

City of Biddeford
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
June 10, 2024 5:30 PM City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room

via Zoom

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

https://biddeford.zoom.us/j/99935577028?pwd=UIYYgZCOu2x_hPc0Muovr56FgFehcA.qu3LIqlJC7esuID0

Passcode: 112024

Or One tap mobile :

+13092053325,,99935577028# US

+13126266799,,99935577028# US (Chicago)

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

+1 309 205 3325 US

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 646 931 3860 US

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Status:

1. Call to Order

2. Discussion Items:

2.1. Approval of Minutes

[May 13 2024 DEI Committee Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

2.2. Public Comment

2.3. Diversity Calendar - Approval of Language

[2024 Diversity Calendar - FINAL.pdf](#)

2.4. Re-visiting the Committee's Mission, Vision, Values

[DEI Committee Brochure.pdf](#)

2.5. Policy Work (for the committee)

2.6. Upcoming Events (June, July, August)

3. Adjourn:

DEI Committee Meeting Minutes – May 13th, 2024 Meeting

Status

1. Called to order at 5:32 PM.

Present: Andrew Lovley, Breese Reagle, Shelly Gibson, Maura Oakes, Anne Morrissey, Flo Leighton, Danica Lamontagne, Bistra Nikiforova, Syed Zafar, Scott Whiting, Sarai Manyiel

2. Discussion Items

2.1. Approval of Minutes April 8 2024

A motion was made to approve the April 8 minutes by Scott, Anne seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

2.2. Public Comment Policy

The group discussed what to do about public comment for the Citizen DEI Committee. Anne recommended that within the published agenda, there will be 5-10 minutes of public comment at the start of each meeting (around 3 minutes per person).

Someone inquired about what other committees do. City Council will offer it a few times during the meeting but not all committees offer it.

Scott shared that if something happened in the moment (i.e. negative/hateful/harmful comments or language, from someone in the public) a motion could be made to suspend comment with a simple vote.

Reminder: public comment would be for offering thoughts/feedback from members of the public but it is not designed to create dialogue between the committee and the community.

Flo suggested within this section of the agenda, the public may also want to comment and share any feedback re: the minutes, past and present. Danica also mentioned that if there were a multitude of people, the committee could extend public comment period to include everyone.

Anne made a motion to include a public comment section in each meeting, at the beginning, with 3 minutes per speaker (15 minutes total, unless the group votes/decides otherwise in the meeting), Breese seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

2.3. Revised Diversity Calendar

Shelly asked for feedback on the opening paragraph of the calendar and shared finding

conflicting narratives and history on the Day of Prayer, so she had not incorporate that date. The group decided that since the Mayor had just read a Day of Prayer Proclamation, it should be included. Sarai offered some feedback on the opening purpose and the group discussed edits.

The group discussed adding in what Biddeford does to any noteworthy days/events/celebrations, though ultimately decided this will be too cumbersome to update on a regular basis.

In addition to including language that this is a working document, offer for community members to share feedback with the committee if they notice something is missing. It's not an exhaustive list and hopefully offers the things that people value.

Bistra suggested using an end of the year evaluation to look through, edit, and add anything. The Policy committee will likely need to review and approve the revised list given it was approved previously in its first iteration.

The group agreed that Shelly will add language about the Day of Prayer (based on the proclamation), work on the introductory wording, and then share it electronically with the committee. Members can share feedback individually via email, if they desire, so the full list can be approved at the June meeting.

2.4. Events in May

Items to be included in the Biddeford Beat:

- Jewish American Heritage Month – May 17th
 - Anne worked with the congregation in Biddeford, offered using the write-up in their spring newsletter
- Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders Month – May 22nd
- Older Americans Month – May 30th deadline

Andrew asked if the committee has to or should approve the language for each of these, particularly if the Citizen DEI Committee logo accompanies the post. The group agreed that those creating each write-up could be trusted to put together the content with Danica and Shelly and they can continue to use the logo.

2.5. Pride Month (June) – Planning & Events

Any comments or reflections on the proclamations from June 2023:

Pride:

- Proclamation - change the name of the mayor and date
- Gives statistics about the community, relative to York County, to replace the statistics from 2023

Scott made a motion to approve the existing Pride proclamation with the above edits and Syed seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

Biddeford Beat:

- Maura offered to do a write-up of local offerings, resources, and ways folks can access support during the month of June.
- The group requested to have the Beat highlight what's happening on a weekly basis with directions to the comprehensive Heart of Biddeford Pride events list.

Heart of Biddeford could use support from the committee to volunteer; getting folks to go into town after the Pride ceremony at Mechanics Park on June 1st, creating and hiding rainbows around downtown / at businesses, etc. Please reach out to Anne and/or Delilah at HoB if you are available.

Juneteenth:

- Proclamation - change the year, mayor name

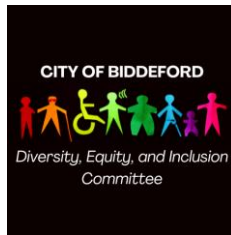
Syed made a motion to approve the existing Juneteenth proclamation with the above edits and Anne seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

- Black History Walking Tour – perhaps offer this the weekend before or after Juneteenth (potentially June 15th)
- Movie screening with McArthur Library
- Potential partnership with the Black Student Union

2.6. Staff DEI Committee - Invitation

The staff committee is interested in having any/all of the citizen committee join them on June 5th, at 10am. The staff committee will also be invited to the citizen committee meeting on June 10th.

3. Adjourn: Meeting Adjourned at 7:02 PM.



Biddeford Diversity Calendar - 2024

This resource was created to amplify a variety of events, celebrations, and holidays, while paying special attention to those that have historically (or currently) been excluded from the mainstream spotlight in America. It is intended to be a living document, in which members of the Biddeford community (and beyond) feel recognized and represented.

**Certain dates will change from year to year. Please email diversityequityinclusion@biddefordmaine.org with any feedback or additions.*

January

Poverty Awareness Month: A month-long initiative to raise awareness and call attention to the growth of poverty in America.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January 15th): Commemorates the life and work of Dr. King, who was a Baptist minister and prominent leader in the American civil rights movement. It is celebrated on the third Monday of January each year.

International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust (January 27th): On this annual day of commemoration, the UN urges every member state to honor the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and millions of other victims of Nazism and to develop educational programs to help prevent future genocides.

February

Black History Month: This month was created to focus attention on the contributions of African Americans to the United States. It honors all Black people from all periods of U.S. history, from each enslaved person forcibly brought over from Africa to African Americans living in the United States today.

Lunar New Year (February 10th): Marks the start of the new year in the lunar calendar used in East Asia, Southeast Asia and elsewhere. It begins on the date of the second new Moon after

the Winter Solstice, which means that the Lunar New Year can occur anytime between January 21 and February 20. 2024 is the year of the Dragon.

March

International Women's Day (March 8th): This day highlights the political, social, cultural, and economic achievements of women, while also celebrating their achievements, raising awareness about discrimination, and taking action to drive gender parity.

Start of Ramadan (March 10th): The start of Islam's most sacred month — during this time Muslims abstain from eating and drinking from dawn until dusk and also involves prayer, self-reflection, and increased devotion. The beginning time of Ramadan is based on the first observance of the new Moon over Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

St. Patrick's Day (March 17th): This day is celebrated by many Irish people and their descendants worldwide, and typically includes a feast to honor Irish heritage.

Neurodiversity Celebration Week (March 18th - 24th): A worldwide initiative that challenges stereotypes and misconceptions about neurological differences while creating more inclusive and equitable cultures that celebrate differences and empower every individual.

Holi (March 25th): Known as the festival of colors, this day is celebrated in many South Asian countries and across the world (including the U.S.).

Easter (March 30th): Major Christian holiday which celebrates Jesus' resurrection. Easter Sunday always occurs on the first Sunday following the full Moon that occurs on or after the spring equinox.

Transgender Day of Visibility (March 31st): A day to celebrate the lives and contributions of trans people, while also drawing attention to the poverty, discrimination, and violence the community faces.

April

Arab American Heritage Month: Time to recognize the 3.5 million Arab Americans that exemplify so much of what our country stands for: hard work, resilience, compassion, and generosity.

The Week of the Young Child! (April 6th - 12th): A national event promoting the importance of high-quality early learning.

Eid al-Fitr (April 10th): Marks the end of the month-long dawn-to-sunset fasting of Ramadan (the Holiday of Breaking the Fast). Eid is declared after a crescent new moon has been sighted or after completion of thirty days of fasting.

Khmer New Year (April 13th): One of the most significant holidays in Cambodian culture, and celebrated with great enthusiasm and joy, this vibrant festival marks the end of the harvesting season and the beginning of the traditional solar New Year. It is a time for families and communities to come together, honor their ancestors, and welcome the arrival of a prosperous year ahead.

Earth Day (April 22nd): Applauds the planet we live on and all it does for us; Earth Day is observed by more than 192 nations. Earth Day 2024 is unwavering in its commitment to end plastics for the sake of human and planetary health, demanding a 60% reduction in the production of ALL plastics by 2040.

Passover (April 22nd - April 30th): Major Jewish festival that celebrates the freeing of enslaved Israelites from Egypt. The dates are based on the Hebrew calendar, from the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Nissan through the 22nd day.

May

Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Island Heritage Month: Celebrates people with Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander ancestry and their contributions to the U.S.

Jewish American Heritage Month: Honors American Jews and their contributions to the United States throughout history.

Older Americans Month: Celebrates how older Americans contribute to the United States.

Military Appreciation Month: A month-long observance in the United States, dedicated to people who are currently serving in the United States military.

National Day of Prayer (May 2nd): First proclaimed by the Continental Congress in 1775 and later by President Abraham Lincoln, a day of prayer was determined to be “an effective remedy

for national ills for all people in all nations.” This day was determined to honor the prayers of all people, without regard to their religious affiliation.

Orthodox Easter (May 5th): Each year, in accordance with the Julian calendar, Orthodox Christians worldwide, and about six million in North America, observe Easter, also known as *Pascha*.

June

Caribbean American Heritage Month: Recognizes those of Caribbean descent and the impact their accomplishments have had throughout American history.

Pride Month: Recognizes LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, + like nonbinary and two-spirit) people and the effect they’ve had on the world. June was selected to commemorate the Stonewall Riots, which were sparked by a police raid on a gay bar in Greenwich Village, New York City. This event was a pivotal moment in the LGBTQIA+ rights movement and has been seen as the beginning of the fight for equal rights.

Juneteenth (June 19th): Originally recognized as a federal holiday In 2021, this day commemorates when the last 250,000 enslaved African Americans learned of the Emancipation Proclamation (over two years after it was originally issued). They were then finally declared ‘free.’

Summer Solstice (June 20th): The longest day of the year and the shortest night and has been celebrated by various cultures around the world for thousands of years.

July

Americans with Disabilities Act Anniversary (July 26th): This landmark law affirmed the inherent dignity of every person, regardless of disability, and falls within the month of Disability Pride. There are an estimated 1 billion people with disabilities worldwide, and 15% of whom reside in the U.S. This law and month remind us of the ways we must continue to advance the rights of the disabled community to promote more accessible, equitable, and inclusive societies everywhere.

Ashura (July 17th): This day of religious significance for Shia Muslims falls within the month of Muharram, which is the second holiest month in Islam after Ramadan. The day of Ashura

commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Hussain, grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad during the battle of Karbala.

August

National Night Out (August 6th): A community-police and safety awareness-raising event in the United States, held the first Tuesday of August.

Day of Arba'in or Arbaeen (Eve of Aug 25th - 26th): In Arabic this translates to forty (i.e. fortieth day). The traditional period of mourning in Islamic culture is forty days and this takes place 40 days after Ashura. Millions of people around the world mark the Day of Arbaeen by remembering the story of Hussain, his family and his companions.

September

National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15th - October 15th): Honors Hispanic and Latino Americans for their achievements and contributions to United States culture.

National Recovery Month: Seeks to raise awareness and educate Americans on treatment and health services for individuals affected by addiction, and to exemplify that recovery is possible.

World Suicide Prevention Day (September 10th): Established in 2003 by the International Association for Suicide Prevention in conjunction with the World Health Organization, to reduce the stigma and raise awareness that suicide can be prevented.

October

Rosh Hashanah (October 2nd - 4th): The Jewish New Year when Jews reflect on their faith. It occurs on the first two days of Tishrei, the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar.

Mental Illness Awareness Week (October 6th - 12th): Each year, during the first week of October, participants across the country raise awareness of mental illness, fight discrimination and provide support for those living with mental health conditions.

National Coming Out Day (October 11th): Observed on the anniversary of the 1988 National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, this international annual awareness day supports LGBTQIA+ people in 'coming out of the closet' (i.e. the process of accepting one's sexual orientation or gender identity and sharing that identity openly with other people).

Indigenous People's Day (October 14th): Celebrates and honors all Indigenous People of North America and commemorates their histories and cultures.

November

Homelessness Awareness Month: Serves to educate the public about the many reasons people are unhoused, and to encourage support for assistance service providers and other service organizations aiming to offer a variety of resources to the unhoused population.

National Native American Heritage Month: Calls attention to the culture, traditions, and achievements of those who are Indigenous to what we now call North America, and their descendants.

Diwali (November 1st): An important celebration in the Hindu faith in which a variety of deities are praised. Diwali occurs annually during the Hindu month of Kartik on the day of the new Moon.

Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20th): Held as a remembrance for all those murdered as a result of transphobia.

December

International Humans Rights Day (December 10th): Adopted by the UN in 1948 following the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Winter Solstice/Yule (December 21st): The shortest day of the year and the longest night. / A festival celebrated by those of the Pagan and Wiccan faiths.

Christmas (December 25th): A Christian holiday marking the birth of their Lord and savior, Jesus Christ.

Hanukkah (December 25th - January 3rd): A Jewish holiday celebrating Jew rising up against their Greek-Syrian oppressors in the Maccabean Revolt. It begins on the 25th day of Kislev in the Hebrew calendar.

Kwanzaa (December 26th - January 1st): An annual celebration of African American heritage, unity, and culture, often celebrated by Black Americans which was, and still is, inspired by

African harvest celebrations. This seven-day holiday honors the seven principles, one celebrated each day.

WHAT IS DEI?



CONTACT US



Diversity

The things that make people different and make our community richer. Examples include race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation.

Equity

Making sure that everyone has access, resources, and opportunities to succeed and grow – especially people who have faced discrimination or who have not been in positions of privilege.

Inclusion

A culture where all people are welcome and everyone is valued, respected, and able to reach their full potential.

Visit Our Website

www.biddefordmaine.org/deicommittee

Email Us

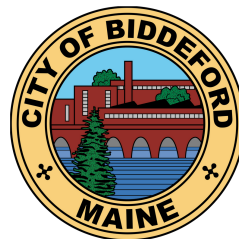
diversityequityinclusion@biddefordmaine.org

Come to a Meeting

Second Monday of
each month

5:30 p.m.

City Hall Second Floor
Conference Room
(205 Main St)



CITY OF BIDDEFORD



*Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Committee*



OUR MISSION



The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee works as part of the community to embrace diversity and recognize the value and uniqueness of each person. Through continuous reflection, education, and action, the DEI Committee pledges to acknowledge and address systemic barriers of inequity. The committee makes recommendations to the City Council on how best to continue building an inclusive and equitable community.

Our committee has nine members that are each appointed by the Mayor for a two-year term. Members must live, own a business, or attend school in Biddeford.

OUR COMMITTEE



The DEI Committee was created by the Biddeford City Council in January 2022 to:

- Advise the Council on policy decisions
- Examine existing city policies, programs and practices and recommend updates
- Make recommendations to the Council on public engagement strategies and methods by which all Biddeford residents have the opportunity to better participate in the decision-making process.
- Provide feedback, guidance, strategies and recommendations to increase community engagement specifically by underrepresented groups.
- Identify local community leaders and build more leadership capacity in Biddeford's diverse communities.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Use the QR code to anonymously share your thoughts, ideas or experiences with the DEI Committee.

