

## Draft of the Minutes of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Task Force

Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 7:30pm via Zoom

Present: Andrea Fonseca, Chair, Jonathan Tropp, Vice Chair, Tara Figueroa, Rick Bolton, Zdena Quinn, David Rosenberg

Absent: Dan Wisneski, Marty Isaac

Also present: James Cordone, Town of Trumbull Attorney, Phil Meagher, Town of Trumbull Technology, Joanne Glasser Orenstein, Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 by Chairwoman Fonseca.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Roll Call taken.

There was no correspondence, and there was no Public Comment.

Mr. Tropp made a motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting, amended to read Old Business was added to that agenda, not New Business. Ms. Figueroa seconded the motion, as amended. VOTE: Mr. Tropp, Ms. Figueroa, Mr. Bolton and Ms. Quinn in favor; Ms. Fonseca and Mr. Rosenberg abstained.

Old Business:

Statement for Town re: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Ms. Figueroa presented a statement for review. After discussion, it was clarified that this statement is intended to be a Value Statement for the Town with regard to DEI, to be included in a larger statement adopted by the Town Council and First Selectmen, that would go broader.

**The Statement is as follows:**

**The Town of Trumbull is a vibrant community with a rich history and bright future. We recognize and value diversity as a vital characteristic of our town. Trumbull is committed to ensuring all residents, students, employees, vendors, and visitors are treated with dignity and respect by fostering a safe and welcoming atmosphere.**

**We believe:**

**The sum of each individual's life experience, identity and background strengthens our community.**

**Our Town has a duty to provide all citizens with fair and equal access to facilities, programs, resources, and services, as well as treat everyone in a courteous and professional manner.**

**To achieve a sustainable and equitable future for all, we must consider how Town policies, practices, and decisions may impact the environment, people, and our economy.**

Mr. Tropp made a motion to present this Value Statement to the Town Council as part of the report to them at the December 5th meeting. Ms. Figueroa seconded. VOTE: All in favor.

Events: Ms. Fonseca reported she spoke with the Trumbull Historical Society with regard to their plans for Black History Month. This has been a virtual program for them in the past, and will likely be this year as well. They will have a guest speaker from the Ruby and Calvin Fletcher African American History Museum in Stratford. They are also changing their Front Room exhibition to feature Nathan Hawley, and the Paugauset tribe later. They did not state how EDIT could help, but were excited to get more people as a result of more publicity.

Mr. Tropp spoke with Stefan Lyhne-Nielsen, Director of the Trumbull Library System. He was receptive to collaboration of some kind with EDIT for Martin Luther King Jr. Day and/or Black History Month, but it is early in the process for them. They like the idea of an appropriate author

talk. The Adult Learning Director will follow up.

Mr. Rosenberg said maybe these are co-sponsorship opportunities, requiring budget.

Ms. Figueroa felt these are great opportunities for writing contests for youth with recognition from the Town. After a long discussion it was decided that a writing contest needed more time, perhaps tied to a later event. Ms. Figueroa will get in touch with the PTA Council as a possible partner. Ms. Fonseca will talk to the Historical Society.

Letters to the Editor: Mr. Tropp felt this conversation could be tabled indefinitely, and made that motion. Mr. Rosenberg seconded. VOTE: All in favor.

Open forum: It was agreed to host an Open Forum on Zoom with conversation on these questions: When have you felt welcome in Trumbull, and/or, when have you not? What suggestions do you have to improve it? Mr. Tropp made a motion to hold this special meeting on January 12, 2023, via Zoom. Ms. Quinn seconded. VOTE: All in favor.

Ms. Fonseca will put advertising and social media posts out after the December EDIT meeting, or it will be too early and get lost.

Other:

Mr. Tropp and Ms. Fonseca met with Dr. Semmel and Ms. Timpanelli earlier in the day to discuss the school calendar, and specifically the addition of Eid as a day off. Mr. Tropp said the meeting was eye-opening with regard to the process. There is a Calendar Committee that sets the calendar. The Muslim Community has had a lot of contact with this committee. Dr. Semmel is encouraging them to continue to lobby for additional holidays, but right now Eid is not added. Muslim students are free to take the day off and no tests or big assignments can be made for that day. The Calendar Committee is composed of Faculty, students and the community and is chaired by Dr. Iwanicki.

New Business

Terms/Renewals: Ms. Fonseca said when EDIT was set up some terms were two years and some were four. Moving forward, they will all be for four. Mr. Tropp said those whose terms were expiring should communicate to Town Council what their intentions were, through Ms. Fonseca. Mr. Cordone said people whose terms were expiring but not replaced can continue until that happens. The terms do not automatically renew.

Calendar: Ms. Fonseca suggested staying on the third Thursday of the month at 7:30pm. The committee will look at the 2023 calendar to see if there are any meetings that should be rescheduled.

Other: Ms. Fonseca said Dede Robinson resigned and she forwarded his letter to the Town Council and First Selectwoman.

Adjournment: Mr. Tropp made the motion to adjourn, Mr. Rosenberg seconded. VOTE: All in favor at 7:52pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanne Glasser Orenstein

November 21, 2022