



City of Biddeford
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

September 9, 2024 at 5:30 PM
City Hall Second Floor Conference Room & Zoom

<https://biddeford.zoom.us/j/96030202799?pwd=Ci7KffCEbcLe6qpftmFqrEH6aJOIGZ.1>

Passcode: 362505

Or One tap mobile :

+13052241968,,96030202799# US

+13092053325,,96030202799# US

Or Telephone:

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

+1 305 224 1968 US

+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)

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comment

3 Minute Limit Per Speaker

3. Approval of Minutes

3.a August 12 2024 DEI Committee Meeting Minutes

4. Discussion Items

4.a

- Review/debrief meeting from 8/12

4.b Committee goals and strategic projects (short and long term)

Language in Code regarding the DEI Committee:

- *Advise the Biddeford City Council on policy decisions related to diversity, equitable outcomes, and inclusion;*

- *Examine existing City policies, programs and practices through a community lens to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion;*
- *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 building more leadership capacity in Biddeford's diverse communities;*
- *Perform such other functions as may be required or delegated by the Mayor or City Council.*

4.c Other Business

- October Meeting
- United Way of Southern Maine (future partnerships)

5. Adjourn

DEI Committee Meeting Minutes – August 12th, 2024 Meeting

Status

1. Called to order at 5:32 PM

Present (in person): Danica Lamontagne, Shelly Gibson, Flo Leighton, Scott Whiting, Breese Reagle, Anne Morrissey, Bistra Nikiforova, Syed Zafar, Jake Hammer, Martin Grohman

Regrets: Sarai Manyiel, Maura Oaks, Andrew Lovley

2. Public Comment (3 minute limit per speaker)

No one present.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.a July 8 2024 DEI Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes made by Bistra, Breese seconded the motion, the motion passes unanimously.

4. Discussion Items

4.a Jake Hammer – Partnerships with GA and our Unhoused Neighbors

Offered a summary of the department and its function. Right now the office is both focusing on compliance (with accounting, etc.) and also on supporting people that need it as much as possible. There is still significant amount of time spent on community outreach (for Jake), in addition to the intentional work with the unhoused. They are really trying to staff Seeds with providers during the day time to support people that have been staying there in transition.

If people have questions broadly about General Assistance, they should be directed to the GA office in City Hall. Updates will also be happening within City Council meetings regarding the unhoused population and transitional housing at Seeds. There's real value in collaborating with other local organizations so we're all supporting the collectively unhoused community.

Dispelling myths and reframing things, as well as brainstorming on upcoming projects, are all ways the committee can support the work of GA.

4.b Update on Proclamations

This came out of a conversation and some miscommunications around the proclamation written by the committee for the Day of Ashura. The Mayor is hoping we have community members attending the Council meeting that are tied to a proclamation, as well as an event connected to that proclamation. There's an opportunity to associate the proclamation with something bigger picture, and they also could be shortened.

The committee encouraged a reframe around acknowledging the group of people impacted in this decision (specifically the Shia Muslim community) and also the value in affirming their identities within the writing/reading of the proclamation. Action is also encouraged, though we

may not always know what those actions are (there is work that be done on both sides). Largely the committee did not disagree with the mayor about the specifics of a process around proclamations, but wanted him to realize the harm that took place when the decision was made not to read the proclamation about the Day of Ashura. Danica and Shelly agreed to offer more clarity around the process and the group is committed to further discussions around relationship-building and harm repair within the Shia Muslim community, too.

Motion to extend the meeting to 7:15pm was made by Scott, Bistra seconded the motion, the motion passes unanimously.

4.c Membership Review

Andrew Lovley's resignation letter was read by Flo. This means a current position on the committee is open, so members are encouraged to reach out to their networks (students, business owners, residents); they can come to a meeting as well, to learn more about the group and its work. Flo made an attendance reminder that 3 excused absences is the max that the Chair wants for any one person on the committee in a given year.

4.d Upcoming Community Events

River Jam: No one from the committee is able to join River Jam. Shelly will attend informally and will talk with Delilah about any other use for the Citizen DEI Committee table this year. For the future, it would be useful to find a way that the committee can join an event and represent itself and its work, even if members of the group can't be at the full event. Ultimately, building relationships remains core to the committee's work.

4.e Committee Brochure – Finalize

Scott made a motion to table this discussion until the next meeting, Syed seconded the motion, the motion passes unanimously.

4.f Group Photo

The group decided not to take a group photo at this time given the number of people absent from the meeting.

5. Meeting Adjourned at 7:14 PM.