

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

November 15, 2022 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Members present via Zoom: Karen Blumenfeld (Committee Vice-Chair, meeting chair tonight), Heather Pineault (taking notes), Steve Wynne (Clerk), Yauwu Tang, Jessica Schendel, Mei-Ling Ellerman, John Bugbee (Acting Town Manager)

Members absent: Yamini Ranjan (Committee Chair), Isabel Xue, Janot Mendler

1. Call to Order: Jessica read the Indigenous Land Acknowledgement. Karen took a roll call to verify a quorum and called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

2. Public Comment: none

3. Vote to approve meeting minutes Oct 18, 2022 and November 1, 2022: Oct 18, 2022 corrections: #4 add "Wayland" Cultural Council correction, and same for Yauwu's grant application at the end of the paragraph. #8 Announcements - Jessica's announcement was a community forum. Steve will amend the minutes. Steve moved to accept the minutes as amended. Heather seconded. Roll call vote with unanimous approval. For the November 1, 2022 minutes, Jessica moved to accept the minutes and Steve seconded. Roll call vote with unanimous approval.

Note: We passed over Item 4 until later in the meeting; there was no Item 5 on the agenda.

6. Discussion and possible vote on co-sponsorship of programs with the Wayland Library: We received from the Library a list of possible events to co-sponsor. Heather made a motion and Steve seconded to support the slate of co-sponsorship events with the library and to authorize Karen and Jessica to continue to coordinate these and other events with the library. Roll call vote passed unanimously.

7. Discussion and possible vote to recommend a town-wide equity assessment: The first paragraph of our charge directs us to "conduct equity assessments and audits in collaboration with appropriate Town officials..." Former Acting Town Manager, Stephen Crane, recommended conducting a town-wide equity audit and collecting data before trying to establish a DEI position in town. Arlington has an RFP that we can look at as a model. They also are doing a school equity audit at the same time. John Bugbee can work to get funds into the FY24 budget that is currently being built.

John explained that an equity audit would help us create a baseline as a starting point. The request for this funding would be part of the capital budget or in the operating budget. The town would examine different audits, write an RFP and then award a contract. John thinks Arlington's audit was "not to exceed" \$100,000. John thinks for a town our size the cost will be closer to \$50-60,000. John said it would be helpful for this committee to endorse this idea as a part of the FY24 budget in order to have a road map moving forward. John would want support from the committee in writing the RFP. The Massachusetts Human Rights Coalition has a list of some firms that do this work. Yauwu moved and Jessica seconded a motion to recommend that the town include a town wide equity audit in the town budget. Unanimous roll call vote in favor.

4. Discussion and possible vote on community reporting line: We reviewed revisions for 1) the Procedural document, 2) Responder intake form, 3) Incident online form, and 4) online web copy with no additional revisions. We also reviewed the 5) Incident Reporting Spreadsheet and made minor edits to the copy.

Our follow up questions:

- *Will there be a privacy agreement for anyone staffing the line?*
- *Where are we keeping the intake notes in order to maintain privacy?*
- *We will need a separate conversation about process issues, privacy and tracking of actions.*

Heather moved and Yauwu seconded to approve these documents, giving Steve and Mei-Ling permission to make any final non-substantive edits. Roll call vote passed unanimously.

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Discussion re start date and a finalized conversation about privacy, physical storage of the paperwork and tracking data. Mei-Ling and Steve will propose suggestions regarding the data and paperwork. We agreed to do a soft launch for December 1st to test run the phone line. We will follow up at our next meeting regarding final process.

8. Update on multicultural festival and festival promotion: Yauwu explained that he and Janot are working to coordinate a planning meeting in the next week or two. Yauwu wants to broaden the working committee so there is diverse representation from throughout the community.

9. Discussion and possible vote on response to 11/10/22 School Committee Meeting regarding Dr. Omar Easy:

Karen gave background and current status, confirming why HRDEIC is addressing this topic. The HRDEIC did not discuss specific allegations. Karen proposed that we brainstorm recommendations with questions about how we deal with situations like this in town and send a letter to the Select Board. For example:

- *For conflicts that include racial or other identity based conflicts, have other channels within the community been fully exhausted - mediation, restorative justice - before elevating to a legal level?*
- *Does our town have HR resources that could be used first (internal resources)?*
- *Do we have standard policies and procedures for dealing with complaints so that they are not handled case by case? And has the conflict resolution process been designed using a Diversity Equity Inclusion Belonging lens?*
- *With identity based issues, who is going to use a racial/equity based lens to evaluate the situation?*
- *When inside or outside professionals are brought in to bring a racial equity lens to a situation, do they have deep training in DEI issues?*
- *When conflicts arise that involve racial or other identity based conflicts or issues, who is not at the table who should be?*
- *Do all people in town who are in positions of authority or in evaluative roles have ongoing and extensive specific DEIB / cultural competency / implicit bias training?*
- *Has a school wide equity audit been done?*
- *What does the town and schools do to attract and retain Black, Indigenous and People of Color?*
- *Do the town and schools conduct independent exit interviews to inform future practices?*
- *Do schools or the town do "stay" interviews for Black, Indigenous and People of Color who stay? John does not know if the town side does this. He will ask Kate, the HR director.*
- *Is it possible for the town and schools to share some HR resources, rather than keeping them siloed, or at least share information and resources?*

Steve moved and Heather seconded that Karen write a first draft, based on her introduction to the topic and questions generated above, and then share it with Yamini and Steve. John said we could read the letter at the next Select Board meeting. Committee members should send comments regarding this matter to Karen alone. Unanimous roll call vote in favor.

10. Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance: none

11. Adjourn: Jessica moved to adjourn, and Steve seconded. Unanimous roll call vote in favor.

Next Meeting Date: Dec 20, 2022, at 6:00 pm

Documents discussed:

- List of library co-sponsorship opportunities
- Community reporting line drafts: (1) Procedural document, 2) Responder intake form, 3) Incident online form and 4) online web copy, and 5) Incident Reporting Spreadsheet