

Meeting Minutes | Wayland Human Rights, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (HRDEIC)

April 4, 2023 7:30 pm - 8:45 pm

Meeting Co-Occurring with Great Presenters Series at Wayland Public Library

Members Present in Person: Yamini Ranjan (Chair), Karen Blumenfeld (Vice-Chair), Mei-Ling Ellerman, Jessica Schendel (taking minutes). **Member Present via Zoom:** Heather Pineault

Call to Order: Courtney Michael of the Wayland Free Public Library introduced Yamini and Karen as speakers, and Yamini called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. A roll call was taken to verify a quorum, and Karen read the Indigenous Land Acknowledgment.

Presentation: Yamini thanked the Wayland Library for the opportunity to present the work of the HRDEIC as part of the Library's Great Presenters Series. She explained that the HRDEIC is a group of people with distinct and diverse backgrounds, unified by a shared commitment to serve Wayland and advocate for justice, equity, inclusion and belonging in all spheres of Town life. Members of the committee were named.

A brief history of the HRDEIC was provided, and the purpose and structure of the HRDEIC were explained. Then the presenters described the HRDEIC's work since its inception in 2021, including:

- Making policy and program recommendations
- Spreading awareness
- Obtaining grant support
- Collaborating with other communities' human rights entities
- Educating the community

The presenters acknowledged and thanked the many entities in town with which the HRDEIC has collaborated and invited others to collaborate. Then they described current efforts underway, including:

- A community reporting line to be established as a portal for concerns and complaints
- A town equity assessment to be initiated within the coming year
- A Community Conversation on Race Amity featuring former METCO director Manuel J. Fernandez
- A reading of the HRDEIC's Indigenous Land acknowledgment at the Town's upcoming Annual Town Meeting
- A proposed community healing program to be offered in partnership with the Department of Justice's Community Relations Service (SPIRIT Program).
- A proposed collaboration with the Wayland Historical Society and Stopping Stones to understand and memorialize the history of slavery in Wayland

Finally, the presenters announced the HRDEIC's first annual Community Multicultural Festival to be held Sunday, May 21, 2023, at the Wayland High School Field House from 1-5 pm. Co-sponsors include Arts Wayland, Chinese American Association of Wayland, Energize Wayland, Greater Boston Chinese Cultural Association, Wayland Race Amity Day Committee, Weston Wayland Interfaith Action Group, Wayland Interfaith Leaders Association, and more. Community members of all ages were encouraged to attend.

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Questions: Yamini invited questions and comments from participants in person and on Zoom. Questions included the following:

1. Along with working to ensure that the land acknowledgment is read aloud at Town Meeting, the presenters were asked what can be done to work with the schools to change the current name of the teams, the 'The Wayland Warriors.' The presenters encouraged people to talk with school administrators about their concerns and to support the [MA Indigenous Legislative Agenda](#), which includes proposed legislation to ban the use of Native American mascots by public schools.
2. The presenters were asked whether a Town cultural calendar could be created. The presenters hope the town will adopt the public schools' cultural calendar.
3. The presenters were asked how the HRDEIC has responded to the current leadership crisis in the schools. The presenters answered that the committee has offered recommendations in three public statements to the Select Board: A *Statement on the Racist Graffiti*, a *Statement on Policing*, and a *Statement on the Superintendent Investigation*. The Statements can be viewed in the [News and Announcements](#) section of the [HRDEIC web page](#). Two of the HRDEIC's recommendations - a town equity assessment and appointment of a Civil Rights Officer in the Police Department - have already been agreed to.

Yamini and Karen were thanked for their presentation. The meeting was adjourned by a unanimous roll call vote at 8:45.

Documents discussed during the meeting:

- Powerpoint deck: Great Presenters Presentation April 4, 2023 (attached)