

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee Meeting

April 10, 2023

Present: Ms. Bindu Gupta, Mr. Pankaj Adaval, Mx. Freddi Koss, Ms. Holly Millershank

Absent: Mr. George Hanna, Ms. Adeola Mbaneme, Ms. Cinthia Mesquita

Also Present: Ms. Taylor M. Galusha, Principal Department Assistant - Office of the Select Board and Town Manager

1. Call to Order by Bindu Gupta at 6:46pm
 - a. Substitute scribe: Holly MillerShank
2. Motion to Accept the minutes of January 9th, 2023, February 13th, 2023, and March 13th 2023
 - a. Moved by Bindu Gupta, seconded by Freddi Koss, approved
3. Review and discuss land acknowledgment statement
 - a. Clarification that our role as the DEIB committee would be recommending the approval of the land acknowledgment statement as well as recommendations on how the town might engage the implementation of the statement.

Ideas for town implementation of a land acknowledgment statement:

1. Encourage and empower communication across stakeholders (library, school, community groups) to advertise awareness of indigenous peoples programming being offered regionally.
2. Put information on the Nipmuc People at trailheads / parks within the community.
3. Encourage development of school programming appropriate to each grade level related to indigenous people, particularly local tribes. Creating opportunities for educators to gain further information about local tribes.
4. Create fliers with information on the land acknowledgment statement available in public locations, QR codes utilized to keep info up to date and connect to a current website. We would recommend self-guided reflection questions as part of the document. The hope for the questions would be for greater introspection and self-reflected action.
5. Highlight Nipmuc and other indigenous art in temporary and permanent public spaces
6. Read the land acknowledgment statement at certain public meetings
7. Include reference to the land acknowledgement setting in public documents

- b. We recommend continued conversation with the Nipmuc people. The process should take the time it needs to be correct with strong relationships and participation. We are interested in upcoming presentation of Nipmuc artifacts.
4. Review and discussion planning for a Juneteenth event
- a. A subcommittee on Juneteenth was formed at the last meeting- from tonight's meeting we'd like to ask the subcommittee to follow up if the library is planning a Juneteenth event and/or if we could host on there. And to follow up on the idea of a panel discussion.
 - b. A flyer or pamphlet could be developed to hand out for further resources about Juneteenth or have a QR code linked to the DEIB website.
 - c. The library will be closed on Juneteenth. We may want to host a panel discussion on a day when the library is open. We need to find the right people to be on a panel. We may also want to recognize a contemporary or history person / group related to Juneteenth.
 - d. The Senior Center would be an option as well but all of the town buildings will be closed on the 19th. The Indian Society building may be available for the 19th (Pankaj will check on availability).
5. Old Business
- a. The town SELCO event is already established for this year, April 29th at Dean Park from 9:00-12:00. We can ask for a booth / table at a future event.
6. New Business
- a. The Senior Center would like to host a multi-cultural event and requested a member of DEIB attend, Holly MillerShank is available. The initial meeting will be at 4/26/23 at 9:30am. No date set yet for the event.
 - b. There are other multi-cultural events taking place across the town. There is one at Paton Elementary on 4/26/23 at 6pm. Bindu will follow up on a student-led multi-cultural event at Oak Middle School in late May or early June.
 - c. Next Meeting's Agenda: Any updates on land acknowledgement, Juneteenth Event, Senior Center Event, School Multi-cultural events, development of a DEIB resources website.
7. Adjourn at 7:34- Bindu made motion, Freddie seconded. Approved.

Next Meeting May 8th 6:30pm