

**Town of Hartford Committee on Racial Equity & Inclusion**  
**Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**6pm to 7:30pm**

In Attendance: John Hall (Chair), Kim Souza (Clerk), Ann Raynolds, Allene Swienckowski, Jameson Davis, Peggy Richardson (Community Member)

Review and pass minutes from the previous meeting. Ann made motion to pass minutes, Allene seconded. Vote unanimously passed.

**Attorney General Forum Update**

The event is still on track for June 13 at Hartford High School, 5:30pm. For publicity: Ann will forward information to area listserves. Kim has/will continue to post on social media. John will post on dailyUV site.

Kim and John attended the Winooski AG Forum in May. That event was very 'top heavy' including +/- 50 representatives from government agencies and service organizations and very few impacted community members.

John suggested that we might help guide the discussion for the Hartford Forum by submitting some recommended topics that we think would add to a productive session. The group came up with the following topics to submit. Kim &/or Jameson will share these with the AG's office for their review/consideration.

**Hate-Free Vermont Forum Topics**

- New legal framework for Hate "Incidents" that can be prosecuted:
  - Acts of intimidation and/or coercion
  - Threats of Physical Harm
  - Threats of Murder
- Insensitivity to experience of people of color (and the reality of trauma and violence)
- Do other States have stronger laws against hate-based harassment?
- What are the goals of the "Bias Incident Reporting System" and how can it be improved?
- In detail, what kind of training is required for local police and sheriffs in regard to the community members' experience of biased and discriminatory policing? What kind of training is required in regard to handling hate-crimes?
- Legal liability for police over failure to properly document hate/bias incidents

Additional discussion around talking points / concerns for the AG Forum are:

- Accountability of AGs office & PDs around VT
- Process. Winooski forum wasn't publicized + AG had put out report on bias reporting without input from impacted community members.

- HOW DO YOU CHANGE THE LAW in order to prosecute without the physical harm?
- Per Ann, there is a precedent for moving from the laws on child abuse to include emotion/psychological abuse beyond physical abuse.
- Stalking – can get a protective order but it is not the kind of thing that goes to court.
- Do other states have the precedent for prosecuting without the physical harm element?
- Is there something in Federal laws? Allene says there is. If the victim feels that they are at risk, it's enough. Allene will find the document.
- AG Donovan is the first AG in VT to even consider taking hate crimes cases.
- What the goals for the bias incident reporting?
- Detailed description of bias training for State & Local PD. What's REQUIRED?
- Are there protections for people reporting?
- Local PD need to know how to handle a hate crime.
- Accountability / legal liability for police in their reporting bias incident.
- Even if all this is enacted, equal enforcement will still be a problem.

### **Fair & Impartial Policing Policy Update**

Selectboard heard from organizations and community members in support of approving a revised FIPP document.

It was reported that the Town Manager and Harford Police Chief are not in support of this measure. Chief Kasten was not in attendance at the Selectboard Meeting on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Selectboard did not vote to approve or oppose the new policy. They opted to wait in the hope of hearing Chief Kasten's position on the issue.

Meeting minutes from the June 4 session will be posted on the Town's website and video of the entire meeting is available [via CATV](#).

### **Act 1 Update from Education Subcommittee**

Subcommittee met to review the document. Overall, it's in 'great shape'.

10 members will be appointed to create the [Ethnic and Social Equity Standards Advisory Working Group](#) to review standards for student performance adopted by the State Board of Education and, on or before June 30, 2021, recommend to the State

Board updates and additional standards to recognize fully the history, contributions, and perspectives of ethnic groups and social groups.

Allene is actively working to be considered as a member of the working group and will report back as she has more information.

### **RFP Process**

Selection committee consists of Jameson Davis, Allene Swienckowski John Hall, Tom Debalsi, Brannon Godfrey & Kevin Christie. The group met Monday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

They discussed the structure of how to review proposals and to interview candidates.

Interviews will take place on June 17 and June 24.

The group established a list of topics to base interview questions on and each committee member will submit questions within those topics to the Town Manager by Friday, June 7. HCOREI members are invited to submit questions to John &/or Jameson for consideration by Thursday, June 6.

The group will keep HCOREI informed of progress and developments.

### **Next Steps & Closing Statements**

Not discussed but including for reference: We still need to coordinate our extended meeting schedule.

Upcoming meeting dates (**beginning at 6pm**) are:

June 19, 2019

July 3, 2019 (skip)

July 17, 2019

The motion to adjourn at 7:40pm was made by Allene. Seconded by Jameson.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Souza, Clerk.