Equity and Justice for All Advisory Committee  
Minutes for Meeting  
December 21, 2020

Members in Attendance:  

Members Absent: Frank Davis, Karen Groce-Horan, Quincy Miller, Rev. Lisa Ward.  
Meeting Location: Via Zoom

The agenda included the following:

Approval of meeting minutes for 12/7/2020

Subcommittee groups provided updates on their work and research to date.

School and Youth  
Members discovered community outreach and communication is limited for town sports. Members will contact various league leaders to discuss how communications can be improved. Members will meet with the Principals and the new Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the school system to develop next steps in addressing school diversity and inclusions concerns.

Government  
Members made the following observations:

- There is no Town-wide focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
- There is no central town diversity hiring policy therefore there is a lack of coordination among town employees/officials on hiring.
- Committee appointments are ad hoc and largely dependent on the personal network of the appointing individual.

The subcommittee asked the larger Committee to consider making the following preliminary recommendations to the Town:

- Develop a Town-wide diversity policy
  - Create goals for
    - Hiring
    - Minority vendors
    - Equity in practices
- Create Town-wide strategic DEI plan related to hiring
- Town stakeholders involved in hiring should meet to identify actual obstacles to greater diversity in hiring and how they might be addressed
- Establish a permanent Committee to review Town-wide DEI issues
  - Create a centralized repository for demographic data
  - Report annually on how Town has performed and what can be improved
Police and Fire

Members acknowledge the most crucial component is input from the Town.

Members advocate for surveys to be conducted. A discussion ensued about how this could be accomplished. Focus groups were also discussed as a good means to gather residents’ input.

Members recognize that Civil Service is a common thread for both Fire and Police, which impacts diversity in hiring. Further research needs to be done on this.

Members also discussed whether the cadet program could be used to increase diversity. Increase interactions between police officers/firefighters and students was also noted as potential opportunities to develop interest in these career paths.

Housing

The Housing subcommittee had not had opportunity to meet and will report back at the next meeting.

Other

The Committee discussed if an interim report should be made to the Select Board in the near future to inform them of the Committee’s preliminary observations and recommendations. Reporting out to the Select Board would also provide residents insights into the Committee’s thinking to date.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:51 PM

Respectfully Submitted By:
Mary Ellen C. Welch, Clerk