

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION TASK FORCE
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TOWN OF SHREWSBURY

REMOTE MEETING

Google Meet Dial: [+1 929-287-3884]; Pin #: [510 122 601#]

Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building

100 Maple Avenue

Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545-5398

MINUTES

Monday, August 9, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Important Notice: Pursuant to Senate Bill 2475 signed into law by Governor Baker on June 16, 2021 Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, this meeting of the **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force** will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. All meetings and hearings listed in the agenda will also be done so through remote participation. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the town's website, at www.shrewsburyma.gov/coronavirus. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting. To listen to this meeting, dial [+1 929-287-3884] and enter the following pin: [510 122 601#]. Please mute your device.

Minutes of the Shrewsbury DEI Taskforce Meeting

August 9, 2021

1. Call to Order and Attendance
 - a. Time - 7:02 pm
 - b. Absent - Paula Collins, Lynsey Heffernan., Donna Jarrell., Roop Jyot Kaur, Priya Rathnam, Navjeet Singh, Helene Winn
2. Survey Committee presents the results
 - . Milind shared his screen to present the slide deck he created
 - a. Special Thanks to Taylor G. for all she has done to help
 - b. Had challenges - Survey launched after June 21 therefore schools were already out
 - c. Who did we hear from?
 - i. 72.1% were white - does not reflect the population of our town
 - ii. Most were female
 - iii. Most were full time employees
 - d. 3/4ths of respondents think the town can do more to address equity
 - e. Over half of respondents have either experienced or witnessed bias

- f. 84% did not report the bias to an authority
- g. 54% observed the bias toward themselves or someone else
- h. 45.6% think there is no bias in the town
 - 3. What type of bias was observed
 - . Race/ethnicity/Culture 29.9%
- a. Political Choice 12%
 - 4. Where was the bias observed
 - . 58% in schools
- a. Need to work with the school department to take that next step to figure out how and why there is so much discrimination in the schools
- b. We are not sure whether the respondents were primarily teachers or parents- This is just a pulse
- c. This tells us our work is important and not done
 - 5. Print Surveys - had a lot of white space so therefore people had comments
 - . Some are good some are really bad
 - 6. What respondents think
 - . 56% say we can do more at Town Hall
- a. 44% say we can do more at SELCO
- b. 66% say we can do more at schools
- c. 60.3% say we can do more at fire and police
- d. 40% say we can do more at senior center
- e. 58.8% say we can do more at Town Civic boards and committees
- 7. Data collected through the survey process is located at this link.
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1R-nen_69mXUGbffbFnB4TmZg_zdOOyIM?usp=sharing
- 8. Link for Survey presentation <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HhcJHaqI3Z69felZOgm5XdxRmoU-x7V3?usp=sharing>
- 9. Ruth thanked the subcommittee for all of their work
- 10. Gene asked how many responded - 204 - Gene commented that it's a very very low number and that seems to be the trend of this town. Sad to see such a low response
 - . Milind shared that after week one we had 145 responses. At the end of week 5 we had 204
- 11. Noor Ali - 200 is a solid start - this can go towards our final report. It needs to be an ongoing process. This type of gauging what is going on is important. The Story Tellers have received 20 responses. 20 responses is not a lot of time, but it's important. 20 brave people. This is a beautiful start. It needs to be an ongoing process in the town
 - . Comments on the 8 written responses are important. They need to be honored and recorded for what is said. Slides 18 & 19 have the comments
- 12. Leonora asked if the slides could be made available to the task force so we can have time to more closely look at them. The full presentation is in the DEI folder.
- 13. The data gathered from the survey is in the Data Collection folder. It is a public record.
- 14. Rajesh ~ This should be baseline data and as we move year over year we should get a good overview of what is happening in the town. By looking at what the data provided, maybe more residents will be willing to provide more data.

II. Final report Content

- a. Most subcommittees submitted the final reports
- b. Rich P. Seems to be overlap - maybe use that as "ammunition" that there is overlap or just include all of the materials

c. Ruth said we will highlight that there is overlap just to further show how subcommittees overlap and are therefore important

d. Beth - has been speaking to John Samia about how to present . John's thought was to have a separate meeting just for this report. This work is way too much for one meeting

i.Looking for October 19th as a meeting date. Have the report by October 13th so they have time to digests.

e. Ruth - New Timeline- final report due September 20th

.If anyone has expertise writing these types of reports, Ruth and Adeola would like the help

i.Meet on October 4th to discuss last thoughts

ii.Meet on October 12th to finalize reports then give to Board on October 13th

iii.Do any subcommittees have changes that need to be made?

iv.Noor updated the last edit at midnight last night. Noor sent the final version to Taylor last night

v.Louise is a little surprised by the Public Safety report. She sat in on one of the meetings with the chief of police. He had talked about an expert with whom the police were already meeting. Need clarification because it seems that

1. Kelly Joseph said that they are due to have a procedural review- what a great opportunity to bring in a DEI expert to take a look at the policies with a DEI lens. How can we use this as an opportunity to look at unintended consequences?

2. Louise asked why a civilian review board and a permanent DEI committee were recommended. Kelly said that the group felt they needed a DEI committee to sustain change. We need to stand up something permanent with its own authority.

a. Civilian review board - having an independent mechanism for citizens of Shrewsbury to have a place to make complaints. Civilian review boards are becoming far more common within the US. Happy to talk off line about the efficacy of Civilian Review boards

b. Jennie has heard that the Mass Dept of Public Health has recently launched a review board for police The RFR Jennie referenced is "Equitable Approaches to Public Safety (EAPS)"

c. Out of the MA DPH Office of Violence Prevention

vii.Recommendations:

1. Permanent DEI Committee for the town

2. Landing page as part of the work that has come out of this

viii.Final Report will be quite a lengthy document - Going to create it so that anyone in town can look at the report - We want to make it easily accessible for townspeople, but also want to include all the work we have done

ix.Subcommittees do not have to redo their reports again

x.Kelly Joseph said that they would like to have another pass at looking at her subcommittee report

1. Also, there are not a lot of people here so it might be a missed opportunity because all committee members are not here

2. We need to have a chance to look at all of the recommendations

xi.Ruth - we could have another meeting to discuss the subcommittee reports. The only agenda item would be to discuss

a. We will meet on August 23rd and Sept. 13th- to discuss all of the reports. 3 subcommittees will present at each meeting

b. Taylor will email all of the recommendations as one document to everyone. Will bcc everyone -

c. Task Force will meet Oct. 4th for last thoughts

d. Meet on October 12th to vote on the final report then submit to Board

e. Louise and Kelly will help on writing the final report

2. Louise asked that everyone use APA format for references

i. Approving minutes from the last meeting was not on agenda, so we will have to approve minutes from two meetings at our August 23rd meeting.

f. Louise motioned to adjourn, Milind seconded

Minutes respectfully submitted by Maura Egan