

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2023

Opening

Meeting with representatives of the Shrewsbury Library was called to order at 6:32 pm on March 13, 2023

Present

Cinthia DosSantos Mesquita, Chair
Bindu Gupta, Vice Chair
Freddi Koss, Member
Pankaj Adaval, Member
Holly MillerShank, Member
Deborah Lebeaux, Chair of the Library Board of Trustees
Priya Ranthnam, Library Director
Beth Casavant, Overseer/Member
Adeola Mbaneme, Member
George Hanna, Clerk

First Motion on the Agenda

- Meeting with the Chair of the Library Board of Trustees and Library Director regarding a Town Land Acknowledgment Statement.
- Library town land acknowledgment statement introductions and acknowledgment statements were presented:
 - While aiming to make a statement, made brochures on the Nipmuc tribe people and Native American literature. Also promote Nipmuc art and performers through events at the Shrewsbury Library.
 - Research was done and brought to the board of trustees awaiting approval, seeking to work with the town through the DEIB Committee in finding a way to use the statement effectively.
- Hope to develop programs, curriculums on the Nipmuc people and seek to work with the town on working with the town.
- Question: Is there a designated aisle for Nipmuc literature in the library currently?
- Question: What are other libraries doing with this?
 - Chelmsford made a statement while some other libraries just have it on their website and through focus on having books with accurate information.
- Suggestion to move to town wide would be best for the pamphlets to be instilled in other locations.

Future Motion #1

- Adeola suggested for the Nipmuc people to be further contacted on how they would want to be honored and have their culture spread and possibly organize a future meeting together. Was agreed on by the committee.

Second Motion on Agenda

- Order to move to the second item of the agenda to review and discuss “Why Statements” for joining the DEIB Committee

Third Motion on Agenda - New Topic

- Third part of agenda to review and discuss future spring programming events
- YMCA, Scouting troops brought up as examples of diversity in the community, and idea of two separate ideas, systemic things beneath celebrating diversity.
- Holly motioned to share places in Shrewsbury where there are diversity or lack thereof.
- Bindhu suggested gathering different celebrations together from different cultures in the form of a festival and brought up the need of planning in advance for these types of events, could also be during the Summer.
- Beth presented an edit to instead start smaller and organize something to a smaller extent, have a booth at spirit of Shrewsbury and maybe limit something to the common green.
- Idea of making it family oriented, could have something like kids going around with passports to get stamps from a variety of different tents.
- Question of how we would get our own tent at Selco and suggestion of having plants at tent for Earth day.
- Adeola proposed an idea of Juneteenth celebrating or lighting up the bridge. Holly brought up the idea of also finding a few speakers as well.
- Holly proposed handing out a printed out colored diversity calendar at the Selco tent, Bindhu proposed a QR code to gain emails and make an email list.

Future Motion #2

- Facilitate an event for Juneteenth, possibly on the common green.
- Further idea to split into a few groups, subcommittees, to better make a plan for a Juneteenth event.
- Freddy, Cinthia, and Adeola volunteered to further research into a Juneteenth event.

Motion to Final Item on Agenda

- To review Correspondence - Email from Santiago, School and District Improvement, Adeola, Bindhu, and Pankaj all volunteered to be contacted.

Agenda for Next Meeting

- Possibly trying to get in touch to speak about the Land Acknowledgement Statement.
 - Freddi agreed to working with Cinthia on outreach for the Statement.
 - Discuss findings on the statement
- Review and Discuss proposal of Juneteenth subcommittee on event on Juneteenth.

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Andeola and seconded by Bindhu. Meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM by Cinthia Mesquita. The next meeting is scheduled for April 10th at 6:30 PM.