

DANVERS HUMAN RIGHTS & INCLUSION COMMITTEE
Meeting of Thursday, August 20, 2020

In accordance with the Governor's March 12 Order suspending provisions of Open Meeting Law and to promote public health and social distancing, a meeting of the Danvers Human Rights & Inclusion Committee was held on Thursday, August 20, 2020 at 7:00 PM via WebEx video conference call.

Committee members present: Dutrochet Djoko, Chair; Eric Crane, School Committee Liaison; Charlie Desmond; Bob Gamer; Bill Graham; Donna Hopkins; Sally Kerans; David McKenna; David Mills, Board of Selectmen Liaison; Paul Pawlak; Jorge Sanchez-Salazar

Staff present: Eileen Page, Human Resources; Lt. Rob Sullivan, Police Liaison

Not present: Cathy Sullivan-Bradley; Douglas Vooyo, Interfaith Liaison

With a quorum present, Mr. Djoko called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

a. July 30, 2020

- *Vote: Ms. Kerans moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Gamer seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

Flag Policy Review

A proposed *Danvers Board of Selectmen Policy Regarding the Rainbow Flag* was read aloud. The policy was drafted by the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager.

- *Vote: The Committee voted unanimously to support the Rainbow Flag Policy and send to the Board of Selectmen for adoption.*

Bumper Sticker Subcommittee Update

The Bumper Sticker Subcommittee presented their plan for a bumper sticker contest to the Committee. The Committee expressed approval of the Subcommittee's timeline and marketing strategy. It was decided to add homeschool groups and the Brookwood School to the list of schools that will be targeted for advertisement.

Town Manager Update

Steve Bartha (Town Manager) joined the meeting to provide an update to the Committee. Following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, the Town of Danvers issued a Joint Statement from Town Leadership condemning the murder and reinforcing the Danvers Core Values. Mr. Bartha reported that the Town is currently working to examine their practices to ensure they are free of bias, including redacting any identifying factors related to race, gender, etc. from job applications received. Mr. Bartha will provide a comprehensive presentation of steps the Town has taken at the September 15 Board of Selectmen meeting.

Liaison Updates

SCHOOL

Mr. Crane reported heightened tensions as the Public Schools assess the best method of reopening for the 2020-2021 schoolyear amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Crane reported to the Board that an investigation recently concluded related to the unfurling of a flag bearing the name of a 2020 Presidential Candidate during the senior parade. The incident sparked a conversation on student conduct, and the Danvers Police Department concluded that no criminal conduct occurred. The student discipline process has been followed. Details are not able to be released due to privacy laws.

Mr. Crane reported that another investigation into social media posts by current and former Danvers High School students has sparked extensive conversation on cultural issues at DHS relating to race, gender, and harassment. The

School Committee has determined that the mental health needs of students must be prioritized. The issue will be discussed further at the School Committee meeting on Monday, August 24.

HRIC Committee members expressed disappointment that the Committee was not involved in the investigation of the social media posts.

New Business

None.

Website and Social Media Management Discussion

This item was tabled due to time.

- *Vote: Mr. McKenna moved to adjourn. Ms. Hopkins seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

The Danvers Human Rights and Inclusion Committee adjourned at 8:54 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by Eileen G. Page
08.24.2020*