

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMISSION MINUTES  
7:00pm TUESDAY 10/13/20

\* VIRTUAL MEETING \*

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 19:02

X	David Martin, Chair	X	Leela Ramachandran
A	Nathan Cookson	X	Diane Randolph
X	Sandra Hinds	A	Odeviz Soto
X	Simon Li (Associate)		
X	Nassra Mgeni	A	Dawn Wang
X	Makena Muindi	X	Charmaine Williams
X	Julie Pierce Onos (Associate)		
X	Sunanda Pepalla		

**Note:** Two full members were absent so Chairman David Martin made the two associate members full members so that they could vote on the motions.

- I. Regular Business
  - a. Notes from Chairman David Martin
    - i. Ground rules for conference calls
- II. Business
  - a. Chair David Martin invited town resident to speak. One person spoke about the ABRHS Mascot.
  - b. ABRHS Mascot
    - The DEIC worked on a statement to send to the Acton Boxborough Region School Committee. The statement is as follows:

**Acton's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission's Statement Concerning the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Mascot:**

Acton's DEIC recommends the removal of the Colonial mascot.

A mascot, by definition, exists to unite and represent a community, foster belonging and promote sportsmanship. The Colonial mascot of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District fails to do this on all counts. The Colonial represents a history of injustice to the Nipmuc Nation, whose land the town was built upon. The demographics of the town of Acton are shifting to a reflection of different races and ethnic backgrounds, and with this we've seen new perspectives on previous issues. Put simply, the mascot does not represent the inhabitants of the Town of Acton. All students should feel centered, supported, and included within a school community.

This statement comes at a time of national and global conversations about racist stereotypes and symbols of oppression; as a commission, in creating our statement, we decided to focus on the communities directly affected by these symbols, namely the ancestors of the natives whose descendants were murdered, raped and ousted from these lands.

Acton's DEIC acknowledges the history of injustice perpetrated against the Nipmuc tribe and stands in solidarity with their fight to be seen, heard and accurately represented in the town.

Motion by Commissioner Leela Ramachandran to send the above statement to the ABRSC.  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Commissioner Sunanda Pepalla

Vote: 10 Yes, 1 No

- c. The Town of Acton Select Board asked the DEIC to create a statement on systematic racism for them to review. Commissioner Leela Ramachandran shared statements from the towns of Medford, Berlin and Wayland. Commissioner Diane Randolph will create a statement for the DEIC to review at the next meeting.

III. Motion by Commissioner Leela Ramachandran to approve the minutes from the October 8, 2020 meeting  
2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Simon Li  
Vote: Unanimous

IV. Chairman David Martin invited comments from town residents.

- a. Future meetings and calendar events. Next meeting, Thursday, November 12, 2020
- b. Motion to Adjourn: Commissioner Makena Muindi  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Commissioner Sunanda Pepalla  
Vote: Unanimous

TIME ADJOURNED: 21:01