

Draft of the Minutes, EDIT Meeting of Jan 18, 2024, on Zoom

Present: Jonathan Tropp, Chair; Challa Flemming, Vice Chair; Rick Bolton; David Rosenberg; Rodney Gray; Jennifer Pacelli; Chris Powell

Absent: Tara Figueroa

Also Present William Chin, Town of Trumbull Technology Director; Joanne Glasser Orenstein, Clerk; Jame Cordone, Town Attorney; Michael Lombardo, Trumbull Chief of Police.

Mr. Tropp called the meeting to order at 7:32pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and roll call completed.

There was no Public Comment and there was no Correspondence.

Mr. Bolton made a motion to accept the Minutes of December 21, 2023; Mr. Rosenberg seconded. VOTE: All present except Mr. Powell (who abstained), in favor.

Old Business:

Mr. Tropp suggested changing the date of the Special Public Meeting from February 1 to February 15. Ms. Flemming made the motion, Mr. Bolton seconded. VOTE: All in favor. Ms. Pacelli will put together an electronic flier.

The committee agreed to go out of order to accommodate Chief Michael Lombardo. Chief Lombardo was asked about the investigation into the distribution of neo-Nazi leaflets around Town in November. Chief Lombardo stated they took the complaint very seriously and investigated it thoroughly. Though the actions were very offensive, they were not criminal, as the First Amendment protects the right of free speech, so no charges were filed. One car involved was identified. If the leaflets had threatened violence, it would have crossed the line into something that was more actionable. Ms. Flemming thanked the Chief for coming to the meeting and asked if there were plans to update the Town. Chief Lombardo said nothing further was planned, as often these groups want the attention.

Town Value Statement:

Since the last meeting, Mr. Tropp sent the value statement to Ms. Tesoro for advice on how to move it forward. EDIT has a meeting set with Ms. Tesoro to discuss potential collaborations with Town departments on January 26. He, Ms. Flemming and Mr. Rosenberg will attend.

Trumbull Library Programs:

The next book club meeting has been confirmed for 6pm on March 4. "How the Word was Passed" is the book. Ms. Pacelli will put together a flyer for social media.

Trumbull Historical Society:

The Trumbull Historical Society had a mixed reaction to the suggestion of a program during Asian-American Heritage month in May. Trumbull does not have a lot of history with this group. Nonetheless, they suggested a presentation based on a recent project by a Connecticut Mirror reporter profiling people from each Asian American ethnic group recognized by the U.S. Census. So rather than historical subjects, these people are currently in the news, such as Attorney General William Tong. The committee liked the idea and would like to go forward with it.

Diversity Training:

Mr. Tropp said the Police Department had DEI training they thought was very good. The Police Department provided a referral to Ms. Figueroa. Mr. Gray will get in touch with Ms. Figueroa and Mr. Rosenburg, and help to carry the matter forward.

Report to Town Council:

Last report was July, so a report is overdue, in part due to the November election. Ms. Gaudio is no longer Chair, but she will reach out to Mr. Massaro to ask to have a report from EDIT on the Council's February meeting agenda.

Equity Profile, pages 16-24, Health Data:

For Life expectancy, which is a good proxy for overall health, Trumbull fares well compared to the State and neighboring towns. Highest life expectancy rates correlate directly with higher incomes.

Health Insurance: Fairfield County Latinos have less insurance than the state-wide average, and both Blacks and Latinos struggle more to have workplace benefits.

Trumbull does well with preventative healthcare in the form of yearly doctor and especially dentist visits.

With chronic disease risk factors, Trumbull again does well in comparison with its neighbors, except in the area of exercise. The thought of EDIT sponsoring an exercise program to engage the community was discussed.

There is a high rate of diabetes within the Black community, as well as hypertension and asthma. Ms. Flemming identified a number of issues, including the shared trauma of enslavement, can be linked to these chronic health problems. Mr. Bolton cautioned that some of the data should be reviewed critically, as differences among towns may reflect differences in populations, as an older median age in some communities also links to more health problems.

There is a lack of data for Trumbull on the mental health data, but it can be extrapolated that Whites rank higher in levels of anxiety while non-White communities rank higher in depression.

Fairfield County does better than the state on fatal drug overdoses, with Whites having had higher rates than other groups, though the Black community had a recent spike, surpassing Whites on overdoses. (Mr. Rosenberg said the spike leveled off in 2022.) Fentanyl is seen as responsible for the vast majority of overdose deaths.

STDs: No Trumbull data, but Fairfield County does better than the State, except for incidences of syphilis.

HIV: No Trumbull data, but it is a substantially bigger problem for Black and Latino communities than White, especially Black.

Birth Outcomes are better in Trumbull than in neighboring towns and the State. Black community outcomes are not as good.

Lead poisoning: Minority communities are more likely to rent, or live in older homes, where lead levels are substantially higher. There is no Trumbull-specific data in this area.

Next month is Civil Life.

Trumbull Times: Mr. Tropp said the reporter from the Trumbull Times has been reviewing the meetings and reporting on them.

New Business: None.

Motion to adjourn: Mr. Bolton made the motion, Ms. Flemming seconded. VOTE: All in favor at 8:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Glasser Orenstein
January 21, 2024