

## **Groton Diversity Task Force Minutes**

March 4, 2021

Approved March 11, 2021

**Present:** Nii-Ama Akuete, Gordon Candow, Michelle Collette, Deb Dowson, Amy Degen, Josh Degen, Raquel Majeski, Tim Manugian, James Moore, Deirdre Slavin-Mitchell, Audra Waiters

**Also present:** Groton Channel

**Guests:** Owen Shuman and Susan Hughes representing the Racial Social Justice Group and A Better Community Facebook Group.

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

Raquel welcomed new member Gordon Candow.

Approval of Minutes:

Josh Degen made a motion to approve minutes for Feb. 11, 2021 Seconded by Tim Manugian. Minutes approved by roll call vote with Amy Degen, Josh Degen and Gordon Candow abstaining.

Raquel reported that the workbooks were expected to be available next week.

Library Fines:

Raquel made a motion to send the letter as it was drafted to the library trustees. Seconded by Michelle Colette. After a discussion a roll call vote was taken. The motion passed with one vote (Josh Degen) against. Amy Degen was not present for the vote.

Review of Working Groups:

Housing Group: (Nii-Ama, Audra) – note: Amy has moved to the Community Outreach group. The task force considered whether they want to be the conduit for stakeholders in the town to come together to discuss affordable housing. After a discussion, Audra made a motion that the DTF host a Housing Summit for the town. Seconded by Raquel. The motion passed unanimously.

Josh recommended that we hold the summit in June, possibly outdoors and will send out the Housing Production Plan and other documents to help inform the DTF about housing in Groton. This initiative requires all members of the task force to participate.

Town Image (James, Michelle, Deidre, & Tim)

The working group want to continue to move forward on a proposal while at the same time contributing to work on the Housing Summit. The group will prepare recommendations for next steps which may include a Town Image Forum in the fall. Raquel clarified that “Town image”

includes consideration of the town seal, but also other issues of community image, such as signs, names, mascots, etc.

#### Community Outreach (Josh & Amy)

This group would like to create a DEI platform for the entire community, perhaps on the town website, to gather and communicate in one place all of the DEI initiatives that are taking place in Groton.

Community members Owen Shuman & Susan Hughes asked the DTF to co-sponsor a program that that would take place on Sept. 23, 2021. It would be a 90 minute webinar presented by author Debbie Irving entitled "I'm a Good Person, Isn't That Enough". The aim of the program is to support white people reflecting on race. The author would also read stories from Groton community members of their personal experiences with race. The cost is \$4,000 and some funds would be sought from the Town of Groton Trust Funds, as well as the Town's Diversity Fund. The author's book "Waking Up White" would be available for purchase as well.

Ni-Ama wondered at the choice of presenter when there are many diverse voices doing similar work. Owen, Susan, and Raquel gave assurances of the speaker's experience and skill. James suggested that the DTF take a week to consider the decision to co-sponsor this event and the majority of the DTF agreed with a show of hands, to delay the decision until the next meeting.

Adjourned: 8:16pm

Next Meeting: March 11, 7pm. on Zoom.

DD 3/5/2021