



CITY OF DOVER

AD-HOC COMMITTEE FOR RACIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION – DRAFT MINUTES

Meeting Type: **Regular Meeting**
Meeting Location: **City Hall, Council Conference Room**
Meeting Date: **Thursday, May 27, 2021**
Meeting Time: **7:00 PM**

Regular Members: 11

Luz Bay; Mark Brave; Lauren Conley; Maggie Fogarty; Timothy Mainella; Daniel Pontoh; Cora Quisumbing-King; Oscany Rodriguez DeJesus; Lina Shayo; Kathleen Blake; Councilor Dennis Shanahan, City Council Ex-officio; Jessica Rozzo, School Board
Ex-officio

Alternate Members: 2

Tess Beem; Jill Braceland

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Lina Shayo, Tim Mainella, Jessica Rozzo (School Board), Maggie Fogarty, Luz Bay, Kathleen Blake, Dennis Shanahan (City Council), Jill Braceland, Lauren Conley (remote)

Also present: Mike Joyal, Bob Carrier, Colleen Bessette, Karen Weston, Lindsey Williams

Absent: Mark Brave, Tess Beem, Oscany Rodriguez DeJesus

Land Acknowledgement was read by Kathleen Blake.

3. APPROVE MINUTES

April 22 and May 20 minutes were reviewed and unanimously approved.

4. CITIZENS FORUM

Mayor Carrier explained the City Council's May 26 vote (6-3) to table the Land Acknowledgement resolution, explaining that he wants more direction from the Committee as to its use, fearing that it could get 'lost' if it is not implemented with clear expectations. He references June 28, 1869 as a significant date in Dover's history. Perhaps the land acknowledgement could be read on that date each year. He also expressed a desire for a unanimous vote by Council members if possible.

Councilor Williams expressed support for the committee's work on the Land Acknowledgement and reminded those present that she and two other Councilors voted in support of the resolution at the May 26 meeting.

5. DISCUSSION

Land Acknowledgement: Dennis explained that the resolution was pulled from the agenda two weeks ago and modestly revised to address a concern that it was too directive with regard to when the resolution should be read.



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During the discussion of the revised resolution on May 26, one councilor continued to speak to his prior concerns. Another spoke to his belief that that the resolution doesn't go far enough and that a statue or plaque in a public location would be a better tribute. The Mayor said that the lack of direction about when it should be read would create confusion. One Councilor mentioned that leaving the reading of the Land Acknowledgement to the discretion of the chairpersons of boards and commissions would be an unauthorized expansion of their role.

A motion was made to table the Land Acknowledgement resolution, and the motion was approved by a vote of 6-3. Dennis recommends that this committee continue our work, consider the issues that were identified by Councilors, and return to the City Council on June 9 with a revised resolution.

Committee members asked that an email from Councilor Cullen be forwarded to us.

Cora asked for clarity about which concerns need to be addressed: Are Councilors asking for a specific day or dates? Are they requesting that we ask for a statue, sign or plaque? What changes would actually win their support?

Committee members were told about a construction site on Second Street that could be suggested as a site for a plaque. Kathleen explained that the story of what took place at that site is complex and that the popular narrative does not accurately acknowledge the harm done to indigenous peoples.

Options of special days were discussed as possible occasions for the Land Acknowledgement, including Indigenous People's Day in October, United Nations Day for Indigenous Peoples (August 9), June 28, Dover High School graduation, Fourth of July, Memorial Day.

Committee members also discussed the value of posting the Land Acknowledgement on public buildings and the website.

Lauren clarified that the Council was simply being asked to adopt the Land Acknowledgement.

Maggie clarified that nothing prevents the Council from utilizing the Land Acknowledgement on any occasion they deem appropriate. And further, that nothing in the proposed resolution would prevent Councilors from establishing statues, plaques and other monuments at any city-owned property in Dover.

Kathleen explained that adopting the Land Acknowledgement is important. The City Attorney has allayed fears regarding use of the term 'unceded.' She reiterated the importance of including reference to 'land, waterways and all living beings,' as respect



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for the entire ecosystem is a fundamental element of indigenous worldview. The words of the Land Acknowledgement have been chosen carefully and they have value.

Mayor Carrier expressed his support for the resolution 'as is' and said he will work to promote understanding and support among City Councilors.

Mike Joyal suggested, and Lauren agreed, that one or more 'whereas' statements could be removed and added to the 'background' section.

Lina asked that the committee consider ways to educate Councilors and community members about the importance of the Land Acknowledgement, our history and present-day concerns of indigenous peoples. The Land Acknowledgment is a way to 'begin at the beginning.'

Our goal is to promote understanding and acceptance, not to debate the details of implementation of a particular statement. We can develop an action plan for this committee to promote learning about these issues.

Cora urged that the City of Dover be leaders in this area, as the City has led in the past with other statements about diversity and inclusion. She expressed her hope that City Councilors will embrace this as ongoing work, incomplete but important.

Mayor Carrier was asked to read the Land Acknowledgement at the Memorial Day ceremony on May 11. He agreed.

Kathleen moved that we accept the revised resolution (see attached). Her motion was seconded by Luz. Committee members approved unanimously.

Committee Vacancies: City Council approved to invite Dan Pontoh back to this Committee as he is only temporarily living outside of the community. If he accepts this invitation, he will be a full member with all rights and privileges. Dan has not responded yet.

Dennis will contact Sherriff Brave to confirm whether he is able to continue serving as a member of this Committee.

Jill and Tess remain alternates until resignations are confirmed. The City's Appointments Committee will consider naming additional alternate members if needed. Lindsey explains that the Appointments Committee will likely review old applications as well as invite new ones.

Lina has received emails from interested community members. She refers them to the Appointments Committee.



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6. CURRENT EVENTS

Committee members expressed support for requesting a Proclamation for Juneteenth, to be read at the City Council meeting on June 9 or 23.

Cora shared her recent experience requesting a proclamation for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month which was read at the May 12 meeting of the City Council.

Luz made a motion that a request for a Juneteenth Proclamation be made to the Mayor. Kathleen seconded the motion. Committee members approved. Jill will research sample Juneteenth proclamations and send them to Mike Joyal. The proclamation will be adapted to Dover.

Prohibition on teaching about Divisive Concepts: Committee approved a draft resolution as written by Tim, with minor edits to clarify that this statement is from this committee. The resolution will be sent to state Senator David Watters in advance of the June 3 senate vote on the state budget. The statement will also be sent to the Dover legislative delegation and Governor Sununu.

Motion was made by Jill, seconded by Jessica, approved unanimously, with one abstention.

Jessica will also bring this proposal to the Dover School Board for their June 14 meeting.

Dennis, acting as legislative liaison for the Council, will report on this committee action during his report.

7. AGENDA ITEMS

Remaining agenda items - communications plan and the flag policy – were moved to the top of the next meeting's agenda.

8. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned by the chair at 9:04 PM.



CITY OF DOVER

CITY OF DOVER - RESOLUTION

Agenda Item#:

Resolution Number: **R – 2021.xx.yy – 000**

Resolution Re: Adoption of a Land Acknowledgement for Dover

WHEREAS: The City of Dover recently established the ad hoc Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion; and

WHEREAS: The Committee acknowledges that the path to racial equity and inclusion begins with ensuring that the indigenous peoples that inhabited the land now known as Dover, NH thousands of years before the arrival of European settlers are recognized; and

WHEREAS: Land Acknowledgements are done to recognize and identify the first people who inhabited a place, to show respect, and to honor the land that is, and was, their homeland. It can be the first step towards reconciliation between the first people and the people who came to colonize a land that was already inhabited. Land Acknowledgements help prevent the colonial practice of erasure of the first peoples and invite true and accurate history to be taught and learned. Making a formal Land Acknowledgement fosters an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, and recognition; and

WHEREAS: The Committee has consulted with representatives of the Abenaki, Pennacook, and Wabanaki peoples to prepare a statement that acknowledges and honors the people, past and present, who have stewarded the land we now call Dover, New Hampshire; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND DOVER CITY COUNCIL THAT:

The City of Dover adopts the following as the City's Land Acknowledgement statement:

“This (event/meeting) takes place at Cocheco (CO-chi-co) on **N’dakinna** (n-DA-ki-na), now called Dover, New Hampshire, which is the unceded traditional ancestral homeland of the Abenaki (a-BEN-a-ki), Pennacook and Wabanaki Peoples, past and present. We acknowledge and honor with gratitude the land, waterways, living beings, and the **Aln8bak** (**Al-nuh-bak**), the people who have stewarded **N’dakinna** (n-DA-ki-na) for many millennia.”

AUTHORIZATION

Approved as to Funding: Daniel R. Lynch
Finance Director

Sponsored by: Mayor Robert Carrier
by Request

Approved as to Legal Joshua M. Wyatt
Form and Compliance: City Attorney



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Recorded by: Susan M. Mistretta
City Clerk

DOCUMENT HISTORY:

First Reading Date:	Public Hearing Date:
Approved Date:	Effective Date:

DOCUMENT ACTIONS:

VOTING RECORD		
Date of Vote:	YES	NO
Mayor Robert Carrier		
Deputy Mayor Ciotti		
Councilor Michelle Muffett-Lipinski, Ward 1		
Councilor Deborah Thibodeaux, Ward 3		
Councilor Marcia Gasses, Ward 4		
Councilor Dennis Shanahan, Ward 5		
Councilor Fergus Cullen, Ward 6		
Councilor John O'Connor, At Large		
Councilor Lindsey Williams, At Large		
Total Votes:		
Ordinance does does not pass.		



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Background Information:

The City Council Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion seeks to ensure that our community recognizes the history and legacy of the peoples that inhabited the land that we now call Dover, New Hampshire. One means to do this is public recognition of the indigenous peoples by way of an acknowledgement, such as the one included in this resolution.

The Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion presents this Land Acknowledgement now as an important contribution to celebrating and honoring our history as we approach the 400th anniversary of the settling of this area.

The City Council mandate for the Committee is to develop an action plan containing recommendations outlining “existing and new steps to be taken to work to eliminate any potential relics of past systemic racism in municipal operations.” Included in this action plan will be steps to ensure equitable recognition of all peoples that have contributed to making Dover what it is today. These recommendations may include enhancing an existing memorial park, or a new commemoration in a public area.

For clarification, this resolution is not intended to formally create, waive, or impact anyone’s or the City’s real estate or other rights and obligations, but instead is a gesture meant to acknowledge and educate the public about history.