

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Town of Medway
IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Advisory) Committee
February 2, 2022 - 6PM
Remote via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Andrea Crow Henry, Susan Dietrich, Dan Kerls, Marques Crosby, Khalid Abdi, and Bill Kingsbury

Committee Members Absent: John Foresto, Brian Sharkey, and Judith Lane

Community Members Present: Two individuals logged in remotely as “Anonymous” and “anon”

1. **Call to Order:** At 6:04PM, Mr. Kerls called the meeting to order. He confirmed the virtual presence of the following individuals: Crosby: present, Abdi: present, Dietrich: present, Crow Henry: present, and Kerls: present.

Mr. Kingsbury joined the meeting at 6:06PM.

2. **Public Comment:** There were none at this time.

3. **Focus Group Updates**

Mr. Kingsbury shared that the police focus group will be on Wednesday, February 9, 2022 at 3PM. He anticipates having at least 3-5 participants. Both Mr. Crosby and Ms. Crow Henry offered to support Mr. Kingsbury’s facilitation of this focus group.

Mr. Kingsbury and Ms. Dietrich met jointly with the Council on Aging and Housing Authority on February 2, 2022. They both spoke positively of the experience and look forward to processing the information to share with the committee at the next meeting. Ms. Dietrich, in particular, shared that the participating members of this focus group helped identify issues that were previously invisible and underrepresented. She noted that the conversation targeted diversity, equity, and inclusion, and was therefore quite thorough and far-reaching.

Ms. Crow Henry shared that the veterans focus group will be taking place February 7, 2022 at 3PM. She suggested that members who want to participate should email her directly.

Ms. Dietrich noted that town and school administration, police, Affordable Housing/Affordable Housing Trust, Council on Aging/Medway Housing Authority, and student groups are all scheduled or completed. She cited local businesses and religious organizations are the only two that are outstanding.

Mr. Abdi informed the committee that he has reached out to participants but has not found any individuals who are interested in joining a focus group. Mr. Crosby offered to help with this, which Mr. Abdi accepted.

Mr. Kerls also noted that Mr. Sharkey is in the process of reaching out to religious organizations; he will update the committee at the next meeting.

Ms. Dietrich asked if there has been any feedback from the Medway Business Council regarding the lack of interest; Mr. Abdi shared that there simply has not been much response.

Ms. Dietrich offered to reach out to Mr. Sharkey regarding some connections she has with local religious organizations. Mr. Crosby also offered to reach out to Mr. Sharkey regarding a previous contact he had provided for the religious organization focus group.

Ms. Dietrich congratulated the committee on the progress they have made with completing the progress and noted the importance of compiling the data as the remaining focus groups are completed.

4. Survey Planning

Mr. Crosby noted that this is Mr. Sharkey's area of expertise and deferred to his thoughts at the next meeting.

Ms. Dietrich suggested making the survey a "smart" survey - she noted the potential for certain survey questions to yield subsequent questions that are most relevant to the user. Moreover, she noted that Acton's survey primarily revolves around race; she suggested that Medway's be broader in order to encompass all aspects of the committee's charge.

Mr. Kingsbury also noted that Acton did not receive as much of a response as would be anticipated by the size of the town; he asked the committee for their ideas regarding participation and engagement.

Mr. Crosby shared that he spoke to the chair of Acton's committee, who noted the lack of response as a point of frustration and disappointment. He suggested that the committee members continue to work with larger groups, such as the schools; he also indicated the importance of the survey being all-encompassing, but still succinct enough to complete in an efficient fashion.

Mr. Kerls agreed, sharing the importance of capturing the information while still designing the survey with brevity in mind.

Ms. Crow Henry suggested that there be approximately 10 questions on the survey, depending slightly on the user.

Ms. Dietrich touched upon the potential to include not only people who live in Medway, but people who work in Medway and interact with the town in that capacity.

Mr. Crosby raised the issue of people potentially completing the survey who do not live or work in Medway; Ms. Dietrich suggested deferring to Mr. Sharkey on this at the next meeting. In addition, she cited the potential to allow an option that prompts respondents to clarify their affiliation with the town if they do not live or work in Medway.

Ms. Crow Henry suggested limiting it to people who live, work, or own a business in Medway. She noted that anyone on the outside of Medway is not directly impacted by these issues. She underscored the importance of maintaining focus on the town's direct stakeholders.

5. Forum Planning

Ms. Dietrich reminded the committee that March 14, 2022 is the date for the forum. It will take place at the Thayer House, but there is also a virtual option. The committee will present a slide deck that provides a summary of the findings from all of the focus groups. There will also be a live Q&A, which will be led by volunteering members of the IDEA Committee. She also suggested posting these materials, along with the notes from the focus groups as an appendix, to the IDEA Committee website following the forum. This will allow community members to access the information afterwards, as needed.

Mr. Crosby recommended genericizing some of the focus group-based information in order to remove the names of participating members; this would help ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

Ms. Dietrich disagreed with removing the names of the attendees; Mr. Kerls clarified that the committee has received that suggestion as a directive. Mr. Crosby agreed with Mr. Kerls, noting the potential fear of backlash. Ms. Crow Henry agreed with this, particularly if the individuals prefer to remain anonymous. Ms. Dietrich asked if the committee will still label the focus groups ("town," "school," etc.); Ms. Crow Henry felt that it was important to still identify the groups, just not the individuals by name.

Mr. Crosby noted potential concerns regarding transparency. He felt that noting the focus group, but not individual names, was an appropriate balance. Mr. Abdi agreed, as the committee promised individuals privacy upfront.

Ms. Dietrich suggested disaggregating the feedback from each focus group and presenting it as bullet points without identifying information, such as focus group name or personal information. Mr. Crosby agreed with this approach.

Mr. Kerls suggested providing the legal team with the final product in order to get approval about any potential privacy concerns.

Ms. Dietrich asked the committee if they feel they will be ready by March 14; they responded in the affirmative. Mr. Kerls noted the importance of using the upcoming meeting(s) to thoroughly prepare for the forum. He also suggested the potential for workshop meetings as supplements to the existing meetings.

In addition to their next upcoming public meetings on 2/15/22 and 3/1/22, Mr. Kerls suggested 2/8/22 at 7PM as a workshop date. All present members agreed to this.

6. Minute Approvals

VOTE: Mr. Kerls motioned to approve the minutes from the 1/18/22 minutes as written. Ms. Dietrich seconded this motion, which passed unanimously. Kingsbury: aye, Crow Henry: aye, Dietrich: aye, Crosby: aye, Abdi: aye, Kerls: aye. VOTE: 6-0.

7. Other Business

Ms. Dietrich asked the committee how they want to follow up with the participants in the focus group. She asked if the committee wishes to share the feedback form with any of the students and create a communication for that. All communications would have to go through parents first, then students.

Mr. Kerls, Mr. Crosby, and Mr. Kingsbury suggested addressing this item in tandem with the community survey. Mr. Crosby suggested having one survey for students and another for other community members. Mr. Kerls suggested seeking legal counsel's advice on this, as well, in order to ensure that the committee takes the proper approach and follows the appropriate protocols.

Mr. Crosby noted that there have been no further submissions of the feedback form since the committee's last meeting.

Mr. Kerls prompted the two anonymous individuals to share any feedback. There was none at this time.

Mr. Crosby shared an update from Mr. Sharkey that the religious organization focus group will be on February 10, 2022.

Motion to Adjourn: At 6:56PM, Mr. Kerls motioned to adjourn. Mr. Kingsbury seconded this motion, which passed unanimously. Kingsbury: aye, Crow Henry: aye, Dietrich: aye, Crosby: aye, Abdi: aye, Kerls: aye. VOTE: 6-0.