

**CITY OF BARRE**  
**PUBLIC BODY DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**Committee/board:** Diversity and Equity Committee

**Date of meeting:** Monday, October 18, 2021, 6:00 PM

**Location of meeting:** Zoom Videoconference with Call-in Option

**Board/committee members in attendance:**

- Ellen Kaye
- William Toborg
- Joelen Mulvaney
- Christopher Roberts
- Danielle Owczarski
- JD Fox
- Svetlana Zhexembeyeva

**Board/committee members absent:**

- None

**Others in attendance:**

- None

**Topic(s) Discussed**

1. Call to order at 6:05 PM.
2. Chris read the Acknowledgement
  - a. We acknowledge that Barre City was developed on Sokoki Abenaki land, which the Western Abenaki nation never ceded, made treaty for, nor were they conquered. We aspire to create a space in our meetings that is inclusive, participatory and equitable. We acknowledge we all come from different experiences and that our experiences may be affected by racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, ableism and many other systems of oppression. We are here to address equity within the systems of our city in order to inform the City Council of our findings. We acknowledge that systemic inequities exist and do not debate the personal experiences of marginalized and underrepresented community members. With that in mind, it is important that we are thoughtful of the impact of our words on each other in this space.
3. Adjustments to the Agenda.
  - a. No adjustments to the agenda
  - b. Welcomed new committee member JD Fox - Looking for an opportunity to get involved with the city and support equity in the City.
  - c. Existing members introduced themselves.
  - d. Welcomed new committee member Svetlana Zhexembeyeva - Looking for ways to be involved in the community and has lived experience. Equity and equality is important personally and to professional work.
4. Participants/visitors open mic
  - a. No visitors.
5. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting - 9/20/2021

- a. Approval of meeting minutes moved by Chris and seconded by Ellen.
- 6. Old Business:
  - a. Working Group Discussion
    - i. Joelen provided a description of working groups and recommended that we reduce the number of working groups to two: Community Education and Barre City Equity Assessment Impact Tool and put the Community Needs Assessment on hold.
    - ii. Danielle expressed that the Community Needs Assessment is important to understand if there are gaps or blind spots in the work we are currently doing and wants to make sure it stays a priority.
    - iii. Chris - Doesn't want to miss the policy and procedure review
    - iv. Ellen - Community Needs Assessment group will help to inform the work we do
    - v. Svetlana - Recommended that two workgroups can work on different topics and this should be part of our strategic plan with set timelines that can be adjusted. There are opportunities for workgroups to pursue as a goal.
    - vi. Danielle will send Svetlana and JD meeting minutes and DEC final documents.
    - vii. Danielle will send Joelen report from DEC Committee
  - b. Working Group Reports
    - i. Community Education – Chris
      - 1. Chris will follow-up with Joelen on the email he planned to send last meeting (see previous meeting minutes)
    - ii. Barre City Equity Assessment Impact Tool – Ellen/Danielle
      - 1. Danielle provided an update on the presentation the group is developing for the Planning Commission meeting, tv training video introduction with Tony Campos (Cable Access TV), and working on a more user friendly version of the tool
    - iii. Community Needs Assessment - See notes under 6. a. i.
    - iv. Liaison Reports: Barre Unified School District D & E Committee – Joelen
      - 1. Nothing to report
    - v. VLCT D&E Committee – Ellen
      - 1. Town Fair was two weeks ago
        - a. There was an entire day devoted to education on equity and inclusion
        - b. There were many towns represented that engage in similar work
        - c. A few towns have reached out to Ellen
        - d. Presentation on policing and bias training
        - e. There was a lot of interest in this Diversity Training
        - f. Facilitator/Trainer said to remember that the work is hard, needs to be done slowly and thoughtfully, but needs to be done.
      - 2. VLCT Group is developing their scope of work/founding document - Draft by March 2021

3. Joelen - Steve is still pursuing funding for training for committees and city staff
- vi. Other Connections
  1. Danielle receives information on State of Vermont equity work that she can share
  2. Ellen recommends inviting people to meetings from other DEC based committees to build connections and learn about work people are doing across the state
  3. Danielle volunteered to contact Xusana Davis for a list of active groups across the state and contact information. Danielle will put together a shared excel spreadsheet to fill in information that comes from different sources that the Barre City DEC can fill in collaboratively.
7. New Business:
  - a. Discussion of skills/experience of next police chief
    - i. Joelen is working with the hiring group and wants to bring information she gleaned from the Town Fair Hiring Workshop to the hiring process.
    - ii. Believes the Equity Impact Assessment Tool could be useful in the hiring process.
    - iii. Chris was wondering if we have information on police department demographics.
  - b. Reflections on “All In for Barre” community development process
    - i. The group believes that an equity lens should be applied to all the task force groups
    - ii. Svetlana will be on the Homelessness Task Force (but need to determine if it will be the All-In group of the City group.
    - iii. Danielle volunteered to Chair the Improve River Access group
    - iv. Joelen will volunteer to be on the Community Center group and Svetlana is interested as well
  - c. Discussion on how committee responds to incidents of bullying/harassment among residents and leadership
    - i. The group discussed different options to respond to incidents
    - ii. In the past, the DEC has offered resolutions on national incidents to support members of the community
    - iii. Could review these on a case-by-case basis, but it shouldn’t be the role of the DEC to address every issue that comes up in the community, the City Council should be acknowledging and addressing these issues as well.
8. Set next meeting Date: Monday, November 15, 2021
9. Round Table
  - a. Danielle added additional thanks to Svetlana and JD for joining the group and really looks forward to the perspectives they will add to the discussion.
10. Adjourned at 7:31 PM.

**Action items**

1. Danielle - Send Svetlana and JD invite to view DEC files and documents

2. Danielle - Call Xusana Davis to ask about Equity and Inclusion group contacts throughout the state and put together a shared spreadsheet to add information into.
3. Danielle - Send Joelen a copy of the 2020 DEC Report.
4. Steve - Update on training funding.

**1) Motion:** Move to adopt minutes.

**Mover/Second:** Chris/Ellen

**Result of vote:** All in favor (William and Svetlana were not present)

**Meeting adjourned:**

**Mover/Second:** William/Chris

**Time:** 7:31 PM

**Next meeting date/time/location:** Monday, November 15, 2021 at 6 PM via Zoom



Danielle Owczarski