

Town of Hartford Committee on Racial Equity & Inclusion
Wednesday, March 20th, 2019
7pm to 8:30pm

In Attendance: John Hall, Chair, Sara Campbell, Vice Chair, Allene Swienckowski, Michelle Boleski, Kim Souza, Clerk, Ann Raynolds, Town Manager, Brannon Godfrey & Community Member, Alicia Barrow.

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

NOTE: Chair will forward minutes from the previous meeting with the agenda for the upcoming meeting via email to the entire committee.

Community & Sub-Committee Updates:

Education Sub Committee

The group met on Saturday.

There was discussion around how People of Color are defined.

The Ed Sub Comm discussed school incidents. Allene suggested more opportunities to sit and talk with parents within the community and understand their experiences in the schools relating to students of color. Collecting these stories is a way to help the boards and administration hear about the issues that families are facing.

Allene & Ann want to establish an advocacy program for parents and students that focuses on students of color. This could be organized by parents (many whom are already overburdened) or professionals with this kind of experience (Phil Eller was mentioned), or Allene suggested that she would be willing to step down from HCoreI if necessary, to work on such an important project. A few committee members have reached out to Wayne Miller at Living Proof Mentoring to see if there is a way that he could collaborate or lead on this kind of thing but have not yet had a response (WM has a new infant & a newly formed non-profit org; i.e. he's super busy too.)

Alicia (parent and community member in the Hartford School District) noted that her children have experienced numerous incidents and that she doesn't even know where to begin in terms of any kind of effective reporting that would improve situations. Thus far, responses to her concerns have been somewhat dismissive.

Ann wants to encourage administration to attend a Forum on School Discipline in Vermont as organized by the Vermont Advisory Committee to the US Commission on Civil Rights. March 29, 5:30-7:30pm at the Franklin Conference Center in Rutland, VT.

The limitations to members being allowed in to the schools was discussed again. There may be channels to get in to classrooms solely to make observations.

RFP Sub Committee

The entire committee went through the current draft of the RFP for a Strategic Plan for Equity & Inclusion as presented by the subcommittee.

New and previously suggested edits were approved or rejected. A motion to approve the edits to the RFP was made by Kim and Seconded by Allene and passed unanimously.

John will submit the current RFP draft to the Town Manager and Superintendent for review and then to include in agendas for both boards to gain approval before posting the document for submissions.

The motion to adjourn at 8:50pm was made by Allene.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Souza, Clerk.