

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMISSION MINUTES
7:00pm THURSDAY January 11, 2024

Present:

	David Martin, liaison		Lingya Zhou
	Makena Muindi	X	Sandra Hinds, clerk
X	Melissa Kaplan Morse, co-chair	X	Suravi Bhatia, student
X	Sunanda Pepalla		Wanjiku Gachugi, liaison
X	Zayd Dhasthageer, student		
X	Diane Randolph Jones, co-chair		

I. Regular Business

Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m.

1. Notes from the Co-chairs

Melissa – On 1/15/24, Congregation Beth Elohim’s Na’aseh will host the 22nd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Breakfast event. The guest speaker will be Jean McGuire. She is a longtime advocate for educational opportunities in Boston.

2. Updates from the DEI Director

-A Holiday Display Policy was approved on Dec 4, 2023. This policy was created after a community member raised an issue of having a Menorah lighting ceremony. The policy allows for displays on the lawn of the Red House (468 Main Street). Acton’s first Menorah lighting/dedication was held on 12/12/23 at 6:30 pm and was successful.

- One new bias incident is being investigated.

- On Jan 30th, we are launching an employee Town wide commitment day. The title is “Inaugural Commitment Day: Pioneering Excellence, Fostering Inclusion, Igniting Our Journey.” The goal is to meet, discuss, and share Acton Town employees’ vision and progress towards DEI in Town Hall.

-The DEI office will be having four DEI workshops for divisions and departments in the next four months.

-We are working on a potential event to help welcome Acton’s new community members who live in Minuteman Inn.

II. Commissioners' Update and Townwide Resource Discussion

- A. **Commissioners' Update:** Suravi, who is the Vice President of the DEI South Asia Alliance at ABRHS, said that affinity groups have been given permission to make presentations in March 2024. The sophomores will be taking MCAS at specific dates during that month and it will give the groups the opportunity to share information about their programs.
- B. **Townwide Resource Discussion**—there was productive discussion/brainstorming on what could be done for a community event that the DEIC can sponsor or co-sponsor.

Prior to our meeting, **Melissa** spoke with Carol Buysse who is a Co-Chair of the AB Racial Justice Collaborative and a member of the Acton-Boxborough United Way.

Suravi said that we should connect with other agencies and perhaps hold an engaging event at the high school that includes food.

Sunanda said that we should speak with the Acton-Boxborough United Way.

Diane asked what do we want to achieve with the final program/event?

Motion by Sunanda: Explore a collaboration with the Acton Memorial Library with the objective of creating DEI awareness for the public through movies.

Seconded by Suravi

Unanimously approved

III. Closing Items

Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting:

Sunanda moved and Melissa seconded to approve the minutes of November and December 2023. Unanimously approved.

Confirm upcoming meeting – Thursday, February 8, 2024.

Adjourn

Zayd moved and Suravi seconded to adjourn.

Unanimously approved

Adjourned at 7:55 p.m.