

**Town of Hartford Committee on Racial Equity & Inclusion**  
**Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**6pm to 7:30pm**

In Attendance: Sara Campbell, Kim Souza, Ann Reynolds, Allene Swienckowski, Jameson Davis, Michelle Boleski + community members, Simon Dennis, Dr. Marva Williams-Lowe & Elvis Lowe.

Introductions followed by review and pass minutes from the previous meeting. Allene made motion to pass minutes, Ann seconded. Vote unanimously passed.

**Community & Sub-Committee Updates:**

**RFP Sub Committee**

Kim shared the history of the RFP process with the group. RFP has been approved by the School Board with minor changes and ratified by the Selectboard with the minor School Board changes. The Town Manager and Superintendent will edit the proposal dates/schedule and it should be posted soon. Kim will notify the group when it is posted.

**Education Sub Committee**

Allene expressed concerns about counselors' abilities to appropriately respond to the needs of students. Allene acted as sort of an advocate in meeting the school to discuss the issue of Alecia's daughter being removed from the UN trip. There was a good outcome.

Marva talked about the fact that children aren't comfortable talking about what's going on/sharing - and don't want to draw attention to themselves. She noted that there is a deficit around education and understanding in the school about cultural differences. It can be difficult to address these kinds of things without making the child feel even more different. 'Kids think about it every day - have to think about their clothes, appearance, what they do.'

It would be helpful if there are ways to let parents of color feel engaged. What are some ways for parents to engage as a group instead of feeling like they are on their own? If parents are interested, they could establish an advocacy group, though schedules are often full. Parents can always have an advocate in any meeting they go to.

Simon has discussed with John Hall and Coach Christie a recognition that our current skill sets aren't sufficient. It will be important to set up an advocacy body - hire someone - that's what they specialize in - they craft the response - acting as exterior educational advocates.

Jameson talked about how impactful it was for him, as a child, to see adult POCs in his predominantly white school. He would love the opportunity to tour the Hartford Schools and to be visible to students of color.

Michelle spoke with the Superintendent about making resources available to educators. We can share any resource links with Michelle and she will submit them to Tom and he will make it accessible to the HSD teachers. HCOREI members can share any useful resources to Michelle.

Marva asked if there is a forum or process to give feedback on the curriculum. Particularly, a forum that allows for POC to give feedback on how some curriculum contact impacts students. How do we get the school to HEAR these parents?

Michelle noted that we should have a curriculum coordinator for humanities as there is for math & science. The recently enacted H.3 may affect this process.

### **Open Updates**

Kim followed up the AG TJ Donovan's office on the scheduled and canceled Hate Crimes Forum series. The AG's assistant directed Kim to Tabitha Pohl-Moore of the NAACP, Rutland. Tabitha then directed kim back to the AG's assistant Natalie Silver who is back to scheduling the forums with the input of the NAACP and Tabitha said that she expressed Hartford's interest in participating/hosting one of these panels/forums. Kim is waiting to hear back from Natalie Silver at this time.

Ann asked about the legislative suggestions to the Bill S132. Jameson said it went to committee but did not make crossover.

The first session of the Toward Racial Healing Workshop was overbooked. A wonderful turnout! The second part is scheduled for May 6.

The group enjoyed meeting at 6pm rather than 7pm. We will consult with the Chair to see if switching the time is a viable option.

Upcoming meeting dates are:

May 1, 2019

May 15, 2019

June 5, 2019

June 19, 2019

July 3, 2019 (skip)

July 17, 2019

The motion to adjourn at 7:35pm was made by Allene.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Souza, Clerk.