First Selectman's Diversity Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 11, 2022, 12:00 pm

Join Zoom Meeting: https://greenwichct.zoom.us/j/84470529609?pwd=VitLdGt5bkZEdFVlMFZXV2p0eWttZz09

In Attendance:

Call to Order
Bobby Walker, Jr. 12:03pm

1. Approval of Minutes from December 2021
Motion: Gaby Rattner, Seconded: Gary Charles

2. Name Change Proposal
   • The First Selectman proposed the following new name for the committee: “The First Selectman’s Committee on Community, Unity, and Diversity”.
   • Discussion related to the alignment of the proposed new name and the committee’s approved mission focused on advancing inclusion and belonging in the Greenwich
     o Words matter:
       ▪ How do we define “community”, “unity”, and “diversity”?
       ▪ A new name will impact the direction of the committee and the programs it can offer
     o Concern that the advisory component of the name has been removed
     o What are the expectations of the committee? What role would the committee play in the community?
     o Concern about the exclusion of “equity” and “inclusion”
     o “Unity” can be a loaded word, especially if people don't feel included and want to be part of a community working to create unity
   • First Selectman suggests that the committee’s name focus on similarities, not differences, especially in this current social and political climate and considering the extremism in the community
     o He suggests that DEI work can be controversial, and shared that concern has been raised in the community
   • Discussion about the word inclusion, it is a process that encourages collective work
   • The word unity does not speak to the process of developing into a unified community
   • Given that some community members seem to be frustrated by the word, “diversity”, a new name was suggested: First Selectman’s CommUNITY Voices
     o The committee would still be able to represent community members to Town government and from Town government
     o The removal of words that have been perceived as controversial provides the committee with more flexibility
       ▪ While the potential new name is very broad, the committee can be specific in in terms of programs and initiatives
     o There is no concern with the alignment of the potential new name and the mission
   • Committee will have to communicate with the First Selectman for guidance on composition of this committee
     o There have inquire related to membership from several Town entities

3. Socioeconomic Panel Update
   • Discussion postponed to next meeting

3. Committee Member Updates and Announcements

Youth Services
   • Greenwich Student Diversity Leadership Conference to be held on Saturday, 02/05/2022
- Theme: Beyond Allyship: Igniting Agency and Action
  - Keynote Speaker: Antonia Soares Thompson, Esq., Director of Racial Justice Initiatives in Middlesex County Massachusetts
  - Youth will expand on last year's work focused on exploring identity, position, and power and develop action plans that can be offered to their schools
- Alma Rutgers Defining Diversity Contest
  - Still working on essay prompt
  - Considering a focus on several themes: environmental justice, ableism, or CRT (Why history matters? How history impacts the present)

Christ Church
- Anti-Racism Forum, Sunday, 02/05/2022
- Adrienne Reedy, Consultant will explore the book *Credible Witness*, by Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil's

YWCA Greenwich
- Honoring the Legacy, the Coretta Scott and Dr. Martin Luther King Annual Conversation, Tuesday, January 25th
  - Historically, this event was called the Dr. King event
    - Name changed to align with YWCA's mission
  - Title of program: “The Evolution of Gender”
    - Will discuss
      - The ways the idea and expression of gender has changed
      - The history of gender and language around gender
      - Gender policies in Pre-K through 12 education
    - Hope to engage families
    - The panel will include Cadence Pentheny from The Triangle Community Center, JR and Vanessa Ford, authors and LGBTQ rights advocates, and someone from the Human Rights Campaign

Greenwich High School
- Diversity Awareness Week at GHS, February 28 to March 4
  - Theme: Celebrating the Community
  - Requesting that committee members share connections with potential male speakers
  - Virtual event

5. Next Meeting Tuesday, February 8, 2022

6. Adjournment: 1:03pm