

Wayland Human Rights, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (HRDEIC)
Meeting Minutes | February 20, 2024, 6pm

Present: Karen Blumenfeld (Chair), Mary Ann Borkowski (Acting Vice Chair), Mei-Ling Ellerman, Eunjee Kang, Janot Mendler de Suarez (taking notes), Heather Pineault, Jessica Schendel (Clerk), Yauwu Tang, Chloe Voight. **Absent** (school vacation): Carlin Gruber, Kanmani Sekhar. **Tech Support:** Robbie Bullard

1. Call to order: Karen called the meeting to order at 6:01pm and read the Land Acknowledgement. *Eunjee Kang joined the meeting at 6:03.*

2. Public comment: None

3. Discussion and possible vote to proceed with a rotating monthly Acting Vice Chair until a permanent Vice Chair is voted on. Mary Ann made a MOTION to proceed with a rotating monthly schedule, seconded by Yauwu, and passed by unanimous vote. (Anticipated schedule: February - Mary Ann Borkowski; March - Carlin Gruber; April - Yauwu Tang; May - Heather Pineault; June - Eunjee Kang.)

4. Discussion of HRDEIC membership openings, recruitment of new members, and the need for design expertise. Ways to recruit include: displays at the SPIRIT program; ArtsWayland Expo and Community Multicultural Festival; invitations through the Wayland Public Schools newsletter, Wayland Interfaith Leaders Association (WILA) and personal outreach. As requested, Karen will share with all members the recruitment flyer previously on the website and information on how to apply to join the committee. She agreed to be copied on personal invitations sent by committee members.

5. Discussion and possible vote on who is authorized to work with the chair to issue statements in emergency situations. Mary Ann made a MOTION to authorize the chair to issue a statement in an emergency situation, working with at least one other committee member, chosen at the chair's discretion. The motion was seconded by Heather, and passed by unanimous vote. *Chloe Voight joined the meeting at 6:17*

6. Review and possible vote to approve January 16, 2024 meeting minutes. Jessica made a MOTION to approve the January 16, 2024 minutes, seconded by Heather, and passed by unanimous vote.

7. Updates

Community Multicultural Festival (CMF) June 2. 1-5pm at Wayland High School: The Fieldhouse is requested, the planning group will meet weekly, and the budget will be fleshed out to request support from the Town. It was suggested to: diversify cultural representation in performances and community tables & activities; reach out to WHS art and music teachers for student talent and to connect with existing shows; work with the WHS AV tech and Arts Wayland to improve the sound system. Eunjee and Kanmani will invite the Muses & Madrigals a cappella groups to perform.

Lunar New Year Celebration: The event was well-organized with good turnout. The event being held on the holiday may have reduced participation. Discussion suggested that the HRDEIC should host a table next year, and noted that learnings from this event can be applied to the Multicultural Festival.

SPIRIT Program April 28, 1-7pm: The SPIRIT planning group meets monthly. The group is now working on how to reach different groups in town. Up to 100 people can participate. SPIRIT planning group members expressed concern about the event length, but DOJ partners explained that it takes time to work together to create community and that participants in other communities' SPIRIT programs have

felt that six hours didn't feel like enough time. There will be a facilitator training. Volunteers to facilitate small group discussions include: Heather, Jessica and Janot, with Yauwu tentatively.

Equity assessment: The deadline was extended. The Town has received 10 bids, a record number in John's experience, and the selection process is on track. The bid review committee includes John Bugbee, Karen, Dr. Eden-Reneé Hayes, and Belmont's Human Rights Commission chair. (Belmont did its own equity assessment, which is a model.)

Police practices for responding to potential hate incidents: Mary Ann and Jessica met with the Police Chief and Civil Rights officer on responding to hate incidents. Mary Ann shared a model from the U.K. with the Police Department. A social worker is budgeted for the Police Department. Wayland is part of Communities for Restorative Justice. Data analysis is used for continual improvement and now includes non-citation traffic stops. Body and car cams are activated as soon as lights on patrol cars are engaged.

HRDEIC website: Several committee members are exploring possible improvements to the website. They will examine where best to place various elements. The Town is willing to update content monthly. A query about a disabilities statement indicated a need to formulate criteria for developing statements.

8. Discussion of ways the HRDEIC might contribute to the fair housing discourse in Wayland. Janot described the State housing crisis, mentioned that Wayland has about 20 abandoned houses, and discussed the need for: housing so seniors don't have to move out of Wayland; more medium density zoning; Equity Assessment data; and a seat at the table on housing and zoning issues. Janot, Mary Ann and Karen volunteered to talk with the Town Manager about collaborating with the Wayland Housing Authority. Fair Housing will be included in monthly committee updates.

9. Discussion and possible vote on whether to endorse a petitioner's article to change the MA flag and seal. Karen is the petitioner so recused herself from the discussion and vote. Before leaving the meeting, she shared facts and took factual questions. *Karen left the meeting at 7:39 pm.* The article asks residents to vote to ask our state legislators to make creation of a new flag and seal a top priority in this legislative session. The imagery in the flag and seal is seen by many as a symbol of the violent colonization of Indigenous Peoples' homelands. In 2022, the Wayland Police Department engaged in an inclusive process to change its badge, which had similar issues. The discussion noted that while this issue is timely, relevant, and in line with what the committee aims to support, it may open the door to responding to other issues that the Town has not as yet acted on, such as Wayland's lack of public transport and the MBTA law, Town Meeting voting for residents who are not US citizens, and others. Heather made a MOTION for the HRDEIC to endorse the petitioner's article to change the Massachusetts flag and seal, seconded by Jessica, which passed by unanimous vote.

10. Announcements - none

11. Topics not anticipated 48 hours in advance – none

12. Adjourn: Heather made a MOTION to adjourn, seconded by Chloe, which passed by unanimous vote. The next meeting is Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 6 pm.

Documents reviewed: January 16, 2024 draft meeting minutes, Petitioner's article