

# Select Board Meeting Packet

November 15, 2021

*This is the Select Board preliminary preparation information packet. The content of this package is subject to change between when it is released and the start of the Select Board meeting. Such changes will not be posted to the web site before the meeting. If you see an item or items in the preliminary preparation package that are important to you, please attend the meeting in person.*



## TOWN OF GROTON

173 Main Street  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450-1237  
Tel: (978) 448-1111  
Fax: (978) 448-1115

## Select Board

Rebecca H. Pine, *Chair*  
Alison S. Manugian, *Vice Chair*  
Peter S. Cunningham, *Clerk*  
Joshua A. Degen, *Member*  
John F. Reilly, *Member*

**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

**SELECT BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2021  
AGENDA  
SELECT BOARD MEETING ROOM  
2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR  
GROTON TOWN HALL**

- 7:00 P.M.      **Announcements and Review Agenda for the Public**
- 7:05 P.M.      **Public Comment Period**
- I.      7:06 P.M.      **Town Manager's Report**
1. **Town Manager's Explanation of Agenda Items**
  2. **Consider Ratifying the Town Manager's Appointment of John Sopka as an Election Worker and Consider Accepting the Town Manager's Nomination and Appoint Art Prest to the Great Ponds Advisory Committee**
  3. **Update on Fiscal Year 2023 Proposed Operating Budget**
  4. **Update on Select Board Meeting Schedule Through the End of the Year**
- II.      7:10 P.M.      **Items for Select Board Consideration and Action**
1. **Review Information and Consider Instituting Bystander Training**
  2. **Review Information and Consider Designating Groton as a "No Place for Hate" Community"**
  3. **Consider Establishing a Victim Advocacy Program**
- III.      7:15 P.M.      **Fire Chief Steele McCurdy – Update on Fire Department Staffing Model**
- OTHER BUSINESS**      - Pursuant to Board's Action in June, 2021, Consider Electing a New Vice Chair for the Remainder of the Year

**ON-GOING ISSUES** – Review and Informational Purposes – Brief Comments - Items May or May Not Be Discussed

- A. **Water Department – Manganese Issue – PFAS Issue**
- B. **Green Communities Application and Implementation**
- C. **Florence Roche Elementary School Construction Project**
- D. **Bystander Training**
- E. **Mask Mandate**

### SELECT BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

- IV.      **Minutes:**      **Regularly Scheduled Meeting of November 8, 2021**

### ADJOURNMENT

**Votes may be taken at any time during the meeting.** The listing of topics that the Chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting is not intended as a guarantee of the topics that will be discussed. Not all topics listed may in fact be discussed, and other topics not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.



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### Town Manager

Mark W. Haddad

**To:** *Select Board*

**From:** *Mark W. Haddad – Town Manager*

**Subject:** *Weekly Agenda Update/Report*

**Date:** *November 15, 2021*

### TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. In addition to the Town Manager's Report, Items for Select Board Consideration and Action and a review of the On-going Issues, there is one scheduled Agenda Item and one matter under Other Business. Fire Chief Steele McCurdy will be in to update the Board on Fire Department Staffing and the needs of the Department. Enclosed with this report is a memorandum from Chief McCurdy explaining these issues. Under Other Business, the Board needs to determine if it wants to reorganize and elect a new Vice Chair for the remainder of the year. When the Board organized in June, the Board discussed the possibility of electing a new Vice Chair after three or so months.
2. At the request of Town Clerk Michael Bouchard, I have appointed John Sopka as an Election Worker. I would respectfully request that the Board ratify this appointment at Monday's meeting. In addition, the Great Ponds Advisory Committee has recommended that I nominate Art Prest for appointment to the Committee. Please accept this as my nomination and consider appointing Mr. Prest to the Great Ponds Advisory Committee.
3. With regard to the FY 2023 Budget, I have no specific update as of the writing of this report. I will report on any new information at Monday's meeting.
4. Please see the update to the Select Board's Meeting Schedule through the end of the year:

Monday, November 22, 2021	- Tax Classification Hearing - Update from the BOH on Mask Mandate
Monday, November 29, 2021	No Meeting (Holiday)
Monday, December 6, 2021	- Annual Report from the Local Cultural Council - Review Letters of Interest on Adult Recreational Marijuana Facilities – Determine Decision Process
Monday, December 13, 2021	- Consider New Name for Redskin Trail
Monday, December 20, 2021	Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Monday, December 27, 2021	No Meeting (Holiday)
Monday, January 3, 2022	No Meeting (Holiday)
Monday, January 10, 2022	Regularly Scheduled Meeting

**ITEMS FOR SELECT BOARD CONSIDERATION AND ACTION**

1. The Board had requested that we provide information relative to Bystander Training. Enclosed with this Report is a memorandum prepared by Dawn Dunbar explaining her research and contact with Hollaback! and what they offer in terms of Bystander Training. We can discuss this in more detail at Monday's meeting.
2. I have set aside time for the Board to discuss whether or not to designate Groton as a No Place for Hate Community. Also attached to this Report is a memorandum prepared by Dawn Dunbar explaining her research on this subject and what other communities have done since the MMA ceased sponsorship of the Program in 2008.
3. Select Board Member Degen would like to discuss the possibility of providing some sort of Victim Advocacy Program here in Groton. Victim advocates are trained to support victims of crime. They offer emotional support, victims' rights information, help in finding needed resources and assistance in filling out crime victim related forms. Advocates may accompany victims and their family members through the criminal justice proceedings. They work with other organizations, such as criminal justice or social service agencies, to get help or information for the victims. There are several organizations that provide this type of service. Training courses run about \$275 - \$350 per person per training session. We could also hire a service on behalf of the Town. I have not been able to determine the cost, but if the Select Board is interested, we can issue an RFP for this service. I look forward to discussing this in more detail with the Board at Monday's meeting.

MWH/rjb  
enclosures



# Groton Fire Department

*Fire ~ EMS ~ Rescue*

*"Together We Serve the Community"*

45 Farmers Row  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450  
Tel: (978) 448-6333  
Fax: (978) 448-1116



To: Groton Selectboard  
From: Steele McCurdy, Fire Chief  
Date: November 10, 2021  
Re: Fire Department Study Update

On June 21, 2021, I met with the Select Board to discuss the initiation of a study of the fire department staffing as we move forward. In this discussion, the Deputy Chief and I explained that we're going to be looking at the next 5 years of the department and what staffing needs would be anticipated as the community and department changes. We advised the Board that there would be intermittent updates on the progress of the group. This is the first update as to what has occurred and is currently underway.

The first piece that was looked at was the short term needs of the department. The short term needs really reflect increased effort and staffing for the purposes of Fire Prevention. The title Fire Prevention however is a misrepresentation of what a modern "Fire Prevention" person does. Over time, prevention personnel have, like the rest of the fire service, evolved into a community wide risk reduction effort. Community risk reduction programs help reduce a myriad of risks in the community proactively rather than the traditional reactionary mode that we are accustomed to. This risk reduction however doesn't directly decrease the needs of emergency response rather over time, decreases the growth and severity of emergency calls.

Currently, the departments operational model has 2 personnel (Deputy Chief and per-diem) working from 8am until 4pm Monday through Friday along with the 2 shift personnel that cover 24/7/365. In addition to the operational piece, the Administrative Assistant and Chief make up the administrative piece of the department working a Monday through Friday schedule.

Under the current setup, the operational staff is required to handle emergency responses, daily training, maintenance, community education, and inspectional services. The major issue with this model is that inspections are often pushed off on any given day due to emergency responses. This includes inspections that are required by law to be conducted for any home sales, renovations, or refinancing. When these delays occur, it changes the entire workflow of the day, and subsequent days, because the schedule needs to be adjusted to meet the inspectional needs. Very often, the Chief must pick up the scheduled inspections which creates constant compounding problems for the Chief with essential functions such as payroll, bills, medical billing, planning, policies and other department logistics.

The senior population is an ever-growing population in Groton. We need to aggressively meet the senior population with services and resources to mitigate hazards in and around their homes. By allocating

more time to work with the senior population in cooperation with the Council on Aging and other regional entities, we can better identify and reduce the risk of accidents, injuries, illnesses, and fires. The more we are able to get out to our seniors' homes, the better able we are to ensure that the most vulnerable do not slip through the cracks.

Our shortfalls impact school aged kids as well. Due to COVID-19 we have been unable to visit the schools. S.A.F.E. teaches students life safety including everything from stop drop and roll, to identifying common home hazards and knowing safety exits. Our S.A.F.E. Program is very important for all students. We have new school aged children who did not receive their foundational fire safety classes. We need to now play catch up before another year passes. Educating the community is an important part of what we do. Having additional dedicated time and personnel able to educate our seniors and youth on important fire and life safety techniques and risk reduction measures would go a long way in meeting some of our shortfalls in this important area.

The needs for Risk Reduction will be accomplished by more appropriately reassigning the Deputy Chief to a more administrative role rather than a firefighter role. When we eliminated the Fulltime Captain position and replaced it with the Deputy Chief in 2019, it was always the intention that the Deputy Chief take on a more administrative role which would include inspectional services. While the department has changed, we have not equally adjusted how the administration runs efficiently. In order to accomplish this, we would augment the daytime hours with an additional Firefighter/EMT being added to a weekday schedule when most prevention and administrative activities occur. This will allow the emergency responses, maintenance, daily training, and pre-incident planning to be handled by operational personnel without competing with prevention/risk reduction activities.

An examination of the activities related to fire prevention events over the past 10 years, when the department originally increased daytime staffing to the current levels, shows significant increases in inspectional services. The increases are driven by a few factors including an increased rate of building and sales, and changes in the fire and building codes which require additional inspections and review. Inspections, which include plan reviews, meetings, education, permits and other efforts has increased from 306 inspections in 2011 to 633 in 2020. This represents a 106% increase in inspectional activity.

Not to be overlooked is the complexity of systems that require research and lengthy plan reviews. As a single example, the Groton Hill Music Center has systems that are unique not only to Massachusetts, but to music centers across the globe. These systems require an extensive amount of time to review their components, plans, alternatives, hearings and testing of the final systems. While this project is part way through, many of the testing and inspection components, are going to be occurring over the next two years. While the Groton Hill Music Center has a definite end date, additional projects will inevitably create not only compounding stress, but also new challenges as systems evolve. Some examples of these upcoming projects are the new Florence Roche Elementary School and the potential development of 500 Main Street (the former Deluxe property). Both of these come with continued short- and long-term inspection needs.

A main driver of the inefficiency within our risk reduction/prevention services is that we do not have the ability to have a single point person overseeing projects, inspections and annual renewals. The current "prevention by committee" is extremely inefficient in terms of time spent rehashing what is and has been reviewed and what one may have done as far as inspections/meetings already. A constant internal and external frustration is the fact that we, at times, cannot be expeditious in the delivery of plan

reviews and inspections. This again goes back to the fact that inspections and time for plan review are often pushed off on any given day due to emergency responses.

Certain inspections are required by Fire Departments in accordance with 527 CMR 1 and other regulating bodies such as Department of Public Health. These codes requires that the fire department inspect different occupancies on a set basis from health care, 4 times per year, to commercial businesses annually. Currently, the department is unable to meet these requirements for all businesses which can place liability on both the business owner and also the fire department. Instead, we are forced to prioritize by occupancy type and frequency of public entry. Unfortunately, some businesses go several years between inspections. This was recently brought to the forefront when a renovation was discovered in a business that had occurred years prior. This renovation blocked off 3 of 4 exits constituting an immediate threat to the occupants. It is almost guaranteed that this is not an isolated incident, rather our inability to find these issues and educate the occupants on appropriate fire codes in a timelier manner due to our lack of risk reduction abilities.

Another example of a preventable issue is a building in town where numerous false alarms have resulted in 11 emergency responses since April. While we have issued a notice of violation to the owner, having a person that can follow up more regularly and move the process through the legal system would have resulted in fewer emergency calls. This is not an isolated incident but each occurrence puts pressure on the department and simultaneously draws on the budget. With more building occurring, we can only expect that these types of situations will become more prevalent.

The question certainly can and should be asked if we as the department can reallocate time within existing staff to better cover the needs. The answer is certainly that it can be done, however it decreases the effectiveness in other areas. Should we take time away from maintaining our equipment, which is expected to be working 100% of the time on a moments notice, our mission readiness decreases. The same readiness issue exists when daily training is sacrificed. Shifting hours for inspections only slightly alters our workload since a majority of contractors and other business occur based on the typical work week. As the natural progression of development and more associated inspections, we naturally lose readiness in our critical areas.

The skills and knowledge required to interpret, educate and enforce the fire codes has also greatly increased with the expansion of our codes. Today a firefighter is required to undergo 80 hours of training to be eligible to become an accredited fire inspector. In addition, this certification requires annual continuing education of 10 hours. To train and keep a large number of Fire Department personnel able to preform these jobs is a burden on the budget.

## **The Future**

In August of 2021, the Town of Dunstable approached us regarding the potential regionalization of fire services. It is not the first time that these discussions have occurred dating back to 2015, but a renewed urgency exists with the impending retirement of their chief. After a couple of meetings with Dunstable, we have mutually agreed that we, at a minimum, should take a strong look at regionalization in order to find efficiencies and increase safety in both communities. Jointly, we have identified grant funding to

study the impacts and effects of regionalization between the two departments. The grant will look to identify and engage with an independent contractor with experience in regionalizing fire departments.

While I am a proponent of regionalization, it should also be known that unless there is a clear equity and benefit for all stakeholders, we will not continue to pursue this effort. It is of paramount importance though that we enter into this process with our eyes open to all possibilities and at the very minimum take a deep look at the current and future pros and cons.

The efforts of this study will require significant collection of data. While pulling this data, we will use the same information as we continue the study of our department with Mr. Robertson, Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Haddad. This will allow us to more effectively provide information for our longer term look at the needs of the department.

With current standards of training and involvement being reviewed, coupled with the ever-present need for on-call firefighters, we have a great deal of work ahead of us. This will inevitably require the assistance of the Board.

## **Grants**

The Groton Fire Department is always looking to maximize grants in order to offset capital, and operational expenses. The future growth of the department, including or not including Dunstable, can at times be offset by grants. A majority of the new on-call firefighters hired over the past 2 years have been covered by a federal grant that resulted in no cost to the Town to add these firefighters. This included, physicals, gear, uniforms, wages, and materials for their initial training.

We will continue to pursue grants for the purposes of hiring on-call as well as career firefighters as well as offset on major capital investments. This will include applications to hire a risk reduction specialist, on-call firefighter training and the replacement of our breathing apparatus.

In summary, the Groton Fire Department needs to expand our risk reduction efforts through the allocation of more resources. The continued problems with being able to appropriately carry out our pre-incident mission threatens the departments effectiveness. Regardless of future plans, this position is necessary to better serve the interests of citizens, businesses and the department. The compounding effects and potential liability associated with poor services are immeasurable and must be addressed as soon as practical.



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**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

### MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mark W. Haddad, *Town Manager*  
**From:** Dawn Dunbar, *Executive Assistant to the Town Manager*  
**Subject:** *Bystander Training*  
**Date:** *November 8, 2021*

I have completed, as requested, research on Bystander Training offered through Hollaback. "Hollaback! teaches bystander intervention using our proven 5D's methodology: Distract, Delegate, Document, Delay, and Direct. Exit polls show that 99% of people we train leave confident they will intervene next time they witness disrespect or harassment."

I met with Nicole Devin on Zoom on Monday, November 1, 2021. All trainings are being offered on Zoom but unfortunately because of COVID, they are not holding in-person trainings yet. Each training can accommodate up to 1,000 participants. If there are less than 50 participants, it can be done as a meeting but anything more than that has to be done as a webinar.

Based on our conversation, she is recommending 4 different training topics:

1. Bystander Intervention in the Workplace
2. Bystander Intervention in Public Spaces
3. Conflict De-Escalation in the Workplace
4. 8 Strategies to Mitigate Implicit Bias

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### Course Descriptions and Time Required for Training

***Bystander Intervention in the Workplace*** - *Workshop description: When harassment happens at work, people are almost always around and if they aren't around, they can be quickly summoned to show up. Our goal is to reduce instances of workplace harassment by giving employees the tools they need to disrupt those perpetrating the harassment. We will equip your employees with the right information on how to be an effective online bystander in the midst of workplace harassment using our proven 5D's methodology; 98% of employees leave our training committing to intervene next time they witness disrespect or harassment.*

- This course can be done in a 60-minute session but it is being recommended that it be done over 90 minutes. With the 90-minute module, we would get an additional module on "what to do if someone comes to you and says you are the person who said/did the hurtful thing".

***Bystander Intervention in Public Spaces*** - *We all have a responsibility to do something when we see harassment happening, but too often we freeze. We don't know what to do. Bystander intervention gives*

us tools to intervene without compromising our own safety. When we intervene, we don't just reduce trauma for the person being harassed. We also start to chip away at the culture that allows harassment to be so prevalent. Alone we can't shift the culture — but together — our actions matter. In this training our goal is to give participants the tools to intervene the next time they witness harassment in public spaces.

We will equip you with the right information on how to be an effective bystander in the midst of public space harassment using our proven 5D's methodology, our five strategies for intervention. Then we will practice so you leave our training feeling more prepared to successfully and safely intervene.

- This course is a 60-minute session but could be extended to a 90-minute session to add for more discussion and practice scenarios.

**Conflict De-Escalation in the Workplace** - If your team interfaces with the public, chances are they will face moments of escalation and will need to know what to do. Conflict de-escalation requires patience, a willingness to listen, and an ability to see the humanity in everyone. Using Hollaback!'s Observe-Breathe-Connect methodology, we'll learn how to identify potential conflict before it escalates using our "pyramid of escalation" and how to assess whether de-escalation is the right action. We'll also learn how to connect with others by validating and de-escalating their feelings — even if we don't understand them or agree with them. We'll have time at the end to practice using real-life scenarios. Your team will leave armed with de-escalation techniques so that they can navigate these moments as workplace leaders.

- This session can be a stand alone or can be combined with Bystander Intervention to make a 2-hour session

**8 Strategies to Mitigate Implicit Bias** - Everyone holds implicit biases. That doesn't make us "bad people," it just means that we have work to do. This one-hour, interactive training will teach you how to understand and begin to mitigate your own implicit biases using 8 strategies.

- This is a 90-minute session.

**Course Cost**

The cost per course is based on a nonprofit organizations budget. Because the Town's budget falls in the \$10M + category, the course cost price structure would be as follows:

Training Length	Per-training Fee w/ no Customization	Per-Training Fee w/ Customization*
60-Minute	\$2,450	\$2,795
90-Minute	\$2,700	\$3,150
2-Hour	\$3,000	\$3,500

\*Customization includes a trainer working with the Town in advance for up to 3 hours.

Organizations booking three or more individual trainings are eligible for a per-session discount of up to 15%.

### **Free Online Training Sessions**

Hollaback offers free online training programs. There are quite a few offerings each month, held on Zoom, which require pre-registration. <https://www.ihollaback.org/harassmenttraining/>

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### **Train the Trainer Program**

Hollaback offers a Train the Trainer program. This would allow Groton to send up to 20 people to the training. The Training requires 3 full days, in-person training or 5 ½ days of virtual training. The cost for this program is \$40,000 annually which includes licensing for that year also.



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**Town Manager**  
Mark W. Haddad

### **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** *Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager*  
**From:** *Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager*  
**Subject:** *No Place for Hate*  
**Date:** *November 9, 2021*

Based on my research, I found that the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) ended its sponsorship, originally dating back to 1999, of the No Place for Hate program in Massachusetts in 2008 due to the "Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) continued ambiguity about the Armenian Genocide and its active opposition to its recognition, reported the Armenian National Committee". Please see the link below to an article which contains the statement released by the MMA on April 8, 2008. <https://asbarez.com/massachusetts-municipal-association-ends-no-place-for-hate-sponsorship/>. The No Place for Hate initiative was restructured by the ADL as a school-based initiative in 2014.

As you will see from the attached chart, I have included brief information on each committee/group I could find, with the majority of them being located on the Cape and South Shore communities. Some are town sponsored appointed committees and some are community sponsored committees. Within the chart, I have also included links to each groups page for future reference.

In 2016, it was proposed by a former Selectman, that the Town of Groton become a No Place for Hate Community. Due to the fact there was no program to join as mentioned above, this initiative ultimately led to the 2017 Spring Town Meeting article requesting support to install "All Are Welcome" granite markers at the major entrances into the Town of Groton. As you are aware, this was supported by a majority vote of the Town Meeting and the markers have since been installed.

**NO PLACE FOR HATE IN MASSACHUSETTS**  
11/09/2021

TOWN/CITY	COMMITTEE INFORMATION	LINK TO COMMITTEE
Salem, MA	<b>No Place for Hate Committee:</b> - Dedicated to promoting acceptance if diversity and combating discrimination - 17 Member Town Committee	<a href="https://www.salem.com/no-place-for-hate-committee">https://www.salem.com/no-place-for-hate-committee</a>
New Bedford, MA	<b>Together at the Table (formally No Place for Hate):</b> - Aims to reduce bias and to increase appreciation for diversity and to build communities of respect	<a href="https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/community-services/divisions/human-services/place-hate/">https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/community-services/divisions/human-services/place-hate/</a>
Falmouth, MA	<b>No Place of Hate-Falmouth:</b> - Community organization whose purpose is to build bridges, combat bias based on race, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and religion, and promote respect for all people through advocacy and education.	<a href="http://www.npfhfalmouth.org/">http://www.npfhfalmouth.org/</a>
Barnstable, MA	<b>No Place for Hare Barnstable Steering Group:</b> - Consists of community members from many organizations - Mission statement declares that the program values diversity and supports civil rights for all people.	No website. Found an article on the Barnstable Patriot from October 18/19, 2019
Duxbury, MA	<b>Duxbury Interfaith Council No Place for Hate:</b> - Offers community resources to counteract incidents of bigotry, racism, and ignorance and to promote respect for people of all backgrounds	<a href="http://www.duxburyinterfaithcouncil.org/duxbury-no-place-for-hate.html">http://www.duxburyinterfaithcouncil.org/duxbury-no-place-for-hate.html</a>
Marblehead, MA	<b>Task Force Against Discrimination:</b> - 9 members Town Committee - Goal is to maintain a community where all individuals are welcome regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or ethnic background.	<a href="https://www.marblehead.org/task-force-against-discrimination">https://www.marblehead.org/task-force-against-discrimination</a>
Hull, MA	<b>No Place for Hate Committee:</b> - 7 member steering committee and 3 members committee - Required to sponsor a minimum of four activities r programs that spread the message of tolerance and understanding in the community	<a href="https://www.town.hull.ma.us/no-place-hate-committee">https://www.town.hull.ma.us/no-place-hate-committee</a>

**NO PLACE FOR HATE IN MASSACHUSETTS**  
**11/09/2021**

TOWN/CITY	COMMITTEE INFORMATION	LINK TO COMMITTEE
Plymouth, MA	<p><b>No Place for Hate Committee:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Celebrate differences and react to incidents that may threaten or isolate individuals or groups based solely on visible or invisible differences</li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://www.plymouthnoplacementforhate.org/">http://www.plymouthnoplacementforhate.org/</a></p>
Marshfield, MA	<p><b>No Place for Hate Committee:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completely non-profit grass roots group that was formed in August 2001. Receive grant funding from the Henry Mauer Foundation of the North Community Church and a charitable donation from the Marshfield United Methodist Church.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://marshfield.net/npfh.html">http://marshfield.net/npfh.html</a></p>
Norwell, MA	<p><b>All Are Welcome Committee:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 7 member Town Committee dedicated to providing support and education related to diversity, acceptance, discrimination and other forms of prejudices. Committee looks to celebrate the differences of citizens and to protect the promise of equal justice and civil rights for all members of community.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.townofnorwell.net/all-are-welcome-committee">https://www.townofnorwell.net/all-are-welcome-committee</a></p>
Worcester, MA	<p><b>Coalition Against Bias &amp; Hate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The City Manager's Community Coalition Against Bias and Hate, formed in 2000, is a partnership of concerned individuals, including representatives from the City of Worcester Office on Human Rights, the City of Worcester Humans Rights Commission, the Worcester Police Department, the Worcester Public Schools, other city officials and representatives from city and state agencies, institutions of higher learning and community and faith-based groups, committed to fostering a community of justice, where acts of prejudice and hate will not be tolerated.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://www.worcesterma.gov/human-rights/coalition-against-bias-hate">http://www.worcesterma.gov/human-rights/coalition-against-bias-hate</a></p>



# TEN WAYS TO FIGHT HATE

A COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE

SPLC



Southern Poverty Law Center

HS  
N ੨੬  
ARITY

PRAYING  
♥ FOR ੨੬  
ORLANDO

SIK  
੨੬ ੨੬  
STAND  
ORLANDO

NEVER FORGET  
WHO YOU ARE AND  
WHAT YOU REPRESENT!  
#LOVE NOT HATE



# TEN WAYS TO FIGHT HATE

Hate in America has become commonplace. A presidential candidate wins election after denigrating Muslims, Latinos, women and people with disabilities. A young white man opens fire and kills nine African Americans who welcomed him into Bible study at a church in Charleston, South Carolina, telling his victims, “I have to do it.” A Muslim woman is seated on a bench in front of a coffee shop in Washington, D.C., when a woman begins screaming anti-Muslim epithets. A swastika and other anti-Semitic graffiti appear at an elementary school in Stapleton, Colorado. A lone gunman carrying an assault rifle and a handgun storms a well-known gay club in Orlando, Florida, killing 49 people and wounding 53 others. What can we do to STOP THE HATE?

Bias is a human condition, and American history is rife with prejudice against groups and individuals because of their race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. As a nation, we’ve made a lot of progress, but stereotyping and unequal treatment persist.

When bias motivates an unlawful act, it is considered a hate crime. Most hate crimes are inspired by race and religion, but hate today wears many faces. Bias incidents (eruptions of hate where no crime is committed) also tear communities apart and can escalate into actual crimes.

Since 2010, law enforcement agencies have reported an average of about 6,000 hate crime incidents per year to the FBI. But government studies show that the real number is far higher — an estimated 260,000

per year. Many hate crimes never get reported, in large part because the victims are reluctant to go to the police. In addition, many law enforcement agencies are not fully trained to recognize or investigate hate crimes, and many simply do not collect or report hate crime data to the FBI.

### THE GOOD NEWS IS ...

All over the country people are fighting hate, standing up to promote tolerance and inclusion. More often than not, when hate flares up, good people rise up against it — often in greater numbers and with stronger voices.

This guide sets out 10 principles for fighting hate in your community.



## 1 ACT

Do something. In the face of hatred, apathy will be interpreted as acceptance by the perpetrators, the public, and — worse — the victims. Community members must take action; if we don't, hate persists. [page 4](#)



## 2 JOIN FORCES

Reach out to allies from churches, schools, clubs, and other civic groups. Create a diverse coalition. Include children, police, and the media. Gather ideas from everyone, and get everyone involved. [page 7](#)



## 3 SUPPORT THE VICTIMS

Hate crime victims are especially vulnerable. If you're a victim, report every incident — in detail — and ask for help. If you learn about a hate crime victim in your community, show support. Let victims know you care. Surround them with comfort and protection. [page 8](#)



## 4 SPEAK UP

Hate must be exposed and denounced. Help news organizations achieve balance and depth. Do not debate hate group members in conflict-driven forums. Instead, speak up in ways that draw attention away from hate, toward unity. [page 10](#)



## 5 EDUCATE YOURSELF

An informed campaign improves its effectiveness. Determine if a hate group is involved, and research its symbols and agenda. Understand the difference between a hate crime and a bias incident. [page 13](#)



## 6 CREATE AN ALTERNATIVE

Do not attend a hate rally. Find another outlet for anger and frustration and for people's desire to do something. Hold a unity rally or parade to draw media attention away from hate. [page 17](#)



## 7 PRESSURE LEADERS

Elected officials and other community leaders can be important allies. But some must overcome reluctance — and others, their own biases — before they're able to take a stand. [page 19](#)



## 8 STAY ENGAGED

Promote acceptance and address bias before another hate crime can occur. Expand your comfort zone by reaching out to people outside your own groups. [page 22](#)



## 9 TEACH ACCEPTANCE

Bias is learned early, often at home. Schools can offer lessons of tolerance and acceptance. Host a diversity and inclusion day on campus. Reach out to young people who may be susceptible to hate group propaganda and prejudice. [page 25](#)



## 10 DIG DEEPER

Look inside yourself for biases and stereotypes. Commit to disrupting hate and intolerance at home, at school, in the workplace and in faith communities. [page 28](#)

# 1

# ACT

Do something. In the face of hatred, apathy will be interpreted as acceptance by the perpetrators, the public and — worse — the victims. Community members must take action; if we don't, hate persists.

“A hate group is coming to our town. What should we do?”

“I am very alarmed at hate crimes. What can I, as one person, do to help?”

“I find myself wanting to act, to show support for the victims, to demonstrate my anger and sorrow. But I don't know what to do or how to begin.”

If you've opened this guide, you probably want to “do something” about hate. You are not alone. Questions like these arrive daily at the Southern Poverty Law Center. When a hate crime occurs or a hate group rallies, good people often feel helpless. We encourage you to act, for the following reasons:

*Hate is an open attack on tolerance and acceptance.* It must be countered with acts of goodness. Sitting home with your virtue does no good. In the face of hate, silence is deadly. Apathy will be interpreted as acceptance — by the perpetrators, the public, and — worse — the victims. If left unchallenged, hate persists and grows.

*Hate is an attack on a community's health.* Hate tears society along racial, ethnic, gender, and religious lines. The U.S. Department of Justice warns that hate crimes, more than any other crime, can trigger community conflict, civil disturbances, and even riots. For all their “patriotic” rhetoric, hate groups and their imitators are really trying to divide us; their views are fundamentally anti-democratic. True patriots fight hate.

*Hate escalates.* Take seriously the smallest hint of hate — even what appears to be simple name-calling. The Department of Justice again has a warning: Slurs often escalate to harassment, harassment to threats, and threats to physical violence. Don't wait to fight hate.



Volunteers clean up a Jewish cemetery in University City, Missouri, after it was vandalized in 2017.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- » Pick up the phone. Call friends and colleagues. Host a neighborhood or community meeting. Speak up in church. Suggest some action.
- » Sign a petition. Attend a vigil. Lead a prayer.
- » Repair acts of hate-fueled vandalism, as a neighborhood or a community.
- » Use whatever skills and means you have. Offer your print shop to make fliers. Share your musical talents at a rally. Give your employees the afternoon off to attend.
- » Be creative. Take action. Do your part to fight hate.

RICHMOND  
STANDS  
W/  
ERGUSON

#BLACK  
LIVES  
MATTER

# 2

## JOIN FORCES

Reach out to allies from churches, schools, clubs, and other civic groups. Create a diverse coalition. Include children, police, and the media. Gather ideas from everyone, and get everyone involved.

Others share your desire to stand against hate. There is power in numbers. Asking for help and organizing a group reduces personal fear and vulnerability, spreads the workload, and increases creativity and impact. Coalitions can stand up to — and isolate — organized hate groups. You and your allies can help educate others as you work to eradicate hate.

A hate crime often creates an opportunity for a community's first dialogue on race, gender identity, or religious intolerance. It can help bridge the gap between neighborhoods and law enforcement. More people than we imagine want to do something; they just need a little push.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Not sure where to start? Here are some ideas:

- » Call on groups that are likely to respond to a hate event, including faith alliances, labor unions, teachers, women's groups, university faculties, fair housing councils, the YMCA, and youth groups. Make a special effort to involve businesses, schools, houses of worship, politicians, children, and members of targeted groups.
- » Also call on local law enforcement officials. Work to create a healthy relationship with local police; working together, human rights groups and law enforcement officials can track early warning signs of hate brewing in a community, allowing for a rapid and unified response.

# 3

## SUPPORT THE VICTIMS

Hate crime victims are especially vulnerable. If you're a victim, report every incident — in detail — and ask for help. If you learn about a hate crime victim in your community, show support. Let victims know you care. Surround them with comfort and protection.

Victims of hate crimes often feel terribly alone and afraid. They have been attacked simply for being who they are — for their disability, their ethnicity, their sexual orientation. Silence amplifies their isolation; it also tacitly condones the act of hate. Victims need a strong, timely message that they are valued. Small acts of kindness — a phone call, a letter — can help.

Often, hate attacks include vicious symbols: a burning cross, a noose, a swastika. Such symbols evoke a history of hatred. They also reverberate beyond individual victims, leaving entire communities vulnerable and afraid.

And because they may fear “the system,” some victims may welcome the presence of others at the police station or courthouse. Local human rights organizations often provide such support, but individuals also may step forward.

### **IF YOU ARE A VICTIM**

We urge victims of hate crime to report it to police.

Only you can decide whether to reveal your identity. But many victims have found the courage to lend their names to fighting hate. You can, too!



*Report every incident.* If you are a member of a targeted group, harassment could continue. What began as egg-throwing at five black families in rural Selbrook, Alabama, escalated for 18 months until hate mail made it a federal offense. The story made the news, police patrolled and harassment declined.

*Speak to the press.* Your story, with a frank discussion of the impact on your family life, can be a powerful motivator to others. Copycat crimes are possible, but rare. More likely, you'll be encouraged by love and support. In Watertown, New York, a black minister talked about the vulgar hate mail he received. His community held a special unity rally. "Denying that racism exists, or not talking about it, will not cause it to go away," he said.

*Research your legal rights.* After enduring racial slurs, slashed tires, broken windows, the wounding of their dog, and a six-foot burning cross planted in their yard by a white neighbor, Andrew Bailey and Sharon Henderson of Chicago filed suit against the perpetrator. A federal jury awarded them \$720,000.

# 4

## SPEAK UP

Hate must be exposed and denounced. Help news organizations achieve balance and depth. Do not debate hate group members in conflict-driven forums. Instead, speak up in ways that draw attention away from hate, toward unity.

Goodness has a First Amendment right, too. We urge you to denounce hate groups and hate crimes and to spread the truth about hate's threat to a pluralistic society. An informed and unified community is the best defense against hate.

You can spread tolerance through social media and websites, church bulletins, door-to-door fliers, letters to the editor, and print advertisements. Hate shrivels under strong light. Beneath their neo-Nazi exteriors, hatemongers are cowards and are surprisingly subject to public pressure and ostracism.

### DEALING WITH MEDIA

Some tips for an effective media campaign:

- » News outlets cover hate crimes and groups. Don't kill the messenger. Consider hate news a wake-up call that reveals tension in the community. Attack the problem. Reporters will then cover you, too.
- » Name a person from your group to be the main contact for the media. This keeps the message consistent and allows the press to quickly seek comment or reaction to events. Invite the press to public events you hold.
- » The media like news hooks and catchy phrases, such as "Hate Free Zone." Propose human-interest stories, such as the impact of hate on individuals. Use signs, balloons, or other props that will be attractive to media photographers.
- » Educate reporters, editors, and publishers about hate groups, their symbols, and their impact on victims and communities. Put them in touch



Children in Asheville, North Carolina, participate in a rally against racism in 2016.

with hate experts like the Southern Poverty Law Center. Urge editorial writers and columnists to take a stand against hate.

- » Criticize the press when it falls short. Remind editors that it is not fair to focus on 20 Klansmen when 300 people attend a peace rally.
- » Do not debate hate group members on conflict-driven talk shows or public forums. Your presence lends them legitimacy and publicity. They use code words to cover their beliefs. And they misinterpret history and Bible verses in a manner that may be difficult to counter during a live forum.

## A MESSAGE FOR THE MEDIA

Share this with media contacts you know, or simply photocopy it and mail it to an editor, anchor, columnist, or reporter:

A newsroom that covers race issues thoroughly and regularly sets an agenda for the community. Nuanced and thoughtful coverage — rather than shallow, reactive stories or stereotypical images — deepens our community’s discussion and understanding of race.

Consider the following:

- » The masked, mysterious Klansman, like his burning cross, is an emotional image loaded with historical associations. Don’t let this cliché control the story. Include a serious look at the Klan’s numbers and influence, its involvement in hate crimes, and the hypocrisy of its pseudo-Christian message.
- » Don’t allow hate groups to masquerade as white-pride civic groups or “heritage” organizations. In their literature and on their websites, they denigrate certain groups of people, typically people of color and Jews. Seek out comments from local police, state human rights commissions, the Southern Poverty Law Center, or the Anti-Defamation League.
- » White supremacist and other extremist groups represent the outer fringes of American society. No meaningful dialogue can occur when it is framed by such extremes. Seek deeper, more thoughtful coverage of issues of race and other -isms.

As a final thought, we ask you to:

Take hate crimes and bias incidents seriously and report on them prominently. Monitor the impact of hate on victims and other members of targeted groups. Become an activist against hate, just as you are against crime. Sponsor a forum or other community journalism event tied to these issues. And don’t miss the “good news” as ordinary people discover unique ways to promote tolerance.

You are part of our community, and you must be part of our fight against hate.

# 5

## EDUCATE YOURSELF

An informed campaign improves its effectiveness. Determine if a hate group is involved, and research its symbols and agenda. Understand the difference between a hate crime and a bias incident.

Eruptions of hate generally produce one of two reactions: apathy (“It’s just an isolated act by some kooks”) or fear (“The world is out of control”). Before reacting, communities need accurate information about those who are spouting hate.

The Southern Poverty Law Center tracks hundreds of active hate groups in the U.S. Some are small — a handful of people — but armed with a computer, email, and a website their reach can be immense, their message capable of entering a child’s bedroom.

Through their literature and websites, hate groups spread propaganda that vilifies and demonizes African Americans, Latinos, Muslims, Jews, LGBT people and other groups. Like some of their fellow extremists in militia groups, they also sow fears of losing control of “their country” to a “One World Government” dominated by Jewish bankers, multinational corporations, and the United Nations. More often than not, members of hate groups use other groups as scapegoats for their own personal failures, low self-esteem, anger, or frustration. They frequently use music or other means to recruit and indoctrinate disaffected teens.

Though their views may be couched in code words, members of hate groups typically share these extremist views:

- » They want to limit the rights of certain groups they view as inferior.
- » They want to divide society along racial, ethnic, or religious lines.

- » They demonize the groups they hate with false propaganda and often outlandish conspiracy theories.
- » They try to silence any opposition.

Most hate crimes, however, are not committed by members of hate groups; the Southern Poverty Law Center estimates fewer than 5 percent. Many hate crimes are committed by young males acting alone or in small groups, often for thrills. While these perpetrators may act independently, they are sometimes influenced by the dehumanizing rhetoric and propaganda of hate groups.

### **WHEN HATE COMES TO CHURCH**

Dylann Roof was a troubled teenager in South Carolina who was indoctrinated into white supremacist ideology online. The radicalization process began when he searched for information about “black on white crime” after hearing about the case of a black teen, Trayvon Martin, who was killed by a neighborhood watchman in Florida. Roof landed on the web page of the Council of Conservative Citizens, a rabidly racist hate group descended from the old White Citizens Councils formed in the 1950s in the South. There, he found page after page of racist propaganda. Roof later wrote in an online manifesto that he has “never been the same since that day.”

As he delved deeper, he was soon immersed in hate materials, writing that he “found out about the Jewish problem” and became “completely racially aware.” One of the sites he visited and began posting comments on was Stormfront, a notorious neo-Nazi forum.

On June 17, 2015, Roof walked into the Emanuel A.M.E. Church in downtown Charleston, South Carolina, where a Bible study was under way. The church, known as “Mother Emanuel,” is famous for its historic role in the civil rights movement.

After about an hour of listening in the meeting, Roof pulled out a .45-caliber pistol and aimed it at an elderly woman. According to witness accounts, he said, “I have to do it. You rape our women and you’re taking over our country. And you have to go.” Then he began firing methodically, killing nine African Americans, including the church’s pastor. He left one woman alive, he said, so she could tell the world what had happened.

Roof was arrested the next day. In January 2017, he was sentenced to death for the murders. He had, by then, become emblematic of a growing phenomenon: the “lone-wolf” terrorist who acts alone after being radicalized by hate propaganda online.

Dylann Roof was indoctrinated into white supremacist ideology online before murdering nine African Americans at a Charleston, South Carolina, church in 2015.



### **WHAT'S A HATE CRIME?**

A hate crime must meet two criteria:

- » A crime must happen, such as physical assault, intimidation, arson, or vandalism; and
- » The crime must be motivated, in whole or in part, by bias.

The list of biases included in state or federal hate crime statutes varies. Most include race, ethnicity, and religion. Some also include sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and/or disability.

As you respond to a hate crime, check specific statutes in your area, then consider working to add missing categories, to protect vulnerable community members.

### **WHAT'S A BIAS INCIDENT?**

A bias incident is conduct, speech, or expression that is motivated by bias or prejudice but doesn't involve a criminal act.

### **WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?**

Hate crimes, if charged and prosecuted, will be dealt with in the court system. They typically carry enhanced penalties, such as longer sentences.

Bias incidents occur with no clear path or procedure for recourse.

Both, however, demand unified and unflinching denouncement from individuals, groups, and entire communities.

### **WHAT'S THE IMPACT?**

Hate crimes and bias incidents don't just victimize individuals; they torment communities.

When someone scrawls threatening graffiti targeting Asian Americans, for example, everyone in the community may feel frightened and unsafe, as may members of other ethnic or racial groups.

# 6

## CREATE AN ALTERNATIVE

Do not attend a hate rally. Find another outlet for anger and frustration and for people's desire to do something. Hold a unity rally or parade to draw media attention away from hate.

Hate has a First Amendment right. Courts have routinely upheld the constitutional right of the Ku Klux Klan and other hate groups to hold rallies and say whatever they want. Communities can restrict group movements to avoid conflicts with other citizens, but hate rallies will continue. Your efforts should focus on channeling people away from hate rallies.

### **DO NOT ATTEND A HATE RALLY**

As much as you might like to physically show your opposition to hate, confrontations serve only the perpetrators. They also burden law enforcement with protecting hatemongers from otherwise law-abiding citizens.

If an event featuring a hate group, avowed separatist or extremist is coming to your college campus, hold a unity rally on a different part of campus. Invite campus clubs, sororities, fraternities and athletic organizations to support your efforts.

### **A WORLD OF IDEAS**

Every act of hatred should be met with an act of love and unity.

Many communities facing a hate group rally have held alternative events at the same hour, some distance away, emphasizing strength in community and diversity. They have included forums, parades, and unity

Hundreds of thousands of people attended the Women's March on Washington on Jan. 21, 2017.



fairs featuring speakers, food, music, exhibits, and entertainment. These events give people a safe outlet for the frustration and anger they want to vent. As a woman at a Spokane, Washington, human rights rally put it, “Being passive is something I don’t want to do. I need to make some kind of commitment to human rights.”

# 7

## PRESSURE LEADERS

Elected officials and other community leaders can be important allies. But some must overcome reluctance — and others, their own biases — before they're able to take a stand.

The fight against hate needs community leaders willing to take an active role. The support of mayors, police chiefs, college presidents, school principals, local clergy, business leaders, and others can help your community address the root causes of hate and help turn bias incidents into experiences from which your community can learn and heal.

When leaders step forward and act swiftly in the wake of a hate incident, victims feel supported, community members feel safe, and space for action and dialogue can grow.

Too often, the fear of negative publicity, a lack of partnerships with affected communities, and a failure to fully understand hate and bias can prevent leaders from stepping up. Their silence creates a vacuum in which rumors spread, victims feel ignored, and perpetrators find tacit acceptance.

### STEPS TO TAKE

Here are steps for a healthy community:

- » Form relationships with community leaders before a hate incident occurs. If your community group already has a relationship with the mayor, for example, you will be better positioned to ask for a public statement in the event of a hate crime.
- » Educate community leaders about the causes and effects of hate.



Sometimes, well-intentioned leaders don't understand that bias-motivated actions can have far-reaching effects across a community. Educate leaders about the impact of hate and the root causes of intolerance so their response can match the incident.

- » Demand a quick, serious police response. The vigorous investigation and prosecution of hate crimes attract media attention to issues of tolerance and encourage the public to stand up against hate.
- » Demand a strong public statement by political leaders. When elected officials issue proclamations against hate, it helps promote tolerance and can unify communities. Silence, on the other hand, can be interpreted as the acceptance of hate.
- » Encourage leaders to name the problem. Local leaders sometimes try to minimize incidents fueled by hate or bias by not calling them hate crimes. As a result, victims and their communities can feel silenced, and national hate crime statistics become inaccurate.
- » Push leaders when they show bias or fail to act. Healing in the wake of a bias crime or incident — and building a more connected community — requires more than official statements. It also takes hard work. Ask your community leaders to walk the talk. Ask for their public support and involvement in rallies, community meetings, and long-term solutions that address the root causes of intolerance.



# STAY ENGAGED

Promote acceptance and address bias before another hate crime can occur. Expand your comfort zone by reaching out to people outside your own groups.

Hate usually doesn't strike communities from some distant place. It often begins at home, brewing silently under the surface. It can grow out of divided communities — communities where residents feel powerless or voiceless, communities where differences cause fear instead of celebration.

The best cure for hate is a united community. As Chris Boucher of Yukon, Pennsylvania, put it after residents there opposed a local meeting of the Ku Klux Klan, “A united coalition is like Teflon. Hate can't stick there.”

On the other hand, the seeds of hate take root and thrive in communities that are receptive to it.

Experts say the first step in changing hearts is to change behavior. Personal changes are important — the positive statements you make about others, challenging assumptions about people who are different — but community-wide changes are crucial for lasting change.

Often, either after a bias incident or as a tool for preventing one, communities want to sponsor multicultural food festivals and other events to celebrate differences. These are important steps in helping community members feel acknowledged and appreciated. We encourage you to sponsor these events — and we encourage you to go deeper.

## STEPS TO TAKE

Not sure where to start? Consider the following:

» Hold candlelight vigils, interfaith services, and other activities to bring together people of different races, religions, and ethnic groups. In Boise, Idaho, for example, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday has become an 11-day human rights celebration.



- » Honor history and mark anniversaries. In Selma, Alabama, a multicultural fair is held on the anniversary of Bloody Sunday, when voting rights activists attempted to cross a bridge in their march to Montgomery and were beaten back by police.
- » Break bread together. Some communities have dinner clubs that bring together people of different ethnicities and income levels for a meal. These groups typically have no agenda, no speakers, and only one rule at their dinners: Sit next to someone you don't know.
- » Move from prayer to action. In California's San Fernando Valley, an interfaith council formed "home dialogues" with people from different faiths and cultures meeting together in their homes. In Covington, Kentucky, churchwomen conducted a letter-writing campaign to support hate crime legislation; they later promoted teacher training in race relations.
- » Begin a community conversation on race. Discussion groups, book clubs, chat rooms, and library gatherings can bring people together. Effective community conversations allow individuals to tell their stories, their immigration history, their daily encounters with discrimination, their fear about revealing sexual orientation, and so on.

- » Consider building something the community needs, and use it as an organizing tool — from a senior center to a new playground. Make sure residents from different backgrounds are included in the process.
- » Create a Facebook page or an online community discussion board celebrating diversity and inclusion.

## **NETWORKS**

From regional “human rights coalitions” to local “peace and justice” groups, member organizations can connect like-minded people around issues of tolerance and social justice. These networks make a powerful force for responding to bias incidents and lobbying for change. The Many and One Coalition, for example, formed after a white supremacist group held a rally in Lewistown, Maine, in 2003.

The Many and One Coalition evolved into a large-scale diversity organization, educating and organizing residents, businesses, and community-based organizations to address personal and systemic oppression like racism, sexism, and homophobia.

The coalition sponsored an annual statewide event, called 10 Days of Community, Diversity, and Justice, to celebrate differences with activities like a multicultural food fair. But it also helped residents go further, providing a safe space in which participants could talk about sensitive issues like religion, sexual orientation, and race.

## **EXPANDING COMFORT ZONES**

A Connecticut-based group, Everyday Democracy, helps communities look long-range by creating dialogue groups in which residents discuss issues of inclusion before tensions can boil over into bias incidents and hate crimes.

The idea is simple: Bring together people from different backgrounds and belief systems, and provide them with a safe space to share thoughts and get to know each other.

It’s a formula that can be replicated anywhere.

# 9

## TEACH ACCEPTANCE

Bias is learned early, often at home. Schools can offer lessons of tolerance and acceptance. Host a diversity and inclusion day on campus. Reach out to young people who may be susceptible to hate group propaganda and prejudice.

Bias is learned in childhood. By age 3, children can be aware of racial differences and may have the perception that “white” is desirable. By age 12, they can hold stereotypes about ethnic, racial, and religious groups, or LGBT people. Because stereotypes underlie hate, and because almost half of all hate crimes are committed by young men under 20, tolerance education is critical.

Schools are an ideal environment to counter bias, because they mix children of different backgrounds, place them on equal footing, and allow one-on-one interaction. Children also are naturally curious about people who are different.

The Southern Poverty Law Center offers free resources to K-12 classroom teachers across the country. Teachers can download lesson plans to address a range of biases and order free, award-winning documentary films on themes promoting civil and human rights. Its Teaching Tolerance program also sponsors a unique program to help students move out of their comfort zone and cross social boundaries in their schools. During the annual Mix It Up at Lunch Day, students eat lunch while sitting next to someone they don’t know. Prompts from teachers or other students help guide the conversation. Mix It Up has helped millions of students across the country examine their own biases and



overcome their fears of differences. Go to [tolerance.org](http://tolerance.org) to find these free resources and more.

### **BEYOND THE CLASSROOM**

Tolerance can be taught outside the classroom as well. Consider this case in Arizona: Amid increasingly virulent anti-immigrant sentiment, the *Coalicion de Derechos Humanos* (Human Rights Coalition) began holding weekly public vigils in Tucson to remember those who lost their lives trying to cross the border from Mexico into the United States.

The group, which works to document human rights abuses along the border, also keeps a list of border deaths, including age and cause of death: *age 26, dehydration; age 18, hit by a car; age 43, gunshot wound; age 25, drowned; age 19, heat stroke.*

“It hits home, with the specific information,” said Kat Rodriguez of the *Coalicion de Derechos Humanos*. “It shows the cost of the failed and flawed border policies of the United States, the human cost.”

## **FIVE STEPS FOR PARENTS**

1. Examine your children's textbooks and the curricula at their schools to determine whether they are equitable and multicultural.

2. Expose your child to multicultural experiences by intentionally expanding your circle of friends and experiences.

3. Encourage your children to become activists. They can form harmony clubs, build multicultural peace gardens, sponsor "walk in my shoes" activities, and create ways to interact with children of other cultures.

4. Examine the media your children consume, from internet sites to the commercials during their favorite TV shows. Stereotypes and examples of intolerance are bound to be present. Discuss these issues openly, as you would the dangers of cigarette smoking.

5. Model inclusive language and behavior. Children learn from the language you use and the attitudes you model. If you demonstrate a deep respect for other cultures, races, and walks of life, they most likely will, too.

# 10

## DIG DEEPER

Look inside yourself for biases and stereotypes. Commit to disrupting hate and intolerance at home, at school, in the workplace, and in faith communities.

Acceptance, fundamentally, is a personal decision. It comes from an attitude that is learnable and embraceable: a belief that every voice matters, that all people are valuable, that no one is “less than.”

We all grow up with prejudices. Acknowledging them — and working through them — can be a scary and difficult process. It’s also one of the most important steps toward breaking down the walls of silence that allow intolerance to grow. Luckily, we all possess the power to overcome our ignorance and fear, and to influence our children, peers, and communities.

### IT BEGINS WITH ME

Human rights experts recommend starting with the language we use and the assumptions we make about others. Am I quick to label people as “rednecks” or “illegals”? Do I look with disdain at families on welfare, or do I try to understand the socioeconomic forces that prevent many families from climbing out of poverty?

Here are other questions you might ask yourself:

- » How wide is my circle of friends? How diverse are the people who visit my home?
- » How integrated is my neighborhood? My child’s school? My workplace?
- » Do I take economic segregation and environmental racism for granted?
- » Do I have the courage to ask a friend not to tell a sexist or racist or homophobic joke in my presence?
- » Do I receive information about other cultures from members of those cultures, or from potentially biased, third-party sources?
- » Do I take the time to listen and learn from other people’s experiences — especially people with whom I might initially disagree?



Congregants at the Metropolitan AME Church in Washington, D.C., hold hands during a June 19, 2015, prayer vigil for the nine people killed at a South Carolina church by a white supremacist.

» How often am I in the minority?

Many good books, films, and workshops can help guide you in self-examination. Reading the histories of other cultures and of different social justice movements — the civil rights movement, the Chicano movement, the fight for LGBT rights, for example — is a good start.

### **FIGHTING FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE**

Sooner or later, your personal exploration will bump up against issues that take more than one person to solve. Deep racial disparities and systemic discrimination continue to plague our country.

These issues cry out for answers and people to take them on.

In any city and state there are dozens of problems to address: hunger, affordable housing, domestic violence, school dropout rates, police brutality — the list goes on. A caring group of people, having coalesced to deal with hate, could remain together to tackle any number of societal problems.

Luckily, many towns and cities have neighborhood or citywide organizations that bring together people of different backgrounds to work for change. If yours does not, there are plenty of resources available to help you start one.

Why not start today?

**“TRUTH AND  
LOVE AND  
KINDNESS  
AND CARING  
WON OUT OVER  
HATE.  
IT RESTORED  
MY FAITH IN  
HUMANITY.”**

— former Palatine, Illinois, Mayor Rita Mullins, after teenagers within the community rose up against the Ku Klux Klan

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FIFTH EDITION, FIRST PRINTING

The Southern Poverty Law Center, based in Alabama with offices in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi, is a nonprofit civil rights organization dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry, and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of society. For more information, see [www.splcenter.org](http://www.splcenter.org).

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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2021  
UN-APPROVED**

**SB Members Present:** Rebecca H. Pine, Chair; Alison S. Manugian, Vice Chair; Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk; Joshua A. Degen, Member; John F. Reilly, Member  
**Also Present:** Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant;

Ms. Pine called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Water Superintendent, Tom Orcutt gave a nice overview of how hard his department worked during COVID and through some absences within the department over the past almost 2 years. He said he was very proud of them and even more proud of the award they received for their outstanding service from the Mass Waterworks. Ms. Pine read the Community Award Plaque from Mass Waterworks awarded to the Water Department and commended them for their service.

Mr. Haddad said that the Groton's Women's Club would be holding their annual greens sale on Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> from 9am-1pm.

Mr. Haddad said that he always took pride in providing accurate information to the Select Board and public and wanted to fix an error he made. He said that there was a sign in town that received many complaints. He said that he reported last week that the building commissioner had gone out there to talk to the homeowner which wasn't the case. He apologized for his error to the public and to the homeowners adding he had a nice conversation with the homeowner the week prior fixing his error.

Mr. Haddad said that they had a vacancy on the Finance Committee. He said interest forms would need to be submitted by November 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Haddad said that the Destination Committee was also seeking interested individuals. He said that they had 3 applicants, but were looking for additional interest.

Ms. Pine said that there was a movie being shown tomorrow sponsored by numerous committees and departments called Etched in Glass. She said that it would be held at the PAC and was about a Holocaust survivor.

Ms. Pine said that Thursday was Veterans Day and that there would be a ceremony held at 11am on Veteran's Common.

**REDSKIN TRAIL ROAD NAME DISCUSSION**

Mr. Haddad said that the Diversity Task Force had recommended that the road name Redskin Trail be considered for change. He said that Ms. Dunbar had done some research for him earlier that day on other roads that had their names changed. He said that the Select Board had done this in the past, without having to go to Town Meeting and also with no compensation being given to the residents. He said that the Board would need to notify the residents of any name change.

Ms. Pine said that they had reached out to the residents of the Road, of whom some were present. Ms. Karen Lippert said that they were in favor of the name change adding the road name was embarrassing. She said that she thought there were some costs associated with changing their address such as their driver's license and deed. Ms. Pine said that Town Counsel said they didn't need to change their deed, but did have to change their address at the post office, and those that mail them. Ms. Lippert asked if there were costs, would the Board be willing to pay those costs. Mr. Cunningham said that he would be willing to pay for those costs the residents incurred adding that one could put a sticker on the back of their license until such time you get your license renewed. Mr. Haddad read a resident's email into the record. Mr. Erich Garger said that the last time this came up there were costs associated with updating street names. Mr. Reilly said he received a call from a resident today about not being in favor of changing the road name. Mr. Cunningham said that when that came up the last time, they had not done as much research into costs associated with the name change adding that wasn't the case this time. A resident at 17 Redskin Trail said he was in favor of the name change but asked if every resident needed to be in agreement with this. Ms. Pine said that they did not. Mr. Brad Harper said he was not a resident of Redskin Trail but spoke in favor of changing the streets name.

Mr. Cunningham asked how they would go about changing the name. He said he liked the idea of it having a historic means to it. Ms. Pine said it would be great if the residents could get together and come up with something they might agree upon. Mr. Haddad suggested a November 30<sup>th</sup> deadline for discussion again at one of the first meeting of December.

*Mr. Degen moved that the Select Board change the name of Redskin Trail effective December 15, 2021 to be renamed at an upcoming meeting. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Ms. Collette thanked the Select Board for considering the name change as recommended by the Diversity Task Force. She added that the Communications Department were going to be a key decision maker in this process also as it would affect 911 and couldn't be something similar to what they had already.

### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. Mr. Haddad said that the first quarter financials were ready to be reviewed. He said that motor vehicle excise taxes were on target with last year at this time. He said that the room occupancy tax had doubled this Fiscal Year as had meals tax. Mr. Haddad said that Country Club revenues were down from last year because it had rained a lot this summer. He said that the Country Club GM said he had the best October yet which was a positive. Mr. Haddad said that licenses and permits were up and real estate was looking good. He said that they were down a little from last year but was not concerned about revenues. Mr. Haddad said that their expenses were up a little bit but the spending freeze was tighter last year than it was this year. Mr. Robertson said that revenue was right on track where they thought adding he went back to 2016. He said that benefits were looking a little higher as was wages, but that was because of an extra payroll (a third payroll in September) and pension costs that were paid up front.
2. Mr. Haddad said that the Boards goals were also on the agenda to be reviewed. Mr. Haddad reviewed the Board's goals and provided updates. Mr. Degen said he wanted to understand Conductorlab site a little further as it was getting ready to be buttoned up. He suggested that he, Mr. Haddad and Mr. Cunningham meet with Conductorlab for a better understanding.

Mr. Haddad said that they were working toward the taxpayer burden goal and provided updates on that goal. Mr. Haddad provided an update on the housing goal. He said that they would be receiving an application for housing off Cow Pond Brook Road with an affordable housing component adding that that Deluxe site would also bring affordable housing to Groton.

Mr. Haddad said that the goal of promoting economic development was being worked on. He said that the Destination Groton Committee would be getting started soon adding they were waiting for a few more interested individuals. He said that they were hoping to get ARPA money from the Commonwealth to install sidewalks down Old Ayer Road to Groton Hills Music Center.

### **871 BOSTON ROAD – LIQUOR LICENSE VIOLATION HEARING**

Mr. Haddad read the hearing letter into the record that was sent to Mr. Piyush Patel, Owner and Manager. Chief Luth and Sergeant Henahan were also present.

Sergeant Henahan said he was the shift supervisor on October 22, 2021. He said he preformed an area check of 871 Boston Road at 6pm and immediately made contact with what he believed to be a teenager leaving the package store with alcohol in his arms/hands. He said the individual appeared nervous at which time Sergeant Henahan proceeded to ask him if he was 21. He said that the teenager admitted to being an 18-year-old senior from a neighboring town. He said he did have a fraudulent Mass ID but said he had not been asked to show proof of license that evening. The teenager said he had purchased alcohol 15-20 times over the past year at this location. He said that the mother was called adding a 17-year-old was also in the teenager's car. He said that both individuals seemed remorseful and apologized for their actions. He said that he allowed the mother to take the children adding instead of taking the 18-year-old with him to the Station. He said that he spoke to the Clerk working who said that she typically asked for identification but had not this time. Sergeant Henahan said that he told the Clerk that she needed to ask for identification every time.

Mr. Patel said that his Clerk had checked the young man's ID before and why she hadn't this time. He said that they examine the ID and if it checked out, they can sell to the person. He said that they understood they needed to check all ID's. He said he didn't like that this had happened but were trying to be better.

Mr. Degen said that the Clerk didn't recall the individual according to the Sergeants report. Sergeant Henehan said that was correct. Mr. Cunningham asked if there had been previous incidents of this. Chief Luth said that there had been none documented. Mr. Reilly asked about the quality of the fake ID. Ms. Pine asked if the retailer would be able to tell the difference between a real ID and a fake one. Sergeant Henehan showed the Board the fake ID which they compared to real one to show them the likeness.

Chief Luth said that they could ask for TIPS training, a policy which it sounded like they were doing, and maybe a one-day suspension of their liquor license. Mr. Patel said that the ID looked so real that they do their best. Mr. Haddad asked if they could refuse to sell if someone doesn't look old enough. Chief Luth said that they could. Mr. Reilly asked if there were scanners for reading licenses. Sergeant Henehan said that they did sell them adding it would tell them if it was fake or not. Mr. Patel said that a small store like his couldn't afford that equipment.

Mr. Haddad said he agreed with Chief Luth's recommendation of TIPS re-training within the next 90 days and a letter warning them of their first violation and also asked that the Department step up spot checks. Mr. Cunningham asked that systems be investigated for scanning licenses, something less expensive. Mr. Patel said that they would also not sell to anyone that looks younger than their ID says. Ms. Manugian said that if this teenager bought here before, there may be other teenagers that are buying there also. Chief Luth said that he could reach out to other communities adding they were all having trouble with this right now.

*Mr. Cunningham moved that they require the store to recertify their employees with TIPS training and a strong letter of warning be issued and that also the owner investigate some sort of system to verify whether ID's are fake or not. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion.*

Mr. Degen said that there was a black light that could be used to check ID's and asked that that be looked into adding it cost \$10.

*The motion carried unanimously.*

#### **TOWN MANAGERS REPORT – CONT.**

3. Mr. Haddad said that at last week's meeting, the Board voted to authorize him to send out a request for letters of interest in obtaining a Host Community Agreement to establish an Adult Use Recreational Marijuana Establishment here in Groton. He said that he had provided the Board with a copy of the request document for their information under separate cover. Mr. Haddad said that they had also posted the notice and request document prominently on their website. He said that he sent out the request document to three businesses adding he sent out one more today.

Mr. Haddad said that in addition, at last week's meeting, Select Board Member Degen questioned whether there was an Adult Care Facility located in the Four Corners General Business District and whether that would impact the issuance of a retail marijuana license at that location. He said that they did a search to determine if there is such a business located in Four Corners. He said that they reviewed the business records in the Town Clerk's Office and reached out to the Secretary of State's Office. Mr. Haddad said that there was no record of any Adult Care Facility registered in Groton. Mr. Haddad said that he had received an opinion from Town Counsel adding that daycare facilities are up to the Zoning Enforcement Officer. He said that Bob Garside said that daycare facilities referred to childcare facilities and not adult daycares.

4. Mr. Haddad said that budget requests went out to the Department Heads, Boards and Committees adding budgets were due to him by November 22nd.
5. Mr. Haddad reviewed the Board's schedule for the next few meetings.

#### **SELECT BOARD ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

1. Mr. Haddad said that they had received interest from several residents interested in serving on the Capital Planning Advisory Committee. He said that there were two vacancies on the Committee. Mr. Haddad said that they interviewed 4 candidates of all who were very qualified. He said that the Committee met earlier that night and were recommending that the Select Board appoint Jamie McDonald and Michael Sulpizio and asked the Board to consider making those appointments through June 30, 2024.

*Mr. Degen made the motion. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

2. Mr. Haddad said that the Select Board had previously approved the adoption of the T.R.E.A.D. program. He said that this program allowed residents to donate money to the Town that could be used to assist low-income seniors and the disabled pay their taxes. He said that the Program was overseen by a committee of five (5) made up of the Chair of the Board of Assessors, the Treasurer/Collector and three residents appointed by the Select Board. He said that they had received interest from three residents to serve on the Committee. Mr. Haddad respectfully requested that the Board appoint Louis DiMola, Paula Martin and Charles Vander Linden to the Committee. He said that Garret Boles would serve as the Chair of the Board of Assessors and Hannah Moller as the Treasurer/Collector.

*Mr. Degen moved to appoint Louis DiMola, Paula Martin and Charles Vander Linden to the TREAD Committee term to expire June 30, 2022 and to also include Garrett Boles as Chair of the Assessors and Hannah Moller Treasurer/Collector as members of the Committee. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Mr. Haddad said that during their budget preparation meeting with the Finance Committee, the issue of PILOTs was discussed and the desire to create a working group of himself, the Town Treasurer, the Town Accountant, a member of the Select Board and a member of the Finance Committee to review this issue in more detail. He said that the Finance Committee would need to designate a member. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to designate a member so that they could get started. Mr. Degen said he would like to do this. Ms. Pine said she thought that this was a tricky and somewhat delicate discussion that needed to occur.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Ms. Pine said that some comments had been made at Town Meeting that the Select Board had acted politically when appointing to the Board of Registrars. She said that she found the claim to be offensive and asked for the historic data on party designation. She reviewed the historic Board of Registrars appointment data put together by the Town Clerk. Mr. Haddad said that if the Town Clerk was a registered Democrat or Republican, that would sway the make-up also adding you couldn't have more than 2 registered in a particular party.

Mr. Haddad said that he had received requests from more than half of the employees asking for Friday, November 12<sup>th</sup> off. He said that if the Board had no issues, he would like to close Town Hall and require the staff to use personal or vacation time for the 5 hours. There were no issues.

#### **ON-GOING ISSUES**

- C. Mr. Haddad said that the elementary school project was moving forward nicely adding they were before the Planning Board on Thursday night for pre-submission review which went well. He said that they had a great team guiding them. Mr. Haddad said that the biggest cost to them outside of material was lead times. He said that they would be doing some pre-ordering to hopefully save them some time.

Mr. Haddad thanked Ayer Family Pharmacy and the Council on Aging for the vaccine clinic they held last week adding 180 individuals received their booster shot or their first or second vaccine.

#### **MINUTES**

*Mr. Degen moved to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of November 1, 2021 as written. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Ms. Pine adjourned the meeting at 8:35pm.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ respectfully submitted:  
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: