



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, March 31, 2022
Virtual meeting via ZOOM

MINUTES

Chair Raquel Majeski called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM by roll call of members in attendance.

Members present: Raquel Majeski, Michelle Collette, Amy Degen, Deirdre Slavin Mitchell, and Fran Stanley

Members absent: Gordon Candow, and Bhaskar Gupta Karpurapu, Susan Hughes, and James Moore

Juneteenth Celebrations

Chair Raquel Majeski reported that the Outreach Committee (Majeski, Degen, and Hughes) met to plan various celebrations for Juneteenth that would engage the community on June 19 or on other days around that date. Several events are planned in Groton and surrounding towns.

Meeting with Latosha Dixon, Town of Chelmsford Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

The Committee met with Chelmsford DEI Chair Latosha Dixon to talk about planning Juneteenth events in the area. Ms. Dixon said Chelmsford held an event last year which focused on educating the predominantly white community in our area about the importance of Juneteenth to the African American community. She said the event included an explanation of the significance of the Juneteenth flag, singing the Black National Anthem, a talk by the chair of the Merrimack Valley NAACP, poetry, music by a gospel choir from Ayer, and an emphasis of black-owned businesses.

Ms. Dixon said she invited Raquel Majeski to be a keynote speaker for this year's event which will be held on Saturday, June 18, 2022, from 12 noon to 4:00 pm on the Chelmsford Common. Ms. Dixon invited the Committees from Groton and Westford to participate. Chair Majeski said Susan Hughes will reach out to the Harvard professor who is the author of "On Juneteenth" and to the Groton Public Library on having a discussion about the book. Ms. Dixon said she liked the idea of a book discussion as part of the celebration.

Member Degen asked how many attended last year's event in Chelmsford. Ms. Latosha said around 200 people were there. She said they did not have many expenses other than arrangements for set-up, etc. They did not pay any speakers or performers.

Member Degen asked how the Groton DTF would be involved. Ms. Latosha said she would like us to support the event in Chelmsford and they would support events in Groton and other communities. It is important to educate the public in the surrounding area about Juneteenth and that we coordinate our events. Ms. Dixon said she would prepare a flyer listing events in the area.

Town Seal Listening Sessions

Members Fran Stanley and Michelle Collette reported on the Town Seal Listening Sessions held on March 8 and March 29, 2022 at the Groton Center. Select Board Chair Becky Pine, with support from DTF members, presented the slide show prepared by the Town Image Working Group. The slide show was well-received by those in attendance, and the discussions were thoughtful and respectful. People at the Listening Sessions expressed confusion and concern about the non-binding question on the municipal election ballot and asked why the vote on the change to the Town Seal was postponed from the Spring Town Meeting to the Fall Town Meeting.

Member Deirdre Slavin Mitchell said she has heard many concerns about the changes to the Town Seal being brought back multiple times if it does not pass at Town Meeting this year.

Chair Majeski said members have inquired about whether we would be allowed to present the slide show at the Spring Town Meeting. She with following up with Select Board Chair Becky Pine.

Minutes

The motion was made by Slavin-Mitchell, seconded by Degen, to approve the minutes of March 17, 2022. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote: Majeski – aye, Collette – aye, Degen - aye, Slavin-Mitchell-aye, and Stanley-aye.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 28, 2022 at 7:00 PM. The Chair will poll members about whether they prefer meeting in person or via ZOOM.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Member