

Town of Hartford Committee on Racial Equity & Inclusion
Wednesday, December 4th, 2019
6pm to 7:30pm

In Attendance: John Hall (Chair) Sara Campbell (Vice Chair), Kim Souza (Clerk), Ann Raynolds, Michelle Boleski, Allene Swienckowski, Peggy Richardson, Community Member, Joe Major, Community Member

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

A minor modification was made to the agenda to move the Road Map discussion to the beginning because it will be a useful tool for comprising the Committee Report for the annual Town Report.

Michelle moved to approve the 11.20.19 minutes as presented. Allene seconded and the vote passed unanimously.

Road Map (Appendix A)

The HCOREI 'Road Map' is a working document. The document serves to outline the goals and objectives of the HCOREI Committee. This is a draft and is subject to updates as plans evolve. Versions will be published with committee notes when changes are made in meetings.

The committee reviewed the Road Map and took note of items that have been completed, assigned, in progress, or need assignment.

Allene noted that she has an interested person for the committee vacancy. She will follow up and report back.

Michelle has mentioned to the School Board that HCOREI is interested in inviting a student liaison to join our group. Kim will follow up with a request to Tom Debalsi.

Allene met with Tom Debalsi and a representative of DICE (Office of Diversity, Inclusion + Community Engagement) from the Geisel School of Medicine. Tom will consult with the DICE rep regarding recruitment of teachers & administrators of color. Allene also reported that Tom has been in contact with the black student caucus sponsor from Lebanon High School and will continue to pursue a similar program in the Hartford School District.

Each committee member will review the Road Map and come back to the Jan 15th meeting with a list of priorities for their work in the coming year.

Committee Report for Annual Town Report

Kim moved that the Chair draft the town committee report including our mission and focusing on the committee items that are complete and share the draft with the clerk and vice chair for review. Sara seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Completed items that are recommended to be included in the committee report:

- Strategic Plan RFP
- Hiring of consultant Vermont Partnership
- Mission statement
- Vacant Seat

Policy Review

Kim is continuing to request and collect various Town policies & ordinances that are not readily accessible via the Town website &/or Town Clerk's Office.

Kim recently acquired a current version of the Hartford Police Department's Administrative Procedures, Number 214, with a Subject Title: Complaints & Discipline, and shared some copies of that document with the committee members. This document is dated 10/15/19 and was updated recently, by Chief Kasten, from a previous version from 2017.

Chief Kasten is currently working on updates to various documents and policies, as well as a new Hartford Police Department website. Kim will continue to request updated materials as they become available and time permitting.

Kim also attended a VLCT workshop on drafting & enforcing ordinances on December 4th.

HCOREI will use the collected policies and documents to review existing policies in the context of transparency, safe methods of filing complaints, as well as compliance with the forthcoming Strategic Plan and enforcement of Town Policies. i.e. What is the policy for Town Policies? This will be an ongoing project.

Other Business

Ann & John reported on the status of the Visible in Vermont exhibition. The exhibit is currently scheduled to be shown at the Quechee Library in January. Sara noted that, while featuring the program at the Quechee Library is great, it does not have the same effect as showcasing the exhibit in a location where it will be in view of people who haven't gone out of their way to see it. If it's in the Town Hall or a school corridor, people will happen upon it and gain exposure to something they might not have ever known existed and that is part of the objective of the project.

When John originally reached out to the Town Manager, it appears he confused the 'I Am Vermont Too' exhibition project with the 'Visible in Vermont' project and noted that he thought the exhibit was not appropriate for the Town Hall. The response John received from the HSD Superintendent was more favorable and John will follow up with Tom Debalsi.

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

Dec 18th Meeting Cancelled due to lack of quorum ability

Wed Jan 15

Wed Jan 29

Wed Feb 12

Wed Mar 4 (tentative)

The motion to adjourn at 7:45pm was made by Ann. Seconded by Sara.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Souza, Clerk.

Appendix A

HCOREI Roadmap 2019

This document serves to outline the goals and objectives of the HCOREI Committee. This is a draft and is subject to updates as plans evolve. Versions will be published with committee notes when changes are made in meetings.

General Committee

1. Mission Statement - create and adopt a formal mission statement - **Complete**
2. Open Committee Seat – one seat open since 2018 – **In progress**
 - Action – Republish vacant seat – Kim– **Complete**
 - Add a student delegate. Michelle – **In Progress** – brought to School Board.
3. Reactive vs Proactive Discussion - ongoing
 - Though our aim is to maintain a proactive path, the committee remains open to upcoming issues that require a more reactive approach.
 - Develop a framework/process for responding to issues. - **ASSIGN**
 - Develop a way to document issues that come to the committee. – **ASSIGN**
4. Charge evaluation – 12/19
 - The charge will be formally evaluated at least yearly and a status report will be produced in early January for Town Report. – **Add to upcoming meeting** - John - possibly after we see the strategic plan
5. Discuss implications of strategic plan and other funding request for the next fiscal year.
 - Kim spoke with Brannon about the town budget cycle and has confirmed there are currently funds for strategic plan implementation. – **Further follow up needed?**
 - Conferences/trainings specifically for committee members – **Pending**

- Training - What specific trainings have been conducted for Selectboard/Schoolboard around implicit bias and or racism? - Pending
- What is HCOREI's role in the implementation? - Pending

Community/State Focus

1. Collaboration with local and state groups
 - Sub committee created to develop a database of organizations and resources that we would/could connect on pertinent issues. Any report back on interactions with other groups would need to be recorded by sub committee - Sara and John – Pending
2. Community engagement - food/events/film series/trainings etc. - Pending
 - Art/cultural projects – Visible in Vermont exhibit – Recommended to SB/SB
3. Data Collection - Data & Reporting Sub-Committee – Allene, Ann, John - strategic plan may inform
 - Community survey - Pending
 - Safe way to file a complaint – Ombudsman - Pending
4. Grants - how to apply for them, what to spend them on - ASSIGN
 - Researching what we may be eligible for
 - Writing them - Ann
5. Legislation: Local/State
 - Reviewing town policies – Kim – In Progress
 - Review process for submitting complaints to both town and police
 - Ombudsman role
 - State Legislation – Ann – In Progress
 - Follow/bring to agenda pertinent state legislation for discussion/review. Goal is to give committee bill numbers beforehand to discuss at meetings. – Ann - ongoing
 - Ann will give information to Kim and Kim will organize into sharable document
 - Can this group lobby the state? - Pending

School Focus

1. School Ends Policies - curriculum overview and understand which policies directly pertain to charge – ASSIGN
2. Support creation of a parent advocacy program for parents and students that focuses on students of color – Allene – in progress
 - Currently working with HSD on a Black Student Caucus – Allene – In progress
3. Diversity Coordinator for HSD using the curriculum coordinator model - Pending
 - Is there a job description that exists for this type of role? - Michelle