Joan-aye; Bob-aye; Eloise-aye; Irving-aye; Jessica-aye; Kea-aye; Kelly-aye; Malcolm C-no; Malcolm D-aye; Mariah-aye; Sandy-aye. Passes 10-1.

Malcolm C volunteered to do some research on what type of processes other towns have undertaken to craft a complaint process and present at April meeting.

WA for Community Engagement

ODICR is working with 5 interns from the BU School of Public Health who are trying to find out more about how people want the town to communicate with them. Their report should be completed by May, and will be shared with CDICR for input before it is finalized. The report will include recommendations on CDICR's role in the Community Engagement Plan. ODICR and CDICR will also get a chance to weigh in on the Community Engagement Plan during the annual review process.

CDICR Community Engagement Committee

Malcolm D, Kea, Joan, and Mariah are members of the Committee which has met twice. The Committee has 3 SMART goals: (1) encourage precinct relationships by having precinct get-togethers in 50% of the precincts; (2) work to make the town website more user friendly and accessible to multiple parts of the Brookline community; (3) develop a Community Group Inventory (a spreadsheet of resources and community groups in the town that would be searchable/sortable). The first goal is challenging due to public health crisis, the second is ongoing, and the third has become even more important in light of the increased need for community engagement.

WA for Racial Equity Advancement Fund

Meetings of the RAEF TG have been occurring for almost a month. The TF is working on setting up a way a for people to apply for funds coming to the town from the sale of marijuana in Brookline. The Commission reviewed the current language of REAF Guidelines for proposals, and given the stated purpose of the Fund, suggested narrowing of scope to focus specifically on race and not on all historically marginalized groups. The discussion also addressed questions about identifying fiscal sponsors for organizations that are not 501(c)(3) certified.

Update on CDICR/HAB Housing Affordability Forum

The Housing Affordability Stakeholders Forum has been postponed until June or possibly fall due to the pandemic. The Program TF is continuing with its plan for 3 forums: the first, to bring together multiple related constituencies; the second, to examine housing affordability solutions that have worked elsewhere; and third, to create a housing affordability vision for Brookline, and to adapt successful solutions to Brookline's needs. Other activities (i.e. support of

Governor's Housing bill) are ongoing along with Brookline for Everyone and Housing Justice interfaith group.

Update on CDICR Employment Committee

The Committee is working on making corrections and additions to the draft report previously circulated. They are waiting for additional data from Anne Braga in order to give examples of professional titles in each department. They are also adding clarification re: full time employment and where the target numbers come from. They plan to meet with Town Counsel, the Council on Aging, and the Select Board to share these statistics. They also plan to delay their originally planned Strategy Sessions until later in the year and have decided to invite multiple departments, some that are doing a good job, and some that could use info on best practices. Their next meeting on April 14. ODICR will distill their report into an infographic and discuss how to get information out in the community.

Impact of COVID-19 on CDICR Work

It needs to be made clear who can benefit from available resources (i.e. clarify if they are available to those who live in Brookline, work in Brookline, METCO families, etc.). It's important to keep in mind language access issues as resources and information are made available.

The Commission felt the Town needed to go on record in regard to calling out xenophobic language and xenophobic acts that occur in Brookline. Jessica moved that the Commission call upon the Select Board to take a proactive stance against any xenophobic acts and statements targeting Asian individuals with regard to the coronavirus.

Roll call vote: Joan-yes; Jessica-yes; Bob-yes; Eloise-yes; Irving-yes; Kea-aye; Kelly-aye; Malcolm D-aye; Sandy-aye. Unanimously passes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42pm.