

DEI Committee Meeting Minutes – June 12th, 2023

Meeting Called to Order at 5:34 PM

Present: Liam, Sydney (via zoom), Irene, Danica, Martha, Andrew, Flo, Kayla, Anne, Liam (left at 6:30), Bistra, Shelly

Motion to accept minutes made by Irene and seconded by Martha. Approved unanimously.

Public Attendance & Comment: Jane Carol, community member and local business owner- working on flag policy & Biddeford community member- Veteran

Agenda Items:

1. Introduce Shelly Gibson, new D.E.I. Coordinator for City of Biddeford
 - a. Introduce committee members
2. Flag Policy- put in place in 2021
 - a. Challenging for staff to handle because requests weren't coming in the way was hoped-full duration, very far in advance.
 - b. Maximum of 7 days now vs. 30 days previously. Cannot be reserved for too far in advance. No flag may fly more than 2 times a calendar year.
 - c. How can this policy better represent the community's needs?
 - i. Jane reached out to Liam to discuss how everyone can have a voice and create a safe space for everyone.
 - ii. Awareness of how people might be less than kind to other people.
 1. If the city allows community members to make requests for all kinds of special events then this will continue to be an issue- flag flying or sidewalk painting etc.
 2. How do you stop attacks from happening between flying flags?
 - d. Separation between church & state, whose speech (Private citizens vs. government) is it when a flag is flown on the pole?
 - e. Continue to allow requests from private citizens or utilize the DEI calendar to determine which flags can fly when.
 - i. Ability to request additional events be added to this calendar.
 - f. A horizontal flag pole rather than vertical to prevent one flag from being flown above another & more flags can be flown
 - g. A time-bound element- tied to an event, date, recent legislation, a new study, etc.
 - h. rewriting the policy in a way that defines which flags fly & when with more structure- tied to calendar, Shelly is available for further discussion and to field

requests for amendments to calendar- Jane's firm will write a policy amendment for DEI Committee to review.

3. Subcommittee check-ins:
 - a. Policy committee: the ways people can provide feedback and recommendations; what are other municipalities doing and how is that going?
 - b. Education & outreach committee: people love the brochure, small crowd for pride celebration because of weather-great overall
4. Requests for next meeting:
 - a. Go through Diversity Calendar for the year to assign tasks and ensure that the burden of the work is distributed fairly and care is taken to value all events
 - b. Discuss stylistic expectations for writeups
 - c. Set a maximum amount of time to address the flag policy at future meetings so that other important work can continue

Upcoming Dates: next meeting: July 10th; policy subcommittee: June 29th; education & outreach subcommittee: to be determined

Motion to adjourn at 7:05 pm made by Bistra and seconded by Flo, passed unanimously