



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, September 28, 2023**
Meeting Time: **7:00 PM**

Regular Members: 9

Kathleen Blake; Whitney Carrier; Cora Quisumbing-King; Lina Shayo; 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 7:02 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Lina Shayo, Kathleen Blake, Maggie Fogarty, Cora Quisumbing-King, Linnea Nemeth, Whitney Carrier

Also present: Michele Holt-Shannon, NH Listens; Alice Ward; Yulia Rothenberg

3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Kathleen read the Land Acknowledgement.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

Members unanimously approved the August 24, 2023 minutes without changes.

5. CITIZENS FORUM

Yulia Rothenberg expressed support for the work of this committee. Cora had encouraged her to attend this meeting to get to know the committee.

Alice Ward attended because she is looking for ways to be involved in her community. She is busy at this time but will consider applying for membership in the future.

6. CURRENT EVENTS

City Council approved that Sofia Robison is no longer a committee member. Two new committee members have been approved. We expect that they will attend next month.

BIPOC Fest was a big success, very well attended. The Korean consul was in attendance.

Kathleen attended the Cemetery Committee meeting; the committee will recommend to the City Council that the cemetery return to its original name, Roberts Cemetery. Kathleen proposed that this committee send a letter of support for this proposal to the City Council. Committee members expressed an interest in knowing the historical background related to the Roberts family prior to making a recommendation. There was some discussion about the history of those who are buried there. It was recommended that we reach out to Diane Fiske at First Parish Church who has done extensive historical research about this area; the cemetery is next to the original site of First Parish Church. Linnea will let us know when the matter will be before the Council.



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Kathleen amended her motion to say that this committee supports a change of name from the current name to one that is accurate and truthful. Committee members expressed unanimous support.

7. CURRENT EVENTS

The Racial Unity Team is seeking a new Executive Director. [Read more here.](#)

Black Lives Matter Seacoast will host their 4th annual gala on September 30, 2023 in Dover. [More information here.](#)

New England BIPOC Fest will take place in Portsmouth on September 24, 2023. [More information here.](#)

On July 15, the Black Heritage Trail of NH installed a marker in honor of Nellie Brown Mitchell at the entrance to the Pine Hill Cemetery. A welcome reception was hosted by Dover Friends Meeting. [Read more here.](#)

Indonesian Independence Day was celebrated in Somersworth with a flag-raising ceremony in August. Dover will mark this anniversary with a flag raising in future years. The 10th annual Indonesian Festival will take place on September 16, 2023 in Somersworth. [More information here.](#)

At their upcoming meeting on September 14, the NH Board of Education is expected to consider utilization of curriculum resources from Prager U, a conservative advocacy group. NH residents can contact the Board and/or attend the meeting in person to speak during public comment period.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Michele Holt-Shannon from NH Listens attended the meeting to assist committee members to consider strategies for engaging Dover people whose voices are often unheard, particularly BIPOC community members, to learn about their experiences living and working in Dover. She explained that there are several different approaches to consider.

9.

From the work plan:

Goal 2 Community Building - To create two-way communication with the public through listening sessions and surveys. To understand people's challenges so that we can address them.

Michele shared a civic health guide prepared by UNH, which considers the impacts of the social determinants of health (zip codes, race, poverty, etc.) on civic engagement. Michele invited committee members to consider subgroups and where/how we might engage individuals in these groups. Examples include BIPOC employees of Dover



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businesses, immigrant and BIPOC families in the Dover school district, young adults who study or work at UNH and rent in Dover, senior citizens, transracial adoptees, etc. Our goal is to learn about BIPOC community members' experiences and any barriers to their full participation in the community, and identify opportunities to eliminate these barriers. She explained that it might serve our purposes best if we seek deeper conversations with a relatively small group of individuals rather than trying to do an expansive assessment. Individual stories will have important data for us and will point toward actionable steps.

Michele led committee members through an exercise to name groups of people and then further subdivide into smaller groups, and then again in order to be clear and specific about our goals.

We will also gather demographic data about the community to guide our work.

To familiarize ourselves with the process, we agreed to do some homework prior to the next meeting. We will each identify two people and ask them three questions – Are you willing to talk to me about your experience living or working in Dover? What are some positive experiences that describe what your life here is like? Are there negative experiences you would like to share? In addition, we can ask: In terms of your identity, what are some words you use to describe yourself?

She will send anecdote circle protocols and other resources to support next steps. We will write up our experiences and share with the committee via email by Monday,

Given holiday conflicts with the November and December meetings, we hope to meet on Thursday, December 7.

10. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 8:59 PM.