

## MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING

Commission on Racial Justice and Equity

Thursday, March 4, 2021

7pm

Held Via Zoom

Meeting began at 7pm. In attendance were Zabian Alarcon, Alina Bricklin-Goldstein, Deb Carroll, Tracy-Ann Johnson, Barret Katuna, Sue Oppenheimer, Dave Peniston, Lillian Tanski, Michael Vigeant, Jen Wang

Public comment: Anne Bowman, of 16 Morgan Dr., on behalf of the TALK Social Justice Committee, mentioned the Welles Village Community Event

1. Motion to move agenda item 5 to the top of the agenda to accommodate Mike Vigeant's availability this evening; passed unanimously
2. Discussion: launching RJECC data project with GreatBlue Research

Committee as a whole discussed draft of areas for investigation; MV lead discussion, asked whether given that there are so many areas of focus, we might be better served starting with the Community Survey before moving to a Town Hall discussion format

MV answered a number of members' questions, including those of language and phrasing. MV explained that this can serve as an outline for an online survey instrument

MV explained that historically, a town hall approach has been used to develop instruments; if commission still wants to begin with a town hall, it might make sense to scale down scope of inquiry

MV stated that in a town hall format (online) these questions could still be presented as poll questions. With roughly 5 attendees, such an undertaking would likely take 1.5-2 hours

MV suggested that best path forward would be digital, then to build in other questions, determine what has not been covered in online survey. We could then take "what we learned" from survey and then have a qualitative discussion in a town hall format. We could then be leading discussion from a point of data, rather than opinion.

LT asked to tweak the language on recreation questions to better reflect community's interactions with recreational opportunities in town, supported starting with survey

MV agreed to edits

JW suggested a pilot survey with a small group to test survey format once draft is done; regarding the "language" section, wondered if it might be an opportunity for some "light, baseline education", ensure we are not just talking about "interpersonal racism", wants to include question on whether respondents know anyone who chose not to move to Glastonbury/moved out of Glastonbury because of racism

MV agreed on piloting survey, stated commission members could get a link to data as it came in, offered opportunity to modify questions in real time if they are not working

AG asked to include a question asking residents if they sent their children to non-Glastonbury schools, and if so, why

DC asked to add "real estate" to housing questions, to encompass most likely point of contact for prospective residents

MV asked commission members to send emails with suggested changes

LT liked idea of pilot program. Urged caution in section involving terms/labels, perhaps this should be more open ended?

MV suggested offering definitions and asking respondents if they "thought of this differently" compared to definition given. MV stated we need to "get this detailed and right", and recommended that if this needed to become several surveys, that was fine, goal is to capture info, said GB will create more formal draft of survey

MV Left meeting at 7:50pm

DC introduced Mission Statement drafts to members. Commission discussed drafts and made editorial suggestions. DC said she would get new drafts to members within a few days.

LT offered Communications Working Group update. Several members met with Kathryn Paquette, town communications director. LT said there is ongoing conversation about working with different action groups in town. LT observed that our commission is doing work that is very different than that of other commissions, and thus needs to think carefully about how we map our actions. LT stated there would be monthly communications updates, and that the working group is looking at all the initiatives discussed in previous meetings, trying to determine to what extent we need to work with town staff without overburdening them/to what extent we work independently

JW stated that meeting with Kathryn was very useful, and despite Kathryn's workload, she was very open to working with the commission, offered suggestions on how to better focus communication, encouraged commission to have very specific communications plan

SO noted that Kathryn also said that the town presents all information apolitically, so anything that runs through town needs to fit within these parameters

LT also mentioned Welles Village community opportunity, chance to speak about living in subsidized housing in town, would be in partnership with the Housing Authority, a chance to "help people feel heard, sought out and valued"

LT also stated that she had met with Neil Griffin of the Housing Authority on 3/3 to reach out to residents within Welles Village as potential participants in a conversation and the survey, likely the 1<sup>st</sup> week of June

Motion was made by DC to move item 6 to next commission meeting, when MV will be in attendance

JW asked whether commission members should be meeting with town departments to build relationships, make data collection “less transactional”

SO asked whether surveys would be given to department heads to distribute

LT explained that commission needs to come up with very specific asks regarding data collection (secondary data) for research. Much of this, if not all, would need to go through the Town Manager and Superintendent of Schools, rather than directly to town staff

Motion made by DC to approve minutes from 2/18/2021 RJEC meeting, seconded by LT, unanimously approved with correction made to spelling of Tracy-Ann Johnson’s last name

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15pm