

DRAFT
Meeting Minutes
Diversity and Equity Committee
June 8, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Joelen Mulvaney
Christopher Roberts
Ellen Kaye
Emily Wheeler
Greg Quetel

Not present:

William Toborg

Members of Public Present:

Alice Farrell
David Delcore
Erika Reil
Lisa Liotta
Michael Boutin
Michael Ruiz
Raylene Meunier
Sarah Helman
Stephen Lockett

Joelen called the meeting to order at 6:31

No revisions were made to the minutes of prior DEC meetings.

Topic One

Joelen Mulvaney read into the record the letter regarding the grant the DEC received from the Vermont Community Foundation for the training being conducted later this summer by Kristi Clemons of Dartmouth University. This is the letter the DEC will be sending to participants in the DEC forums.

Erika Reil asked how the participants were chosen and whether the forums are open to the public. Ms. Mulvaney explained that this is a pilot project for city and community leaders initially but that we hope to open it up to the public eventually.

Ellen Kaye motioned, and Christopher Roberts seconded, a resolution to approve the letter. All five DEC members voted in favor of accepting the letter, so it will be mailed to participants forthwith.

Interlude

DRAFT

Ellen Kaye asked Michael Boutin if he was recording the meeting, and he said yes, adding that he puts these recordings on YouTube. Joelen Mulvaney asked Mr. Boutin to stop the recording, and he agreed to do so. Ms. Kaye asked if anyone else was recording

the meeting, and no one responded.

Topic Two

The DEC is in the process of revamping its web site, and Joelen Mulvaney has recently tried to clean up some of the language. She discovered that some of the minutes are missing, and she is planning to include those minutes on the website. Ellen Kaye and Christopher Roberts volunteered to assist Joelen Mulvaney in locating the missing minutes. Michael Boutin provided the missing minute dates, which are:

May 4th, 2023
November 10, 2022
October 10, 2022
September 29, 2022
August 15, 2022
March 20, 2022

Joelen Mulvaney wants to edit/revamp the goals and objectives statement as it currently appears on the website, and she read into the record the changes she has made thus far. Ms. Mulvaney said the definitions in the definitions section also need to be updated, which the Committee members will likely do at the next DEC meeting.

Ms. Mulvaney wants to further revise the DEC goals and objectives section, particularly since the former Barre City ADA Committee is now part of the DEC, in turn necessitating inclusion of the ADA Committee's material on the DEC's website. The revisions made by Ms. Mulvaney are intended to be temporary, and the DEC will need to conduct a complete revamp of the section of the website in the near future.

Rikk Taft will assist with adding the ADA materials to the web site. Erika Reil also offered to assist with the ADA materials and offered to advise the DEC on any potential issues that may arise.

Rikk Taft announced that he is the new ADA coordinator for the City and is presently taking courses to receive certified as the coordinator. This appointment marks the official start of the City's transition plan and its self-evaluation regarding ADA issues.

Greg Quetel motioned to accept the proposed changes to the website, Christopher Roberts seconded, and the Committee voted unanimously in favor to accept the proposed changes.

Topic Three

Discussion about racially motivated attack on two Spaulding High School students.

The incident happened on city property but not take place on school grounds. Two male students belonging to a particular ethnic group were leaving the high school when they were physically attacked by a group of 11 to 12 other students. Racial epithets were used during the attack. The grandparents and parents of both students attended the last

DRAFT

school board meeting to tell the Board about the students' story and to state this harassment has been going on for some time.

Michael Boutin, who said he spoke with the Barre Police, stated that they told him that it does not appear the attack was racially motivated. It is not clear exactly what happened, and whether the incident began in the school and then moved outside, or whether the assailants were lying in wait for the two students outside of the school.

Erika Reil commented on how much is not known about this incident, noting that she reads the local newspaper every day and has seen nothing about this incident. Joelen

Mulvaney responded that the story was in the newspaper. Lisa Liotta said the Times Argus did run a story, but she wasn't sure of the date. Michael Boutin noted that the story recently appeared on the WCAX news.

Melissa Batah was at the School Board meeting, and Joelen Mulvaney contacted her after the meeting to discuss the incident. She believes the DEC needs to obtain additional information as to exactly what happened before issuing any formal statement. Ms. Mulvaney also gave the student who spoke at the School Board meeting her contact information, but the student has not responded.

Joelen Mulvaney said the families are working with the school administration, and that it would be inappropriate for the DEC to contact the families. Ellen Kaye believes the perpetrators should be spoken with as well and should perhaps be brought before the School Board (although that would have to be done in a closed session due to confidentiality issues). Ms. Mulvaney is going to follow up with Barre City Police Chief Vail to discuss the incident so the DEC can then assess whether it has accurate information before issuing a formal statement. Ms. Mulvaney noted that the DEC usually issues statements regarding these types of incidents, and that the DEC may want to do so in this case.

Christopher Roberts said the DEC should issue such a statement provided that accurate information as to what actually transpired can be obtained. Greg Quetel agreed that it was vital to obtain additional information about the incident before issuing a formal statement.

Christopher Roberts brought up the current nationwide campaign attacking the LGBTQIA community, mentioning New York Times columnist Charles Blow's recent commentary on the subject. Joelen Mulvaney proposed that the DEC draft a formal statement or resolution regarding the issue to be presented to the City Council for adoption. Ms. Mulvaney requested that Mr. Roberts prepare a draft resolution before the next DEC meeting.

Topic Four

Visitors/Public Comment

DRAFT

Sarah Helman wondered why the DEC meetings aren't being recorded. Joelen Mulvaney said there is no legal mandate to do so. Ms. Helman. Sarah responded that while there may be no legal requirement to record DEC meeting, she wondered why the DEC did not do so in any case. Ms. Mulvaney noted that DEC meetings are open to the public and that any person is free to attend. Ms. Mulvaney stated that the Vermont meeting law does not require recording of meetings, and that the DEC has always complied with the law's requirement to publicly warn of future meetings and holding its meetings in public.

Erika Reil noted that June is Gay Pride month, and that the City Council passed a resolution in recognition of this.

Ellen Kay voted to adjourn the meeting, and Greg Quetel seconded,