First Selectman’s Diversity Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020
Location: Mazza Room, Greenwich Town Hall
Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 10 at noon in the Gisborne Room

Members Present: First Selectman- Fred Camillo
Pamela Toper, Dr. Alan Barry, Rev. Ted. Pardoe, Jennifer Flatow, Danielle Sittol, Bobby Walker, Jr., Hale McSharry, David Rabin, Mary Lee Kiernan, Garfield Charles

Agenda Items:

1. Call to Order: was made by Pamela Toper, Chairman at 12:08 PM
   a. Minutes from January 2020 are still in process and will be distributed when completed (by Bobby Walker Jr).

2. American Islam Project- Program recap
   a. Those present and who attended said that the event was a very personal conversation and very well attended. The room was engaged, there were great questions being asked and many perspectives were shared. Panelists felt welcomed and seemed to enjoyed the evening. A special thank you to Rev. Ted for coordinating the event and to all who attended, including the First Selectman.

3. Social Justice Program (Bobby Walker Jr)
   a. This conversation began as one around white privilege, but many feel that this 1) does not convey the message that the Committee is looking to communicate and 2) would not attract an audience if promoted this way. What the Committee is really looking to do is to address the issues of equity and social justice locally (including topics such as employment, education, and access to opportunity). By focusing on equity, Rev. Ted suggested tying it to the Greenwich United Way Needs Assessment (which is set to be completed this fall). David Rabin also seized this as an opportunity to remind those present to complete the survey. Rev. Ted also said that he has reached out to his contact (Garret Moran) who is definitely interested in being a part of the program and we will look to plan this event for late Fall 2020.

4. Youth Commission Project
   a. New date is tentatively set for May 16, 2020 – potentially being held at YWCA now as Greenwich Academy was not available.
   b. Danielle continues to work on the details with the youth group to determine their agenda for the day. More details will be forthcoming.

5. Alma Rutgers Diversity Contest – “Defining Diversity”
   a. Flyer has been created (distributed to the group), dates were shifted to accommodate school schedules.
   b. Reception is slated for June 2, 2020 at 4:00pm [at Town Hall], the First Selectman will be in attendance to present certificates to winners.
i. Monetary prizes were secured by Greenwich Alliance for Education, along with another Foundation. There were also additional funds received which will possibly be used for the reception.

c. This year the contest has been expanded to a multi-media campaign, and Bobby Walker Jr. asked the group to visit the criteria for the contest. He shared that there are members at the club who might in fact want to enter the contest, but they are not enrolled in Greenwich school system (but are able to attend the club based on a parent working in town). The committee weighed pros/cons of expanding the contest to include other towns, including having the option for a Committee member to sponsor a student. Ultimately the Committee opted to open the contest to include students who attend an accredited program in Greenwich (like the Boys & Girls Club). Danielle with adjust the language on the flyer to reflect this change and will redistribute. Rev. Ted also suggested that we look into attracting students from town who attend boarding schools in the future.

6. Immigration Guide Reprint
   a. Samples were available in Spanish and English today at the meeting for review.
   b. Additional copies are in the process of being printed and will be available (both electronically and in hard copy). To get to the guide electronically you may visit: https://www.greenwichct.gov/538/Human-Services

7. Panel on the Rise of White Nationalism- This item is to be stricken from the agenda

8. Website
   a. The following is the link to our page on the Town of Greenwich website: https://www.greenwichct.gov/705/Diversity-Advisory-Committee
      i. The site is up to date with meeting minutes and agendas.
   b. Hale took the lead to set up a Facebook page for the Committee, he asked those who are on Facebook to share articles from one another (most recently Dr. Barry’s article that was featured in the Greenwich Time).

9. Next Meeting Date: March 10, 2020 Gisborne Room
   a. Misc. Items shared by the group
      i. Diversity Awareness Week at GHS is the week of 2/24-2/2/-theme is acknowledging beauty within all individuals and communities. Performances are not open to the public for security reasons.
      ii. Pamela shared that she will be stepping down at the Chair of the Committee in June 2020, Jennifer Flatow is to take over as Chair. Pamela will remain an active member of the group. Bobby Walker Jr. asked that we strike the terms “Chairman” and “Vice Chairman” and replace with “Chair” and “Vice Chair), the First Selectman agreed with this and the change will take place immediately.
      iii. Bobby Walker Jr. also acknowledged his departure from the Boys and Girls Club, and his transition to a new role at Greenwich Academy. He will remain a part of the Committee as Vice Chair moving forward.
   b. Committee to do’s
      i. Danielle to send current Committee list to Jen who wants to create attendance for tracking purposes
      ii. Danielle to update flyer and send to group for Alma Rutgers contest

10. Meeting Adjourned: 12:52PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Flatow