

Town of Boxborough
Diversity Equity & Inclusion Committee
Regular Session Meeting Minutes – approved 6/25/2024
Conducted via Zoom
March 26, 2024

PRESENT: Jennifer Campbell, Chair; John Fallon, Member; Wes Fowlks, Member; Mary Sullivan, Clerk

Nonmembers: Brittany Zorn (Boxborough News), Michael Johns (Town Administrator)

Absent: Peishan Bartley, Member; Amy Osenar, Member

Call to Order

At 6:34 PM, the meeting was called to order, noting the presence of a quorum.

Roll Call

Present by roll call: Campbell, Fallon; Fowlks; Sullivan

Minutes

Fallon moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting (February 12, 2024), seconded by Fowlks. The motion passed.

Roll Call Vote: Campbell – Aye, Fallon – Aye, Fowlks – Aye, Sullivan – Aye

Lakshmi Kaja, Member joined at 7:00 PM

Michael Johns (Nonmember) left at 7:00 PM

No public input.

New business

Strengthening Police & Community Partnerships

Campbell discussed the event on 3/16/24. Summary of breakup sessions and work by participants was discussed. A SPCP group was formed and after reviewing summary of work will meet quarterly over the next year or two in order to implement recommendations with the police chief's input, Members Fowlks and Osenar have volunteered to be on the SPCP group.

Actions regarding goals for 2024

See attached list worked on by group during meeting.

Discuss Boxborough 2030 (Passed over given that Bartley was not present).

Discuss Community Meeting Space access

Member Kaja was not prepared to discuss, so this was passed over.

Fowlks moved to adjourn meeting at 7:37 PM. Seconded by Kaja. The motion was approved unanimously via Roll Call Vote: Campbell – Aye, Kaja – Aye, Fallon – Aye, Fowlks – Aye, Sullivan – Aye
Next meeting is to be determined by doodle poll after Annual Town Meeting in May by Chair Campbell.

Adjournment 7:37PM

Attachments:

Actions regarding goals for 2024

Attachment: Actions regarding goals for 2024

Lend a diverse lens to town activities.

- Create a statement asking for DEI consideration in policies and procedures
 - Checklist for event planning to make sure DEI is considered
 - Part of the Board and Committee handbook developed by Town Clerk
 - Calendar for religious holidays – make sure this is observed/updated
- Veteran's day ceremony – not a diverse group.
 - Veteran's agent shared w/Acton – their ceremony is at a similar time
 - Veteran's agent to be able to reach out to diverse (age/families) population
 - Involve children/families – invite to kids at school
- The word “resident” as opposed to citizen
- Work with the TA, Department Heads, and Board Chairs to recommend participation of DEIC members or designees to major town initiatives (SPCP counsel, for example).
 - Send email to TA, DHs, and Chairs asking for their cooperation
 - Find areas in 2030 plan that are being implemented that we can impact

Develop a process for addressing bias incident reports.

Tabled until we have more info from Town Administrator.

- Ombudsperson – TA to look into Open Meeting Law
 - Technically public when made to public official
 - Exclusion or exemption to keep complaints private
 - Follow up with TA

Support employees with DEI needs.

- Pass over to personnel board? Work with them. (Wes Fowlks will follow up.)
 - Employer of Choice initiative
 - What does it mean to be an Employer of Choice
 - Does DEI play into it?
 - Employees to be their whole selves
 - Employee “Bill of Rights”
 - Stakeholders: SB, Personnel Committee, Assistant TA, Community Services Coordinator

Conduct feasibility study to determine ways to provide DEI services to the town, including exploring partnerships with other towns.

- Craft article for Annual Town Meeting (Jennifer will follow up with this).
 - Research amounts and scopes of costs/results
 - Inter-municipal agreement w/Acton?
 - What does Acton DEI coordinator do?
 - Job description
 - Reports filed by DEI coordinator
 - Is Acton interested?
 - Ask Boxborough TA for support/advice & do outreach
 - Go to Acton Town Manager first to see if they're interested
 - September – go to Select Board to propose/elicit support
 - January – present article
 - May – ATM
 - July – Fiscal Year funding received

Amplify and acknowledge underrepresented voices.

- Request that all town websites and posted documents be available in translations for common languages
 - Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish, Korean, Hindi
 - Rajon – Asst Town Administrator
 - Google?
 - Have a clear button on the website to provide translation
 - Accessibility for website – alt text, screen readers
 - ? In compliance (ADA coordinator, Rajon)
- Encourage and seek out diverse candidates for town boards including non-citizens and minors