

**Brookline Commission for Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations Meeting**  
April 24, 2019 6:30 - 8:30pm Public Health Building – Denny Room (Lower Level)

**Commissioners present:** Sandy Batchelder, Malcolm Cawthorne, Jessica Chicco, Joan Lancourt, Robert Lepson Kelly Race, Kea van der Ziel

**Liaisons present:** Suzanne Federspiel (School Committee), Vishni Samaraweera (BHS), Lloyd Gellineau (Office of Diversity Inclusion and Community Relations & CDO)

**Not present:** Michael Gropman (Police), Bernard Greene (Select Board)

Meeting called to order by Kelly at 6:31pm.

**Meeting Minutes**

Minutes from the March 27, 2019 meeting approved unanimously.

**New Business**

Joan and Bob have been working on reviewing the Commission's by-laws and will be prepared to lead a discussion at the May meeting with a focus on identifying actions the Commission can take.

**Public Hearing**

Article 17: Neil Gordon (TMM1), petitioner, presented on the article which proposes to amend the naming committee bylaws to add a member from CDICR so that it can include the Commission's point of view. The naming committee currently meets only about once a year. If it passes, the WA would take effect upon approval of the AG's office, likely early fall. Commissioners voted unanimously to support Article 17.

Article 19: Anthony Ishak, petitioner, presented on the article which proposes to ban menthol tobacco products from being sold in Brookline. Anthony presented on the high use of e-cigarettes in high schools and at BHS in particular, as well as among middle schoolers, and on the targeting of menthol products to black and LGBTQ communities. A ban would impact about 19 stores in Brookline. One of the purposes of banning flavors and now menthol is to prevent the start of use of tobacco products. Commissioners voted unanimously to support Article 19.

Article 20: Rebecca Stone (TMM3), petitioner, presented on the article which proposes to make menstrual hygiene products available for free in restrooms serving the public in Brookline. Rebecca provided information about cost estimates for implementing the article and rationale for not including staff restrooms at this time, and responded to concerns about theft of products. Commissioners voted unanimously to support Article 20.

Article 27: Mike Offner, petitioner, presented on the article which calls for an apology to Gerald Alston. Mike talked about the moral imperative to atone. Sandy expressed concern with how an apology may impact pending state and federal litigation and the

recommendations of Town Counsel. Public comment was received from Maria Nobrega and Anne Greenwald in support of the article. Commissioners voted 6-1 in favor of supporting Article 27.

Article 28: Kea (TMM15 and Commissioner), petitioner, presented on the article which would adopt a resolution supporting the creation of a state commission to change the flag and seal of Massachusetts. There was a brief discussion of pending state legislation and the position of the Native American community. Commissioners voted unanimously to support Article 28.

Article 29: Mariah Nobrega, petitioner, presented on the article which would adopt a resolution calling for greater diversity among Town Meeting Members. Mariah explained how this article is related to a survey on town engagement that was completed last fall as well as the Racial Justice Summit, and that this resolution would be a first step towards changing the dynamics of recruiting for Town Meeting. Commissioners voted unanimously to support Article 29.

Articles 25 & 26: Lloyd informed the group that Article 25 is now off the table as money has been identified that would cover a large portion of the costs of Article 26. The petitioners were unable to attend this evening but had asked for the CDICR's endorsement. Joan has proposed language to modify Article 26 so that the consultant be required to work within the GARE process.

We had many questions about Article 26 and would like to ask the petitioners directly. Kelly will invite the petitioners to the May meeting. If they are available, we will designate a portion of the meeting to a public hearing.

Commissioners volunteered to write up the endorsements for the warrant articles.

Article 17 - Kelly  
Article 19 - Kea  
Article 20 - Kea  
Article 27 - Kelly  
Article 28 - Jessica  
Article 29 - Bob

Next meeting: Is scheduled for May 15. We will spend one hour reviewing the by-laws and determine how we want to proceed. Perhaps we will have a facilitator at the June meeting for a longer discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.