

Town of Boxborough
Diversity Equity & Inclusion Committee
Regular Session Meeting Minutes
Conducted on Zoom
February, 17th, 2021

PRESENT: Wes Fowlks, Member; John Fallon, Member; Lovingsky Jasmin, Chair; Mary Sullivan, Member; Nora Michnovetz, Member; Lakshmi Kaja, Member; Amy Osenar, Member

ALSO PRESENT: Rajon Hudson

ABSENT: Peishan Bartley, Member; Song Issah, Member; Olivia Jones, Member

At 7:03 PM Jasmin called the meeting to order.

Agenda

1. Review and accept minutes of Dec 15th, 2020
2. Vote on the drafted article for the town meeting

At 7:04, Fowlks moved to approve the minutes from the December 15th, 2021 D.E.I. meeting. Seconded by Jasmin.

Roll call vote: Fallon – Aye, Sullivan – Aye, Jasmin – Aye, Michnovetz – Aye, Kaja – Aye, Osenar – Aye, Fowlks --

Aye

Approved 7-0

Jasmin noted that Issah was absent, and Fowlks offered to contact her to better understand her schedule.

Fowlks then presented the details of the drafted article for the town warrant. The committee reviewed it and after review, presented the following for vote:

“Article

To see if it is the sense of this Town Meeting that racism is a public health crisis, and the Town needs to work to combat racism and support people who are impacted by racism and targeted by acts of hate.

Summary:

The last year has seen the largest Civil Rights movement in the United States since the 1960s. In 2020, policymakers from more than 50 American municipalities and three states have formally highlighted racism as a public health crisis and on September 3, 2020, Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-Mass.) introduced the Anti-Racism in Public Health Act in Congress.

Often acts of racism and hate are committed discreetly as it is the intent of the perpetrator to isolate, intimidate and dehumanize their targets. Additionally, acts of hate and racism are often not publicized leaving residents unaware that their neighbors have been targeted. This year we have seen two members of the Acton-Boxborough School Committee targeted by acts of racism and hate while

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volunteering their time to serve our Town and school children. These volunteers were targeted because they are Black. In response to these incidents over 350 students from R.J. Grey Junior High School acknowledged and signed a letter written by 2 students in support of the members of the School Committee as well as acknowledging racism exists in Acton-Boxborough and takes a firm stand against it.

The Town can begin to address racism by:

- Reaching out and supporting individuals and groups affected by acts of hate;
- Confronting denial of racism, which serves to silence and isolate targeted individuals and perpetuate racism that exists; and
- Working to create a safe and supportive community which fosters inclusion, equity and diversity.

These acknowledgements would be in line with the Boxborough 2030 Master Plan.

Goal 2.1 of the Boxborough 2030 Master Plan states:

Support diversity by valuing, respecting, appreciating, and welcoming individuals – those who reside, visit, work, or pass through Boxborough – of all ages, genders, socioeconomic levels, cultural heritages, racial/ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities, religions, and ability levels.

By addressing this subject at Town Meeting, Boxborough will model how a community can come together to work against racism and hate. Our children, residents, and all others who work or pass-through Boxborough will see our endeavor in striving to be a welcoming, supportive and engaged community for all.”

At 7:16, Fowlks moved to approve the above article and summary for submission into the 2021 warrant. Seconded by Osenar.

Roll call vote: Fallon – Aye, Sullivan – Aye, Jasmin – Aye, Michnovez – Aye, Kaja – Aye, Osenar – Aye, Fowlks -- Aye,

Approved 7-0

At 7:22, Fowlks moved to adjourn. Seconded by Fallon.

Roll Call Vote: Fallon – Aye, Sullivan – Aye, Jasmin – Aye, Michnovez – Aye, Kaja – Aye, Osenar – Aye, Fowlks -- Aye

Approved 7-0

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