

Meeting Minutes
Wayland Human Rights, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee
November 17, 2021, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Members Present via Zoom: Dovie King (Chair), Karen Blumenfeld, Kylie Byrne, Adrienne Correia, Isabella Donovan (taking minutes), Richard Lee, Jenny Levine, Janot Mendler de Suarez, Ingrid Palacios, Heather Pineault, Jessica Schendel, Jane Sciacca, Yauwu Tang, Isabel Xue. Not present: Yamini Ranjan, Steve Wynne.

1. **Call to Order:** Adrienne Correia made the preliminary meeting statement and Dovie King called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. A roll call to verify attendance was made. No Public Comment was made.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Karen noted typo in John Bugbee's name, asked to remove a sentence in item 6 and improve neutrality in Item 8. A motion was made by Yauwu, seconded by Jessica, to delete "abruptly" and replace 'on the eve of launching the line on Oct 1st' with "to obtain review by town counsel", and remove sentence about resource guide. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote and the minutes are approved.
3. **Discussion on Agenda Item #3: updates**
 - **Native American Heritage Month:** Ingrid reported on Our Wayland community conversation. Dovie attended Wayland Library Native American History event.
 - **Domestic Violence Panel:** Ingrid reported excellent presentation, data and statistics. Karen read "rave reviews" from Lauren Dunne Astley Memorial Fund.
 - **Community Policing Forum:** Dovie, Ingrid, Richard & Janot expressed disappointment with the scheduling conflict with the domestic violence panel, concern with the process and the need for the Town to do better to avoid double-booking events on the same night.
 - **Police Chief search:** Dovie reported that she has been asked to serve on the hiring committee, which will interview 4 candidates next week. Dovie noted this resulted from the public comment last month requesting HRDEIC involvement. Richard recognized its importance.
 - **Massachusetts Human Rights Coalition:** Karen shared other towns' initiatives on housing, public safety, mental health, Black history/walking tour, lived experience, LGTBQ events, neighborhood dialogue, and indigenous awareness and legislative initiatives. She mentioned that Wayland could consider Gov. Baker's *Best Practices Task Force on Combating Hate Crimes* recommendation that every public safety department designate a Civil Rights Officer.
4. **Discussion and vote on Agenda Item #4, Indigenous Land Acknowledgement:** Karen read the proposed statement from the meeting packet and suggested acknowledgement be added to meeting agendas. Richard suggested review by an American Indian leader and using it as a forward to materials we produce but it is too long to read aloud. Ingrid noted community leaders in the Native American History event expressed that land acknowledgement is meaningful. Jessica and Karen suggested shorter versions for meetings and public events; Janot, Richard, Jenny and Yauwu agreed, adding to put it on the website; Isabel recommended including a referral to learning resources with the statement and Dovie agreed. Jenny and Ingrid stated that words should lead to action. Jane highlighted acknowledging the ongoing history of Native Americans who have lived in Wayland. Richard made a motion to adopt the statement for meetings and events, and develop a concrete action program. The motion was seconded by Janot and voted unanimously by roll call vote.
5. **Discussion on Agenda #5, phone intake line and possible vote to submit letter to Select Board:** Dovie stated that although ready since Oct 1st to provide this key resource to the community, and having repeatedly reached out to the Town Administrator, including through Adam as liaison to the Selectboard, the continuing lack of response feels disrespectful. Richard noted that liability concerns were previously raised when the TA's Racial Justice Advisory group conferred with town counsel. Dovie said Belmont has been offering this phone and email service for years, noting when she requested a phone line there it was provided by the police dept. Janot suggested asking Adam to facilitate getting the phone line set up. Dovie proposed the committee write a letter to the Selectboard. Seath interjected it may be better to speak with Louise directly. Dovie expressed appreciation but has been trying for three months. Richard, Karen and Heather noted with concern additional obstacles such as limitations on meeting times, lack of technical support and scheduling issues. Heather mentioned the need to get a link set up for public access to the resource guide.
7:04pm Town Administrator Louise Miller joined the meeting and was acknowledged by the chair

Louise spoke about liability issues with taking calls, and that she had not received procedural info. She announced that John Bugbee now serves as her appointee to work with the committee, asking that he be invited to meetings. Dovie noted that John attended but left the last meeting early, is not present tonight, and that Town staff manage the distribution list.

7:08pm Louise Miller left the meeting

Dovie confirmed having sent Louise the written procedures multiple times with no feedback. Heather suggested approaching the Selectboard “chair to chair” and Janot suggested using all channels: sending a letter, making public comment, and meeting with the board. Jane and Yauwu noted that public comment is not the right channel for a town body. Dovie asked for committee members to help; Richard volunteered to help write a letter for consideration at our next meeting. Heather will try to get on the Selectboard agenda.

6. **Discussion on Agenda #6, student member reports:**

- Isabella Donovan shared a list of recommendations shared by a WHS teacher for DEI curricular improvement, diverse hiring, and teacher training.
- Isabel Xue shared activism at her school (Middlesex) in response to disinviting author Nikole Hannah-Jones, starting the Claim Our Voice movement seeking more transparency and student input, and asked for support from the committee in raising awareness and publicizing.
- Adrienne noted similar issues at her school (Rivers) noting students participating in “Weston Walk” at Regis are working on incorporating land recognition and more indigenous curricula.

Dovie offered to work with the student members to highlight the role students are playing and asked for reports as a regular agenda item. Ingrid expressed appreciation for student members’ activism in their respective schools. Janot mentioned former WHS teacher Dan Frio’s book *Classroom Voices on Education and Race* includes a section on Wayland student experiences, noting the library was reluctant to host an author talk; Isabel said the book is “unavailable” in Wayland schools. Richard asked about a WHS student DEI committee to partner with; Isabella will talk to the Power club. Adrienne offered to get Rivers’ Diversity Club to help out at Middlesex. Isabel shared Claim our Voice plans including to donate copies of *The 1619 Project* and asked for fundraising/awareness support; Dovie asked Isabel for the url: claimourvoice@mx. Ingrid suggested a spring community forum as a student platform to air issues and challenges, and Dovie agreed.

7. **Discussion on Agenda #8, Discussion and possible vote about community resource guide:**

A motion was made by Jessica, seconded by Yauwu, to adopt the resource guide and post it on the HRDEIC website, and that it may be updated when needed without further vote. The motion passed by roll call vote, with 1 Nay by Richard. Karen and Jessica will send pdf to Dovie for posting to the public.

8. **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance:** Karen asked about making a statement for International Human Rights Day, November 10; Dovie suggested doing a program next year. Yauwu raised his committee agenda item request; Dovie will get it on the next meeting agenda.

9. **Next meeting Date:** Wednesday, December 15, 2021, 6:00 - 8:00 pm, remote by Zoom

10. **Adjourn:** Karen made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Janot; it passed by roll call vote with 2 Nays, from Ingrid and Yauwu. The meeting ended at 8:06 pm.