

DEI Commission Meeting

January 13, 2022

Meeting held via Zoom

Present:

Peju Champion	Nuha Muntasser	Janine Taylor	Paula Hudson
Katina Fontes	Sue Abrams	Tanisha Tate	
Stephanie Oliver	Vona Hill	Sue Rushfirth	
Nalini Luthra	Joanna Steffey	Yana Bloomstein	

Absent:

Peng Zhou

Also present:

Henry Hayes (Town Manager),
Sudbury TV, Sylvia Nersessian (School Committee), Scott Nix (SPD), Jen Roberts (Sudbury Select Board),
Nancy Kimble

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Open Meeting by Roll Call Vote.
2. Public Comments.
3. Select Board / January Quarterly Report Meeting Debrief and Vote.
4. Subcommittee and Working Groups Updates.
5. DEI Initiatives / Recommendations to Town of Sudbury.
6. LWV DEI Roundtable Discussion.
7. Welcome Karyn Jones from COD.
8. Review and approve minutes of December 16, 2021 meeting.
9. Adjourn Meeting by Roll Call Vote.

Call to order

Co-Chair Muntasser, following acknowledgement of a quorum, called the meeting to order at 7:34PM.

She welcomed everyone and reminded them that we all have a shared experience and are here to serve the town of Sudbury. She encouraged people to be active participants in the discussions and to step back to let others speak and share ideas and to step up to share your own.

Vote taken to call the meeting to order:

Nalini Luthra	Aye	Nuha Muntasser	Aye	Vona Hill	Aye
Katina Fontes	Aye	Sue Abrams	Aye	Tanisha Tate	Aye
Joanna Steffey	Aye	Peju Champion	Aye	Paula Hudson	Aye
Stephanie Oliver	Aye	Janine Taylor	Aye		
Sue Rushfirth	Aye	Yana Bloomstein	Aye		

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Land Acknowledgment

Katina Fontes read the acknowledgment and a poem by Larry Spotted Crow Mann. Yana Bloomstein volunteered to be the reader for the February meeting.

Select Board / January Quarterly Report Meeting Debrief and Vote.

Note: a debrief is included in the meeting packet.

Discussion points from the meeting:

- The Board advised that the website should be an information only platform with no discussion option.
- The Select Board was encouraged to adopt a land acknowledgment to be read at the beginning of their meetings.
- There was a question about the support for non-citizen voting in local elections...why didn't residents just get their citizenship. Nalini explained, from personal experience, how difficult and lengthy that process is.
- Regarding the flags as you enter the town, there was a question about a trigger for some who might have fled dangerous conditions. The Board is interested in knowing more about this project though.
- The Board is excited about the Lived Experience project.
- The Commission was asked to review the original goals and come back to the Board with suggestions for updating.
- The Board wants to hear term recommendations from the Commission. This could impact the budgeting, which currently would be \$15,000 as of July 1 (pending TM approval of the budget.)
- The Board asked what the Commission has learned so far. The Learned Experience project will provide a significant amount of information and will help with planning next steps.

Discussion:

There was a lengthy discussion about extending the current terms of the Commission members, as well as whether the Commission should become a permanent Commission. Discussion around the extension of terms focused on whether to request an extension of six months or one full year, taking into consideration the expectation for the Lived Experience project to conclude in the spring. It was agreed that the feedback from the Structure Subcommittee is important as is identifying more action/projects.

Motion: Move to request an extension of the Commission to November 30,2022.

Nalini Luthra	Aye	Nuha Muntasser	Aye	Vona Hill	Aye
Katina Fontes	Aye	Sue Abrams	Aye	Tanisha Tate	Aye
Joanna Steffey	Aye	Peju Champion	Aye	Paula Hudson	Aye
Stephanie Oliver	Aye	Janine Taylor	Aye		
Sue Rushfirth	Aye	Yana Bloomstein	Aye		

Next Steps:

- We need to identify the Commission's work for the next six months. The Lived Experiences project will provide direction for actions and policy recommendations. Other initiatives that need to be addressed include the mission statement, goals, transition planning and recommendations of the Structure Subcommittee. Structure Subcommittee recommendations to date are included in the meeting packet. This should also be included in the report to the Select Board.
- Nalini and nuha will adjust the dates on the original mission statement.

Motion: Move to accept the proposals for the Structure Subcommittee to be brought to the Select Board.

Nalini Luthra	Aye	Nuha Muntasser	Aye	Vona Hill	Aye
Katina Fontes	Aye	Sue Abrams	Aye	Tanisha Tate	Aye
Joanna Steffey	Aye	Peju Champion	Aye	Paula Hudson	Aye
Stephanie Oliver	Aye	Janine Taylor	Aye		
Sue Rushfirth	Aye	Yana Bloomstein	Aye		

LWV DEI Roundtable Discussion

Stephanie and Nalini agreed to represent the Commission at the January 30 event (via Zoom). There was a discussion around several of the proposed questions in order to provide Nalini and Stephanie with responses that reflect the Commission. Questions discussed included #2,3,8,9. Paula volunteered to research some accurately framed definitions for equity. It was also agreed that, in response to some of the questions, the Commission is still defining it’s own work and we will continue to do so with the feedback we receive from the various projects we undertake. Commission members are encouraged to email additional suggestions to Nalini and Stephanie.

Subcommittee and Working Groups Updates and DEI Initiatives / Recommendations to Town of Sudbury

It was agreed that moving forward is contingent on certain decisions being made. Because of time constraints at our monthly meetings, the consensus of the group was to leave decisions to Subcommittees. These decisions can be brought to the whole group and we will decide later whether we consider them as recommendations to be voted or final decisions.

Review and approve minutes of December 16, 2021 meeting

Motion: Move to accept the minutes of the December 12, 2021 meeting.

Nalini Luthra	Aye	Nuha Muntasser	Aye	Vona Hill	Aye
Katina Fontes	Aye	Sue Abrams	Aye	Tanisha Tate	Aye
Joanna Steffey	Aye	Peju Champion	Aye	Paula Hudson	Aye
Stephanie Oliver	Aye	Janine Taylor	Aye		
Sue Rushfirth	Aye	Yana Bloomstein	Aye		

Motion to adjourn

Nalini Luthra	Aye	Nuha Muntasser	Aye	Vona Hill	Aye
Katina Fontes	Aye	Sue Abrams	Aye	Tanisha Tate	Aye
Joanna Steffey	Aye	Peju Champion	Aye	Paula Hudson	Aye
Stephanie Oliver	Aye	Janine Taylor	Aye		
Sue Rushfirth	Aye	Yana Bloomstein	Aye		

Note: Next meeting will be Thursday, February 10, 2022

Meeting adjourned at 10:04pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Abrams

Clerk

