

Town of Hartford Committee on Racial Equity & Inclusion
Wednesday, November 20th, 2019
6pm to 7:30pm

In Attendance: Sara Campbell (Vice Chair), Kim Souza (Clerk), Ann Reynolds, Michelle Boleski, Jameson Davis (via telephone), Peggy Richardson, Community Member

Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 6:17pm (delayed until a quorum was reached).

Modifications to the agenda included adding brief updates regarding:

The workshop Michelle attended November 7 & 8

Roadmap

State coalition / working group

Legislation

Town Policies

Ann moved to approve the 11.06.19 minutes as presented. Michelle seconded and the vote passed unanimously.

Vermont Vision for a Multicultural Future Conference

Michelle attended the conference in Brattleboro November 7 & 8.

She made connections with several people throughout the event including the Vermont State Librarian, Xusana Davis – VT ED of Racial Equity, Julio Thompson – Civil Rights division of the AG's office, members of the State's Fair & Impartial Policing committee, members of the VT Principal's Association, the head of the NEA, aides from Senator Sanders' Office and HR rep of VPR.

Michelle attended several workshops relating to bias in media and other topics. She discussed a campaign for attracting people of color to the area with a Department of Tourism representative.

Kim recently worked with the VT Dept of Tourism in the context of her business and directed the focus on attracting diverse visitors to downtown White River Junction.

If HCOREI drafts a proposal for a specific ad campaign to attract more POCs to the region, the Department of Tourism might be willing to produce and share such content. This project has been noted in the 'Parking Lot'.

Road Map

Sara will bring copies of the current version of the Road Map to the Dec 4th meeting so the group can make any suggested edits or approve as our 'work in progress'.

Legislative Update

Ann reported a conversation with Kevin Christie regarding legislation around hate-filled harassment and threats. Vermont has a very weak bill according to Kevin, but Kevin is going to submit it as a "place holder" for the Senate and House Judiciary Committees to review and, hopefully, strengthen, and this will be a time for testifying on this subject. All these actions about intentions on bills must be submitted by Dec. 3, Kevin reported.

The Vermont Coalition for Ethnic & Social Equity in Schools group has not yet managed to fully assemble their 10-member working group which is needed to implement Act 1.

Policy Review

There is work in progress toward a Welcoming Lebanon Ordinance in Lebanon, NH. Kim will share information on that as it becomes available. There may be efforts in Norwich, Hanover, NH and Plainfield, NH as well.

Ann is collecting information around risk of grant funding if the Welcoming Hartford Ordinance is approved. Other cities/towns that have adopted similar policies need to be contacted to learn of their experience with federal funding.

Due to 2 members needing to leave at +/-7pm, Kim will report in on the Hartford Police Department policies that she has been researching at the next meeting.

Kim has requested copies of all emails submitted at the Public Records Requests of Lannie Collins, The Valley News & Mike Morris. Kim will share those with any HCOREI members who are interested.

There are still concerns around reporting complaints – in all departments of the Town. Kim has recommendations for ways to bolster the accountability and transparency among the HPD regardless of the fate of the Welcoming Hartford Ordinance. Things like mandatory reporting of any contact with ICE to the Town Manager, and likewise, mandatory reporting from the TM to the Selectboard.

Kim reported that the preliminary / draft Town budget does include funding toward implementing the recommendations that will come from the Strategic Plan. The Town Manager expects that the School District will also include similar funding in their budget.

Other Business

The committee would like an update from the Chair regarding the status of the Visible in Vermont exhibition during our December 4th meeting.

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

Wed Dec 4
Wed Dec 18
Wed Jan 15

The motion to adjourn at 7:05pm was made by Kim. Seconded by Michelle.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Souza, Clerk.