



Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee

Meeting Minutes

February 15, 2023 at 6:30 pm
Woodbridge Library Meeting Room

Present: Co-Chairs Ellen Scalettar and Tahera Parvez, Steven Lawrence, Sofia Morales, Lor Ferrante Fernandes, David Franklin, Ke Xu, Javier Aviles, Mohini Ranganathan (joined 7:20 pm)

1. Chair Scalettar called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. She announced that First Selectman Beth Heller appointed Tahera Parvez as the committee co-chair. A warm welcome was extended to the new DEI Committee member Javier Aviles.
2. **Opening Circle**
Steven Lawrence opened the meeting with news relating of the conviction of the Buffalo, NY mass-shooting gunman. Discussion ensued.
3. **2023 Vision and Goals**
The Committee discussed setting realistic goals for the year. The following areas of potential focus were considered:
 - Sharing Experience Woodbridge Survey results with the community
 - Keeping Black Lives Matter a central focus
 - Continue with community dialogue via Woodbridge Reading in the Community or similar community group discussions
 - Woodbridge Like Me Day
 - Community outreach
 - Other DEI related experiences
4. **Experiencing Woodbridge Survey - Next Steps**
Potential next steps for sharing the survey results with the Woodbridge community were discussed.
5. **Woodbridge Like Me Day (WLM)- 2022 Review and Planning for 2023**
WLM was a great community success with a turn out of over 300 people. WLM will be held on the same day as the Recreation Department's Annual Road Race is 2023. Engaging other community members in the planning of the event was discussed.
6. **Mosaic: Reading in Community**
The Antoinette Brim-Bell poetry reading was impactful. To maximize DEI event attendance, the need to be mindful of other town-wide events and activities when planning future events was noted. In addition to readings, other ideas included community discussions, panels, and films.

7. **Community Outreach and Communication**

-The Experiencing Woodbridge Survey results were presented to the Board of Selectmen. The committee's goal is to continue to share survey findings.

-Pot Luck Dinner at Amity HS was an impressive, student-led initiative. Steve, Tahera, and Mohini represented DEI at the event.

-Connecting with local DEI initiatives was discussed along with building a network of community partners.

-It was noted that the next Orange DEI Task Force meeting is scheduled for March 8 at 7 pm at the High Plains Community Center in Orange.

8. **September & October Minutes**

Lor Ferrante Fernandes motioned to accept September and October Minutes; Ke Xu seconded. Motion passed.

Vote Yes: Ellen Scalettar, Tahera Parvez, Steven Lawrence, Sofia Morales, Lor Ferrante Fernandes, David Franklin, Ke Xu, Mohini Ranganathan

Abstain: Javier Aviles

9. **2023 Committee Meeting Schedule**

Ellen Scalettar motioned to accept the Meeting Schedule (third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm); Mohini Ranganathan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Vote Yes: Ellen Scalettar, Tahera Parvez, Steven Lawrence, Sofia Morales, Lor Ferrante Fernandes, David Franklin, Ke Xu, Mohini Ranganathan, Javier Aviles

10. **Volunteer for Next Opening Circle:** Javier Aviles

11. **Other Updates and Announcements**

The possibility of having an Amity HS student representative from the Diversity in Action group attend DEI meetings was discussed.

12. Meeting adjourned 7:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted: *Toni Belenski*