

**DEI Commission Meeting
July 8, 2021
Meeting held via Zoom**

Present:

Peju Champion	Joanna Steffey
Katina Fontes	Nuha Muntasser
Yana Bloomstein	Sue Abrams
Stephanie Oliver	
Nancy Kimble	
Nalini Luthra	

Absent:, Tanisha Tate, Vona Hill, Susan Tripi, Sue Rushfirth

Also present:

Jennifer Roberts (Select Board Liaison), Henry Hayes (Town Manager) ,
Janie Dretler (Select Board), Lynn Puorro (Sudbury TV), Sylvia Nersessian, Dan Carty, Lisa
Kouchackdjian, Peg Zhou, Reverend Marjorie Mattie (First Parish), Mark Thompson (Sudbury
Technology)

Agenda:

Welcome.
Open meeting by roll call vote.
Public Comments.
Welcome Reverend Marjorie Matty
Commission Goals and Timeline:
 Celebrating Sudbury - Community Building Event.
 Discuss strategies to enhance DEI Commission visibility in town.
 Survey.
 Bill S. 465 update – legislation to extend voting rights in municipal elections to noncitizen voters
 of the commonwealth. (Report included in agenda packet)
 DEI Office hours/meet and greet.
Review and approve minutes from June 24, 2021 meeting.
Upcoming agenda items/next meeting planning.

Call to order

Co-Chair Luthra, following acknowledgement of a quorum, called the meeting to order at 7:37PM. Vote
taken to call the meeting to order:

Joanna Steffey	Aye	Nalini Luthra	Aye
Katina Fontes	Aye	Sue Abrams	Aye
Yana Bloomstein	Aye	Nuha Muntasser	Aye
Nancy Kimble	Aye	Peju Champion	Aye
Stephanie Oliver	Aye		

Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

Reverend Marjorie Matty

Reverend Matty introduced herself and gave an overview of the activities of First Parish Church in Sudbury focused on racial equity, including a panel on Black Lives Matter and a book group around Debbie Irving's book, Waking Up White. She suggested encouraging 1:1 conversations to "become more open hearted." She noted that people tend to be isolated other than some common activities. She and Nalini have had a conversation about the Commission including these conversations in the work. Reverend Matty offered the help of First Parish and the Sudbury Clergy Association in that work. Reverend Matty encouraged members to contact her: remjmatty@gmail.com

Commission Goals

1. Celebrating Sudbury

- Nalini suggested that we look at October to sponsor an event. She made several suggestions, including vendors, activities etc.

Discussion:

- First Parish will help with this project.
- It was suggested that we start small and build on the event from year to year.
- The town has guidelines that must be followed regarding safety, parking, health etc. Town property, should that be used, also requires permits etc.
- Is there a diversity focus for the event?
- A small working group should be convened to work on this. Nalini and Stephanie work together on this, and Nancy will put Nalini in touch with Sharon Smith-Gross, a Sudbury resident whose idea this was.
- Another suggestion was a film festival and/or book group.
 - Volunteers to pursue this idea (including talking with the library):
Peju, Nancy, Stephanie, Yana, Joanna
- Should we engage other towns in these efforts?
- How do we engage the youth? Reverend Matty described several programs from First Parish:
 - connecting with other UU churches.
 - a young teens and identity group.
 - STOP (students together opposing prejudice) has discussion groups and attends services at other houses of worship.

2. Survey

- Shrewsbury: Katina reported that they did a qualitative survey centered around story telling. The survey went out at the end of the DEI Commission's work.
- Needham invited residents to come forward with experiences they have had and used that as the focus of the survey, developing questions from that information.
- A general survey versus a survey with more specific questions around personal experience was discussed.

3. Other Discussion:

- Nancy noted that one of our goals in the Select Board's mission and goals document is to get some training for the commission. She and Sue A. have watched a training video from the National League of Cities, which might be very helpful in providing some direction. Nancy shared the link to the video with the commission. Regarding the survey and data, the video stressed the importance of disaggregating the data received so it provides more specific information.
 - Mass Human Rights Coalition is another resource we could explore.

- Nalini contacted the superintendents of SPS and LS. There was agreement that they are an important part of this work and should be represented in some way.
- Scituate is sending Nancy the questions they used when interviewing their town departments.

Bill S265 Update

Nancy has researched this and included information in the agenda packet. She reviewed the bill, it's progress and some history of other town's efforts to make the by law changes necessary to allow non-citizens to participate in local elections and town meeting. Several towns have passed the changes but they must be approved by the legislature and none have been approved to date.

Suggestions for what we can do to:

- Put out a statement of support from the Commission.
- Submit a warrant article for the next Town Meeting.
- Talk to Senator Eldridge to talk to us about the bill. Nuha will invite him to a meeting.

DEI Office Hours

- The discussion included the need for social media (FaceBook page etc.) in order to get more visibility for the Commission.
- The Commission on Disabilities' FaceBook page is a good model to use as it doesn't require the kind of monitoring that is needed if there are comments allowed.
- Yana, Katina, Joanna and Nuha will talk about creating a FaceBook page, as well as other outreach.
- Office hours can be on Zoom or in person and don't need to be more frequent than monthly. Once we have a FaceBook page and some other outreach planned, we can look to schedule these.

Working Groups

- These are necessary to be able to get all these projects going. The Open Meeting Law should be used as a guide to determine how to do these groups without violating the law.
- At the next meeting members should be prepared to identify what specific groups/projects they want to work on.

Approval of Minutes of June 24 , 2021 meeting

Motion to approve the June 10 minutes was made by Joanna and seconded by Nancy.

Joanna Steffey	Aye	Nuha Muntasser	Aye
Katina Fontes	Aye	Sue Abrams	Aye
Yana Bloomstein	Aye	Stephanie Oliver	Aye
Nancy Kimble	Aye	Nalini Luthra	Aye

Abstentions: Peju Champion

Upcoming agenda items/next meeting planning.

Note: Please get agenda items to Nuha and Nalini by the 1st or 3rd Wednesday of the month.

- Reports on outreach progress
 - Please send the reports to Nalini and Nuha by July 15 so they can be included in the agenda packet for the next meeting.
- Meeting schedule for the rest of the summer
- Brief review of the NLC video

A motion to adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Katina and seconded by Joanna.

Vote:

Joanna Steffey	Aye	Peju Champiom	Aye
Katina Fontes	Aye	Stephanie Oliver	Aye
Yana Bloomstein	Aye	Sue Abrams	Aye
Nancy Kimble	Aye	Nuha Montasser	Aye
Nalini Luthra	Aye		

Meeting adjourned at 9:40PM

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Abrams
Co-Clerk