



## TOWN OF GROTON

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### Diversity Task Force

Raquel Majeski, *Chair*  
Michelle Collette, *Vice Chair*  
Gordon Candow, *Member*  
Amy Degen, *Member*  
Bhaskar Gupta Karpurapu, *Member*  
Susan Hughes, *Member*  
Deirdre Slavin-Mitchell, *Member*  
James Moore, *Member*  
Fran Stanley, *Member*

**Diversity Task Force**  
**Thursday, December 9, 2021**  
**Groton Center, 163 West Main Street**

### MINUTES

Chair Raquel Majeski called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Members present: Raquel Majeski, Michelle Collette, Susan Hughes, Deirdre Slavin Mitchell,  
James Moore and Fran Stanley

Members absent: Amy Degen, Gordon Candow, and Bhaskar Gupta Karpurapu

#### Minutes

**November 18, 2021-** The DTF reviewed the minutes of the November 18, 2021 meeting. Several revisions were suggested including noting that the FOX 25 News crew interviewed members at the site prior to the meeting and videoed a portion of the meeting.

The motion was made by Slavin Mitchell, seconded by Hughes, to approve the minutes of November 18, 2021, as amended. The motion passed unanimously. (The minutes, as amended, are posted on the Town's website:

<https://www.grotonma.gov/government/boards-and-committees/diversity-task-force/>

**November 4, 2021 -** The motion was made by Collette, seconded by Moore, to approve the minutes of November 4, 2021. The motion passed with Majeski, Collette, Degen, Hughes, Slavin Mitchell, Moore and Stanley in favor; Hughes abstaining.

#### Clarification of Issues

Chair Majeski said she would like to clarify the process on how to resolve issues in the group if and when they occur. She asked members for their thoughts on the matter on how to engage in discussions in a respectful manner. She expressed concern about hurt feeling that resulted from a conversation following the November 18, 2021 meeting. She said meetings should be adjourned with a statement of clarity.

### **“No Place for Hate”**

Chair Majeski recommended that the DTF review the principles and practices of the “No Place for Hate” organization to see what we could learn without necessarily joining the organization. Members agreed.

### **Racial Healing Handbook**

Chair Majeski said Lawrence Academy will hold three sessions on the *Racial Healing Handbook* in the new year. She suggested that members may want to attend and participate in the sessions.

### **Town Seal**

The DTF decided to pause during the holidays and hold its next meeting on January 13, 2022. Items to be addressed at that meeting will include the revisions to the Town Seal. Member Stanley said the entire DTF should be involved in the discussion of revisions to the Town Seal rather than only the Town Image working group.

The DTF made its recommendation to the Select Board to remove the words “Holy Bible” from the seal and to leave the remainder of the seal as it is. The DTF agreed to work with the Select Board on a series of public forums over the winter. The Select Board will decide whether to include the article to amend the Town Seal on the Spring Town Meeting Warrant.

Members noted that the Town Seal on the floor of the Police Station lobby does not include the words “Holy Bible.” Members of the Working Group will ask the Police Department when and why the change was made.

Members Hughes, Stanley, and others have researched Samuel Green’s writings about the Town Seal, which he designed, and was adopted by a vote of Town Meeting in 1898. Several members recollect reading a statement by Dr. Green that the Town Seal is reflective on a point in time and may be changed in the future. Research on the exact quote will continue.

All members agreed that the forums should be listening sessions rather than debate on the topic. Chair Majeski will invite Select Board member Becky Pine to the January 13, 2022 meeting.

### **Action Items**

- The Town Image Group will work with Select Board Member Becky Pine on the Town Seal forums to be held at the Senior Center, the Lost Lake Fire Station, and the NESSP Temple. The DTF will assist with preparation of a PowerPoint presentation.
- The Community Outreach Committee will continue to propose educational activities.

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- The DTF will explore principals of the “No Place for Hate” organization.
- The DTF will inquire about the process of reporting racist incidents and appropriate follow up actions including mediation and restorative justice.

The motion was made by Collette, seconded by Moore to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette  
Member