

## Bethel Equity and Inclusion Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date:** September 28, 2021

**Committee Members Present:** David Phair, Owen DMC, Jesse Plotsky, Rita Champion, Christy Fry, Laura Perez

**Community Members Present:**

introductions were made, some snacktivity we enjoy about fall,

**Public Comment:**

no public comment was made

David is working on a turkey drive. looking for a spot to store turkeys. direct from David to families. Rita volunteered some tub freezer space for turkey.

**Updates:**

confirmed our meeting times. October 26, November 23, December 28th, January 25. the 4th tuesday of every month. meeting time was approved by consensus.

**Discussion:**

Discuss past present and future for the E & I committee. Owen reminded the “why” of this committee and how we plan to document, understand and remedy. We hope to increase civic engagement by making the town more inclusive, we plan to work with town leadership, the selectboard about their role in equity and inclusion. What we have done as a committee, the groups that were created, website, education, survey, definitions document made by jerry, partnership with historical society,

discussion about reflections on the committee and how to move forward as a group.

Rita mentioned awareness as being high priority for the committee. The more people know we are here and what we are doing the better we will be able to support the town and peoples needs. Jesse- brought up the importance of the group defining equity and definition of inclusion. how can we communicate what we think equity is in bethel.

update on the history of the definition document was given by christy. the reservations around it. the selectboard committees ask for the definitions. we talked about maybe an evolving definition “of the week or of the month” rather than a document we hand them.

Laura- has people at her work that could make the document read in understanding language. the golden global majority was introduced as a term by Laura.

Owen- contributed the importance and his interest in having community conversations. invite the various committees to. circle conversations.

other idea about hosting community circle discussions around racism, homophobia, We talked about regularizing the Juneteenth event. the town should be taking more ownership for future organizing of the celebration and as a committee we would like to do that as well.

Open Meeting Laws:

<https://www.vlct.org/sites/default/files/documents/Resource/VLCT%20Open%20Meeting%20Law%20FAQs.pdf>

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Bethel better connections grant. --they will be doing projects for the forward fest. land acknowledgement statement and gender pronouns as being off putting in the grant meetings. we talked about ways that our group could be supportive of the community. we aren't the experts but the conduits to these conversations.

accessibility checklist of people walking through town. funds came through v trans. Laura will talk with bethel better connections as committee rep. help people ask the hard questions that they maybe haven't already asked.

Owen-circle conversation as a group. yes. when to have a circle conversation was not decided.

historical society, reintroducing a conversation.

focus on event planning for next meeting.

voted, we as a committee take on Juneteenth.

survey, brainstorming ways to reach the most amount of people in Bethel.

while tabling at Forward Fest.

- email list,
- get half sheets getting printed out
- reading materials, bring books for people to read.
- rita will ask andrew about printing a flyer transferring
- david will bring a table
- bring a pride or blm flag
- about us page printed or available
- a space where people can tell their story

Update on the racial justice work in the White River Valley school district

-working on anti racism policy. latest meeting went well. minor revisions then will go to school board to be approved

- Owen will send out policy to the committee for us to look at.

- district wide policy to react to racist actions and activities.

-framework for staff about racism

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selectboard engagement

- Jesse gave updates on selectboard meeting. budget to invest in camera, television, monitor, and microphone. between \$2-5 thousand. they agree it is a good idea. committed to putting it into next years budget. they will need a person to operate, a monitor to let people in and monitor chat. bethel revitalization might be able to cut down on cost to share the equipment.

Rita- every town update. The people matched with the land in Sharon are staying in Bethel for the winter and need help insulating. Cover home repair, does it for free and have the supplies. right across the street from the special needs support system. a good resource.

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Laura-introduced idea about sending care packages to people who are having a hard time and might like a little lift. The idea came from Tabitha Moore, care packages, artwork, food, chapstick, the idea that someone loved and cared enough about a stranger was powerful. support from strangers. care packages to the golden majority. The committee loved the idea. school groups? Laura taking a lead on coordinating with the schools. Tabitha could nominate the receivers. any community member who has had a hard time at work, or bullied at school.

- will talk about town meeting at next meeting. do we want to make a push for full day ballot voting vs. floor voting. the selectboard is discussing options.

meeting adjourned 8:03

### **Motions, Proposals, and Resolutions Made:**

motion to approve last meetings notes were made. minutes were approved

### **Voting Record:**

(Note: need to indicate individual votes if a roll call is taken)

### **Next Meeting Date:**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/5820627640?pwd=TVNiSURhVm5ScTgweWl6OHdRbzZ4QT09>

Meeting ID: 582 062 7640

Passcode: equity

Dial In: 1-646-558-8656

**Notes Taken By: Rita Champion**

**Meeting facilitated by: Owen DMC**

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