



CITY OF DOVER

COMMITTEE FOR RACIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION – APPROVED MINUTES

Meeting Type: **Regular Meeting**
Meeting Location: **First Floor Conference Room, City Hall**
Meeting Date: **Thursday, June 15, 2023**
Meeting Time: **7:00 PM**

Regular Members: 9

Kathleen Blake; Cora Quisumbing-King; Lina Shayo; Sophia Robison, Councilor Linnea Nemeth, City Council Ex-officio; Maggie Fogarty, School Board Ex-Officio;

Alternate Members: 2

1. CALL TO ORDER

Lina called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Linnea Nemeth, Kathleen Blake, Maggie Fogarty, Lina Shayo

Also present: Colleen Bessette

Regrets: Cora Quisumbing-King

Absent: Sophia Robison

3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Lina read the Land Acknowledgement.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

The May 25 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

5. CITIZENS FORUM

No citizens were present.

6. CURRENT EVENTS

Kathleen noticed that the settlers cemetery on Dover Point Road has a new sign saying "First Settlers Cemetery." A member of the Cemetery Committee explained that the sign was temporarily in place for the City's 400th anniversary. The City Council has on their agenda for July 12 to declare the cemetery 'abandoned.' This will make it possible for the City to take responsibility for the land and to rename it.

Linnea can also bring this up with the Heritage Commission at their June 23 meeting and will ask them to support the City in determining that the cemetery is abandoned and giving it a historically accurate name such as First European Settlers Cemetery, or First English Settlers Cemetery.

The premier of the Major Waldron documentary was very well-attended (including 35 people on Zoom) at the Dover Library on June 12. The film was followed by a good discussion. Other venues in Massachusetts are planned. It should be online and available with curriculum materials by the end of the summer.

On July 15, the NH Black Heritage Trail will dedicate a memorial marker for Nellie Brown Mitchell at the Pine Hill Cemetery, followed by a reception at the Dover Friends Meeting next door.



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The Land Acknowledgement was read at the Memorial Day ceremony at Pine Hill Cemetery.

On June 14, the City Council passed a resolution affirming first amendment rights and objection to censorship of any kind. From the resolution: "Censorship of ideas on the basis of partisan, political or ideological beliefs is antidemocratic, unconstitutional, and denounced in the City of Dover. All citizens' rights under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and Part I, Article 22 of the State Constitution shall be respected in accordance with applicable law. City resources, to include City funds and the time of the City's professional staff, may not be used for the purpose of censoring library materials on the basis of political, partisan or ideological beliefs."

7. NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Foraging/Harvesting Rights on Conservation Land – Kathleen

Conservation Commission met on June 12 and they heard from Jake Kritzer, chairperson for the Durham Conservation Commission; he was well-received. Kathleen shared the Durham recognition which describes the foraging rights as an act of repair. Kathleen spoke to a concern that Dover's attorney may have expressed reservations about a benefit (foraging rights) being limited to a particular group; Kathleen explained that the provision of foraging rights is a response to harm done to a particular group so the benefit should be specifically offered to that group.

Kathleen drafted a message for the Conservation Commission expressing our support for foraging rights being granted to indigenous citizens on Dover public lands. She will reference the date of our last meeting when we agreed to send the message; she will cc Lina.

Status of Committee – Membership, Operating Rules – Linnea

Our proposed committee structure was approved by the City Council on June 14. She suggests a reordering of the description of committee membership to more clearly indicate that the ex officio members are among the nine slots.

REVIEW AND DISCUSS PENDING PROJECTS

Implementation Plan for work – Linnea

Linnea shared the current version of our action plan. We focused our attention on Goal 2 - Community Building:

Goal 2.1 Establish outreach beyond municipal entities, such as the Children's Museum, DALC, and the Woodman Museum to understand how they are supporting racial equity.



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Status: In progress, multiple contacts with Director John Nichols at the Woodman. Medium priority.

Goal 2.2 Create two-way communication with the public through listening sessions and surveys. Status: Not started yet; high priority. We discussed a range of possibilities, including facilitated community conversations in different neighborhoods/parts of the city, focused on whether and in what ways Dover is a welcoming community and where/how we can do better. Maggie shared about the “We are Concord” events hosted by a coalition of partners in 2015 which included diverse participation, food, and opportunities to connect and share different perspectives. Perhaps we can use the funds dedicated to DEIJ work to support facilitation and other event costs. Possible partners include Black Lives Matter Seacoast, Seacoast Outright, Dover Chamber of Commerce, faith communities and others.

Goal 2.3 Collaborate with other City Committees and local groups on racial equity and inclusion. Status: In progress with multiple conversations having already been initiated with Dover Police, the public library, the Cemetery Commission, Heritage Commission, Arts Commission, Conservation Commission and the school district. High priority.

Goal 2.4 Explore diversity training opportunities with the Chamber of Commerce and members to expand impact of mission and goals. Status: Not started; low priority, subject to making progress in other areas first.

Goal 2.5 Create an inventory of resources and groups available to respond to incidents in our community. Status: Informal process has been followed on two occasions; medium priority.

Note: Possible partnership with Dover Police’s “Breaking Barriers: Strengthening Police-Community Relationships” series.

Goal 4 - Indigenous Peoples Project: Kathleen shared that we had talked with the Arts Commission once about a public art installation, but the conversation hasn’t moved forward. We will invite a representative to a future meeting (September?) to discuss potential ideas, including work by an indigenous artist and/or a Land Acknowledgement piece. Possible partnership with the Children’s Museum?

Shall we reach out to the Conservation Commission about the blueberry bushes memorial? To develop this idea further, we will invite the Pouliots to a meeting in July or August to hear more from them and to create action steps. Kathleen will invite them; we can make arrangements for them to join us via Zoom.

Review/Discuss Proposed Equity Policy of Dover School District - Maggie

Maggie explained the process of creating a draft Equity Plan for the Dover School District, which had its first reading at the Dover School Board meeting on June 12. Feedback and suggestions from this committee are welcome.



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Kathleen expressed appreciation for the draft policy and noted with appreciation that multiple aspects of diversity were named in the policy.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Maggie shared that the Dover Adult Learning Center graduation will take place on Tuesday, June 20 at 6:30 PM at Dover High School auditorium. All are welcome.

Maggie also shared that the NH House of Representatives defeated SB 132, the anti-sanctuary cities bill. We are grateful to have had support to defeat this harmful bill from Strafford County Sheriff Mark Brave, Dover Police Chief William Breault, Mayor Bob Carrier, Councilor Linnea Nemeth and our committee chairperson Lina Shayo.

10. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 PM.