



Town of Fairhaven

Town Hall - 40 Center Street - Fairhaven, MA 02719

BELONGING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK

2022 FEB 11 P 3:17

FAIRHAVEN,
MASS.

Date, Time, Location:

November 10, 2021 @ 6:30 P.M., Banquet Hall & Remote through ZOOM

Meeting Overview:

1. Meeting called to order
2. Quorum/Attendance
3. DEI Definitions
4. Committee Seal
5. Belonging Satisfaction Survey - John
6. Book contributions - Di H.
7. Land Acknowledgement
8. Next meeting Dec 8, 2021 (moved to Jan 12, 2021)
9. Adjournment

-Key-

BOLD = Issue being discussed

● = Notes, indentation for more notes

○ = Questions and discussions below

◆ = Votes (Nom/Second)

! = Change in attendance

Member Attendance (8):

- Leon Correy, Greg Weider, John Hinds, Diane Hahn, Kylie Bateman, Geoffrey A. Haworth, Jessica Fidalgo, Officer Jerome Penha, Jill Sullivan

Town of Fairhaven & Guests (0):

- none

Meeting called, 6:30 PM

PAST MINUTES: October 7, 2021 -not voted on.

TONIGHT'S AGENDA

Chairperson Welcome & Media Notification

- Leon Correy reads Media Notification & welcomes everyone to the Belonging Committee meeting.

- Introduction to committee members roll call. School representative Jill Sullivan, 7th grade Special Ed Teacher at Hastings. Middle School has a DEI group, she is here for the perspective of those with special needs and learning disabilities both in schools and community.
- Addendum to agenda not received in time for posting. Human Library proposal by Jessica between number 7&8 (new number 8)
- We have a quorum, Greg mentioned he would be late, but will be joining us. Geoff is absent.

DEI Definitions

- Leon Correy states we should go over the definitions of DEI as a new committee. Can present one component each meeting
- Di great idea to break it down to delve into each issue
- John town website has a great description of the 3, what about that?
- Leon those are good, we want to be able to break it down in our own words and bring it to people to explain terminology. It is up to the group moving forward with this. Each individual may have a different vision or what it means to you individually may be different.
- Kylie online is good, but it would be good as a group for clarity and purpose to not be pulling in different directions.
- Jessica What is written up was nice, but I think we all have different parts of DEI that are personal to us. And talking points, like I would be interested in more of what DI, John, and Jill have to say about disability inclusion, because I just don't know what those needs are to improve. So further discussion would be beneficial as a group.
- Kylie Everyone wrote in with a purpose to serve, a calling to be here. Learning about each other will make discussion helpful
- Leon would take a motion to vote on discussion
- Jessica make a motion to define as a group Seconded by John Hinds
- ♦Vote Unanimously passed
- Diane asked about definitions and how they change in future.

Committee Seal

- Leon Correy. Do we want to use a custom or town seal for belonging committee
- Di What would it mean for using our own or town seal?
- Leon, More symbolic than anything official. We are not here to enact policy, we are here to support the selectboard.
- Di- Students have made beautiful art to represent schools. Maybe the kids could design a seal.
- Leon likes that idea, maybe a contest.
- John We would want to clearly explain to kids what we are doing.
- Leon, we can give them information and our mission. They can show what DEI means to them
- Di something at the end of year, not before christmas
- Kylie is supportive of the idea of students helping, the biggest impact is youth, show we are involved.
- Jill use town seal, but add something to it, to represent everyone
- Jessica a guideline for the kids to follow, so there is some professional look, possibly seniors from high school & computer skills
- Di- was thinking middle school would be a good age group to grab to.

- Jessica Thinking of youth, and outreach that the older kids who will be voting might be good to engage with them, in middle school I would have not cared
- Jill both ages have pros. Kids can be fluid in their thought and mind set, so still thinking about how to involve them.
- Officer Penha Open it up to everyone and let them feel involved in the process and including a lot more students. Trying to include middle school with their program more in the future. The more students reached the better
- John What about 3 banners, all ages elementary, middle, high
- Leon We can engage with that based on presentation
- John Included teachers and principals to help with engagement
- Leon would someone volunteer for coordinating
- Jill and Diane will coordinate together with schools for this.
- Motion that Di and Jill will coordinate for the seal
- Kylie makes a motion and Jerome seconded
- ♦Vote unanimously in favor.

Belonging Satisfaction Survey - John

- John proposes a survey of town employees. He has done surveys in the past in his career and believes it can be simple and helpful to our mission under inclusion to ask a few simple questions about what it is like working for the town fairhaven. The survey could help people feel like they are heard and that people are interested in them and how they feel. For everyone to feel like they belong so everyone takes the survey, not asking about Race, Gender, Age Etc. Use town employees first, and then maybe open it up to the community 3-4 questions. Execution would be to go to selectboard, then to departments, and meeting with heads of departments be interactive with them. Or go straight to town people.
- !Greg W enters the meeting @ 6:30pm.
- Di distribution may be the hard part of that idea. Other than that, I think it's a good idea
- John- ask department heads how to distribute via paper or email. With community, Standard times or Neighborhood News. I think it will all create good will.
- Kylie- what is the goal of the survey?
- John- concept to improve town, goal is to make changes if possible to improve and solve the problems. Go back and ask if we did help. Positive change, positive help. At Least people can be heard. Get feedback on how to improve. Here is what we have, and what we have done. Question examples here: Do you enjoy your job? Do you feel as if it is going well with your daily activities? Any problems with your job you would like us to know? Next step for the public to vote, even 10% would be good, simple and easy. Do you enjoy living in fairhaven? Have you had any contact with any of the town departments? IF yes, positive or not, what happened? Any suggestions for how to help make Fairhaven better for you? Execution, I can meet with selectboard
- Di Thinks it's not specific enough for the issues this committee is here for. DEI specific, vs snow plowing.
- Leon announced Greg entered meeting
- Jessica I had more questions prior to your explanation, I do think there needs to be a bit more "tell me about it" as long as there's follow through.
- John, anyone can write in their issues.

- Jessica, maybe more specific about your issue, so we can clearly try to improve that.
- John worried about intimidation, people not knowing what DEI is about. Follow up would be about going to where the problem is and try to resolve or just letting departments know (ie street plowing)
- Greg missed meeting time, he logged in at 630, missed that it was 6pm tonight
- John quickly covers his proposal.
- Greg questions, on meetings, Leon will follow through
- John believes it will be a learning experience and will involve people so everyone feels comfortable
- Leon Asking if town administrator is involved
- John said he would include, but did not want to talk to anyone before we discussed as a group.
- Leon- since we are in flux with the TA position, it would make sense to include Wendy, or if we should wait for a new administrator.
- John, in that case, table it or wait. They would love a survey as a new person.
- Jessica Any funding or monies we talk about spending, we need a special account but also we would have to go before town meeting to have any sort of budget. Mailings, price for students, Ad for Neighborhood News.
- Leon, currently we don't have any budget. Until the next town meeting.
- Kylie it would be a lot of work and a big undertaking. There's a lot of good that can come from it, but needs more work
- Motion to table the satisfaction survey until a new TA is hired made by Di, Jessica seconded
- ♦Vote Unanimously passed
- **Book Contributions - Di**
- Di Went to the dollar store and noticed these books, "Belonging, Empathy & Bullying Is", maybe bringing these books to school and introduce them to this young enough. Maybe a group reading thing.
- Jill at Hastings we are already doing this. The kids are already more inclusive of each other. We are doing this from the ground up and the school systems are doing this Belonging and Inclusion.
- Di So happy to hear this initiative is already happening,
- Leon, just wasn't sure what the ask is? What the idea is?
- Di Just wanted to introduce the books, but it sounds like the schools are already working with this.

Land Acknowledgement

- Leon, some groups have these, wanted to ask if you wanted to do this, and do you know what it is? Sustainability Committee, Conservation Commission for example. It is a statement that you take, after the original statement that you are serving the town and acknowledging that the land was originally inhabited by the native americans. Considering we are the belonging committee, I wanted to ask.
- Di It's an awesome idea to acknowledge this.
- Leon- We can table this, so I can send an example out. So you can all see what it is.
- John- Likes the idea, we could vote on it.
- Jessica would like more information on it, just so I can see it
- Diane motion table until next meeting, Kylie seconded
- ♦Vote Unanimously passed

Human Library

- Jessica not 100% prepared on presenting tonight, not aware if everyone knows what the Human Library Program is about. Human Libraries are held across 23 or 32 countries now. Instead of renting out a library book you check out time with a person at a human library event. The human book is generally from a marginalized group of people, by race, gender, sexuality, poor, religion, etc; any kind of person really. You have the time to have a very open and honest conversation with each other but the other person's life experiences, because you haven't been able to have their experience, they tend to be very positive and almost therapeutic conversations. Positive for both sides. I did speak with the Library Director, Kyle, about co chairing hosting this event, he was interested in doing it as well. He was going to write or come in for a meeting when I was ready, but I missed that. I thought Human Library would be a really positive, DEI event as we talk about being different, and how I can be better for them.
- Kylie A great way to get diverse presences in front of people. This project is inline with that, loves and would love to participate by being a book. Could be an exciting event.
- Greg, so people would sign up for time with the person that wants to be the book?
- Jessica-Generally there are time spots 20-30 minutes you could go and sit with that book for what you are wanting to do.
- Greg thinks it sounds wonderful, sounds really good.
- John would it be proper to expand it to include successful role models, police/fire.
- Jessica What's nice is you can kind of do whatever group you want to. You could police officers, because right now they dont have the best reputations, it would give people an opportunity to meet them who otherwise may be intimidated. The big idea is to get people to the table and get them talking. We can hold 1 event or multiple, can be a specific topic. Maybe a public service or mentor night. Generally it is marginalized people, I think where we are in society right now, everyone could say "well, I am". So we can kind of be open to what & how many we do. We can see how the first goes, and go from there if it is a positive event.
- Di Maybe tackle this in January with the busy time of year.
- Jessica Time frame we were thinking was later winter or early spring. Not right away, maybe late February or April. I would want time to organize, it will be some work to do this.
- Leon was supportive of the idea as well.
- Motion to set up initiative Human Library Di, seconded by Jill.
- ♦Vote Unanimously passed

CLOSING REMARKS

- **Fairhavens Got Pride-** Di committee hasn't met yet. Working out some of the coal in the fire, but will meet post holidays to set up a committee.
- Leon asked if we should move December 8th meeting to January because of the holidays
- John, not able to attend, would prefer moving to January.
- Di abbreviated meeting in Dec
- Jessica for the sake of going over DEI definitions and us being new, moving to January where we know everyone can attend would be better. A lot of things are being planned, so that skipping December's meeting would just give us more time for that.
- Motion to skip December meeting, and move to January. Made by Jesscia, seconded by Jerome.
- ♦Vote Unanimously passed
- January 12th meeting at 6:30pm

- Motion to adjourn made by Di, seconded by Jill
- Roll Call vote passed unanimously to end meeting
- **Meeting ended 7:15PM**

Jessica Fidalgo, Secretary