

Town of Medway
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Advisory) Committee
December 7, 2021 - 6PM
Sanford Hall

Committee Members Present (In-Person): John Foresto, Dan Kerls, William Kingsbury, and Susan Dietrich

Committee Members Present (Virtually): Marques Crosby, Brian Sharkey, Andrea Crow Henry, and Khalid Abdi

Committee Members Absent: Judith Lane

Community Members Present: None

1. **Call to Order**

At 6:12PM, Mr. Kerls called the meeting to order. He confirmed the presence of the following members: Kingsbury: present, Dietrich: present, Crosby: present, Sharkey: present, Crow Henry: Present, Foresto: present, Abdi: present, Kerls: present.

2. **Public Comment**

There were none at this time.

3. **Website and Email Updates**

Mr. Crosby shared that the email inbox is set up and configured.

Ms. Dietrich shared that on the website, there is a “contact us” option for community members to contact the committee.

Mr. Crosby also added that the community feedback form is not active, but is ready to post at the discretion of the committee.

Ms. Dietrich shared concerns that the committee charge is currently difficult to see clearly, due to the background color, and suggested reformatting to ameliorate this issue.

Ms. Dietrich asked if the committee is ready to post the form; the committee shared that they are all ready to activate it. She discussed that the next step will be reaching out to Sandy Johnston about launching this component. Mr. Crosby agreed to serve as a representative in his communications with Ms. Johnston.

Mr. Foresto shared that deferring to Ms. Johnston’s existing strategies for communication would be an effective approach, particularly in regard to social media.

Ms. Dietrich offered a few additional strategies, such as reaching out to the chairs of other town boards to spread awareness and encourage communication. She felt the survey, in particular, should reach as broad of an audience as possible.

Mr. Sharkey agreed, stating that sending the survey to a purposeful distribution list would be more effective than overwhelming the recipients with multiple email blasts.

Mr. Foresto shared that there are approximately 350 people involved in town committees and departments in Medway, all of whom should receive the survey and have the option to participate.

Ms. Dietrich and Mr. Crosby underscored the importance of framing this survey as part of an ongoing conversation, not a standalone occurrence. There will be multiple opportunities for participation not only through focus groups, but also through the community forum and follow-up survey.

The committee also agreed that their existing timeline is acceptable.

4. **Debrief on Town Focus Group (Pending Completion)**

Mr. Kerls shared that the town focus group will be happening on 12/13/21 at 3PM. Mr. Crosby and Mr. Kerls will be co-facilitators. The participants are Allison Potter, Michael Boynton, and Katherine Bird. Mr. Sharkey offered to be the notetaker for the focus group.

Ms. Dietrich reminded the committee that there will be a Zoom for each focus group, so that the conversations are recorded and available. No more than 4 members of the committee should attend the live session, as it would become a quorum and therefore a formal meeting, which is not the intent. The members agreed to watch the recording separately afterwards.

Ms. Dietrich also shared that she is leading the school focus group on 12/8/21 at 3:30PM. The participants will be the superintendent, the director of student services, and one representative from each school building. Mr. Crosby offered to join virtually and be the notetaker. Ms. Dietrich also shared that she provided the focus group participants with the committee's information sheet well in advance of the focus group.

Mr. Foresto shared that he will send the materials to the town focus group participants on 12/8/21.

The committee also shared that the police focus group is scheduled for 1/4/22 at 3PM.

They also reviewed the fact that there are 6 remaining focus groups (listed below) to schedule after the ones for town, school, and police are complete. This equates to roughly two focus groups per week in January.

Mr. Foresto offered to lead the Affordable Housing Trust focus group, Mr. Kingsbury offered to lead the Council on Aging and Housing Authority focus group, Ms. Dietrich and Mr. Kerls offered to lead the student-based focus group, Mr. Abdi offered to lead the business community focus group, Mr. Sharkey offered to lead the church-based focus group, and Mr. Crosby offered to lead the Medway Marches focus group.

The committee set the goal to be done with all focus groups by the end of January 2022.

Mr. Kingsbury suggested that the committee identify tentative dates for their respective focus groups by the IDEA Committee's 12/21/21 meeting.

5. **Review July and November Minutes**

The committee planned to review the 7/14/21 minutes at the 12/21/21 meeting.

VOTE: Mr. Foresto motioned to approve the 11/30/21 minutes. Ms. Dietrich seconded this motion, which passed unanimously: Sharkey: aye, Crosby: aye, Crow Henry: aye, Abdi: aye, Kerls: aye, Dietrich: aye, Kingsbury: aye, Foresto: aye. VOTE: 8-0.

6. **Identify Community Forum Dates**

Ms. Dietrich suggested holding the community forum either at the high school or virtually in order to offer an opportunity for the committee to share their findings with the community and field questions. She suggested the first week in March as a tentative date. She also cited that the Master Plan Committee's first forum was virtual on a Monday evening and had approximately 100 attendees; this was significantly more attendance than their second meeting, which was in-person and received 60 attendees.

The committee therefore agreed that offering the option to attend the community forum either in-person or virtually would be the best approach to ensure maximum attendance.

The committee settled on Monday, March 14, 2022 at 7PM as a date for the community forum. Ms. Dietrich shared that this would allow the appropriate time necessary to fully debrief all focus groups and present the committee's overall findings for the community.

Mr. Foresto shared that he added this event to the town calendar.

The committee identified a location as the only remaining logistic of planning the community forum. Mr. Foresto suggested Thayer as a location

7. **Plan Community Survey**

Mr. Sharkey shared that he has experience in this area and offered to help with the process. He referred to survey design and survey execution as primary points of his approach. He shared that he will prepare more concrete ideas for platforms for the next meeting on 12/21/21. He cited the importance of reviewing other towns' surveys, as well

as conveying the importance of identifying unmet needs in the community, and ultimately the town's role in addressing those needs.

8. **Accessibility Discussion**

Ms. Dietrich recapped the committee's previous conversations about translating the surveys into multiple languages and providing accommodations for individuals with visual or hearing impairments.

The committee discussed potential cost-related issues with interpreters, particularly in regard to American Sign Language.

Ms. Dietrich shared that she will reach out to her contacts in the schools to identify the languages other than English that are spoken in Medway in advance of the 12/21/21 meeting.

Mr. Sharkey shared that some of his survey platforms have a GoogleTranslate plugin, which could increase accessibility.

The committee discussed how the Thayer House is fully accessible for persons with disabilities; Ms. Dietrich also underscored that the hybrid option for attendance makes it more accessible for everyone.

Mr. Crosby raised the issue of how the committee will present its findings to the community. Mr. Sharkey suggested presenting a slide with major findings and recommendations for each focus group as a general approach, then considering universal trends.

Mr. Foresto suggested each committee member using the same slide template; Mr. Sharkey offered to create this.

Mr. Kerls suggested that the committee discuss the presentation format at the 12/21/21 meeting once the town and school focus groups have taken place.

The committee also discussed potentially creating a OneDrive repository for their shared resources. Mr. Crosby offered to reach out to Mr. Boucher about this and report back to the committee on 12/21/21.

9. **Motion to Adjourn**

VOTE: At 7:26PM, Ms. Dietrich motioned to adjourn. Mr. Foresto seconded this motion, which passed unanimously. Sharkey: aye, Crosby: aye, Crow Henry: aye, Abdi: aye, Kerls: aye, Dietrich: aye, Kingsbury: aye, Foresto: aye. VOTE: 8-0.