

Resolution on the Town of Glastonbury's response to the public health crisis of racism

WHEREAS, racism is a social construct with no biological basis that unfairly advantages specific individuals and groups while unfairly disadvantaging other individuals and groups, and racism creates poverty, restricts opportunity and saps the strength of communities through the waste of human resources,

WHEREAS, racism has been a problem throughout American history, is cyclical, and can worsen without efforts to eliminate it,

WHEREAS, America's history of racism created persistent discrimination in American systems, leading to continued disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment, transportation, public safety, socioeconomic status, criminal justice and public health,

WHEREAS, the public health divide between America's white majority and many racial minorities has been highlighted and exacerbated in Connecticut and the United States by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to higher risk and mortality for Black and Hispanic communities throughout the United States,

WHEREAS, segregation is a driving force of systemic racism, and economic segregation in Connecticut correlates highly with racial segregation,

WHEREAS, the future prosperity, sustainability and wellbeing of the Town of Glastonbury depends upon Glastonbury creating and maintaining an equitable and welcoming community for all residents and visitors regardless of race,

WHEREAS, the Town of Glastonbury has shown an interest in anti-racism and equitable access to opportunity through long term support of community programs such as the Glastonbury ABC House and the MLK initiative, and through support of the Glastonbury Public Schools' participation in Connecticut's Open Choice program for public school students,

WHEREAS, The Glastonbury Town Council recognizes the opportunity at this time to reiterate and continue Glastonbury's efforts to be as welcoming and equitable a town as possible for all Glastonbury residents and visitors,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN OF GLASTONBURY THAT

1. The Glastonbury Town Council shall appoint a Commission on Racial Justice and Equity, composed of nine members. This commission shall include members of the Town Council from each political party and members appointed by the Town Council from the Glastonbury public. The Town Manager shall provide support and report information to the Commission as needed. The purpose of this commission will be to conduct a wide ranging public survey on racism and the experiences of Glastonbury residents, hold public hearings to hear from the community on issues of racism and equity, and make recommendations to the Town Council for possible action to promote racial equity in all aspects of public and community life in Glastonbury. The Glastonbury Commission on Racial Justice and Equity shall hold hearings and collect data on

minority residents' experiences of Policing, Education, Recreation, and Housing in Glastonbury, as well as other concerns brought forward by Glastonbury residents or Commission members. The Commission shall then provide written reports of their findings to the Glastonbury Town Council, as well as recommendations for action as necessary. The Commission shall submit initial findings and recommendations to the Town Council after no less than three months and no more than one year after the Commission is formed.

2. The Glastonbury Town Council affirms a Right to Belong for residents and visitors in our public, open, and recreational spaces and facilities regardless of race or socioeconomic status. The Town Manager shall prepare a report to the Council on Town ordinances and protocols governing the use of town-owned public, open and recreational spaces and facilities, and identify for the Council any ordinances or protocols that the Town Council should review in light of the affirmation of a Right to Belong. Following the Town Manager's report, the Glastonbury Town Council will conduct a review of signage and policies governing use of town-owned public, open and recreational spaces to ensure equitable access while maintaining necessary safety protocol. The Town of Glastonbury will install new signage at public open and recreational spaces to reinforce that all are welcome to share in these community resources regardless of race or socioeconomic status. Additionally, the Town of Glastonbury will use public communications channels to communicate this to the town and the broader community within Hartford County.
3. The Town Manager, with the support of the Glastonbury Chief of Police, shall report to the Town Council regarding what measures the Glastonbury Police Department takes to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all residents and visitors by the Glastonbury Police Department. This will include information on hiring, training, community policing and local partnerships, and data currently available on crime rates and traffic stops. This report will provide necessary information for the Town Council and the Commission on Racial Justice and Equity as they begin their charge.
4. The Town of Glastonbury shall continue to identify opportunities to enhance diversity and ensure open and equitable principles across our leadership, staffing and contracting.