

## DEI ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Special Meeting Minutes October 23, 2023

The meeting commenced at 9am.

In attendance: Melissa Conner, Wendy Ramos

Ms. Conner stated that there would be no public comment at this meeting.

**1. Discussion of Book Fair** – Ms. Conner noted that recently, at the school book fair, diversity books were segregated. She had a conversation with the PTO chair to ask that the books be integrated, and the PTO chair agreed, Scholastic sends the books by pre-packaged for display. The PTO Chair will follow up with the company to provide our feedback. Ms. Conner said it's worth keeping an eye on it going forward.

**2. Revisit objectives of the Committee** – Ms. Conner mentioned that because of the DEI Committee's current membership size of (two members) they need to rethink the committee's objectives; they cannot accomplish everything with such a small group. She advised that she and Ms. Ramos will revisit the objectives and provide their recommendations to the incoming BOS.

**3. Recruiting / Membership:** Ms. Conner stated that they are looking for additional members for the committee and would welcome interested parties to reach out. Ms. Ramos recommended reaching out to the Weston Marketing Committee for their assistance in advertising for new members.

**4. Integration into Town Activities** –Ms. Conner advised they need to reset the function with how the DEI Advisory Committee is involved with the BOS when crisis communication is required. Referring to the current Middle East conflict, Ms. Conner advised the DEI Advisory Committee should be part of the crafting of communication language in real time with the BOS. This has been flagged to the BOS who expressed enthusiasm for this participation moving forward. Ms. Conner advised they would be recommending to the BOS to enact a streamlined communication process.

**5. Old Business** - None

#### **6. New Business**

With regards to Co-Chair Vanessa Richards resignation- The DEI Advisory Committee has received numerous questions from the public on this topic. Ms. Conner stated that to be fair, she and Ms. Ramos do not know the scope of the role of the DEI Advisory Committee within this situation. The Committee's role in this situation needs to be defined after discussion with the appropriate town offices and officials. In an effort to ensure neighbors can express their opinions on the matter, the DEI has called a special meeting for October 30th at 730PM to take public comment and ultimately determine their

recommendation to the BOS on the matter. Until the Committee has clarity around their responsibility, they remain objective and neutral in position.

Ms. Conner stated that the DEI Advisory Committee has received multiple emails advising them there are lawn signs that town residents have deemed offensive. Ms. Conner advised that they need to get clarity around the scope of what can be done within their Advisory role on this topic and will bring it forward to the BOS for their action. These identified signs do not align with the DEI values of the committee.

Ms. Conner asked for a show of hands of participants that would like to have an open dialogue. Three-fourths indicated they would; a meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 30 @ 7:30p.

Adjourned at 9:26 am.