

Minutes- Hardwick Equity Committee Meeting

6:00 pm, Monday February 1, 2021

Via Zoom

Present: Chip, Myles, Lucian, Ceilidh, Alexandra (Alex), David, Beth (notes)

Special Guest: Elizabeth Rossano

Action Steps:

- Check in with people about being speakers at HEC meetings
- Beth will check with Anna at AWARE to see how/if the town and they may partner in some way
- Building Fearless Futures -Lucian will talk with Netdahe about speaking
- Ceilidh will talk with Casey about creating a document to share with potential speakers/contractors
- Ceilidh and Myles will come up with a process of how to pay people
- What do each of the points of focus mean to us? What are the possible next steps? Bring to next meeting for possible discussion

Potential reading material: -Nancy Gallagher, "Breeding Better Vermonters" book about eugenics movement in Vermont

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

New Members:

Alexandra Jump of Cabot, David O'Brien of East Hardwick

Minutes from the January 4th Meeting:

Myles moves to approve as submitted, Alexandra seconds; all in favor, passed

March Meeting Date:

- Day before town meeting -will this interfere with anyone's schedule? Seems like it will still work for everyone, so we'll stay with our regularly scheduled meeting.
- We may end up rescheduling our meetings moving forward in order to involve other people/organizations (there are currently conflicts)
- Meeting after Town Meeting is our formational meeting

Jeudevine Library Project & Community Allies:

Info presented by Elizabeth Rossano -Racial Literacy Committee

- Board has formed the Racial Literacy Committee (4 members), which is still in early phases; tasked with personally understanding racial issues and will find a more solid path as they move forward, but are helping guide the library board and staff to educate themselves;
- Library staff and Board are currently reading "White Fragility" by Robin DeAngelo
- May invite community members to join the committee at some point
- Computers are still available for community use; librarians do a lot to remind people that they are an available resource for the community; how does/can the library reach people who have

literacy or info accessibility issues? There are many audiobooks, ebooks, as well as the inter-library exchange program in order to help broaden the scope of information available

- Community strength is among the most important things we can do to work against white supremacy culture; finding and creating ways to connect with each other helps create that strength

- Creating a safe place; when people feel safe there is space to grow

- Strong possibility of collaboration between the library board and the Hardwick Equity Committee; joint educational projects? hoping to collaborate with schools & Community Allies as well

- literacy: ability to read vs understanding of the issues and ability to talk about them

- how to get people interested and engaged in the conversation? humanizing each other is a huge community building practice

Community Allies

- Safety Trust & Respect” is the foundation of the group

- Monthly meetings for people to connect and talk about issues

- The core group read “My Grandmother’s Hands”, a larger group is currently reading “Caste”

Amendment of formation documents:

- Assignment of term limits to committee seats will be chosen by the select board and decided on at the HEC meeting after town meeting, where we will also reassign roles

- Documents will need to be reviewed and possibly updated

Recap & Updates from last meeting:

- focusing on the goals in balance with inviting speakers

- Select Board & town would like to see an annual report with recommendations for projects & recommended assigning project managers; clear recommendations around what the committee hopes to accomplish and what it is tasking the town with accomplishing; what tasks are handled by which group of people is yet to be determined

- paying people already educated (either due to study or experience or both) to do the work vs doing the work ourselves

- For anyone hired by the committee/town, a W-9 needs to be filled out & insurance must be obtained in order for us to contract their services; for individuals or smaller organizations, how to overcome that barrier of insurance needed? Partner with a local organization?

- This is a new committee; we’re definitely still working things out, but we have the resolution to help orient and guide us

-Equity Report for Selectboard-

- The committee creates the timeline for reports and recommendations for the town

-Planning Commission (PC)/Better Connections Grant- David Gross (chair) is very interested in proceeding with this work; someone on the committee could look at PC policies and make recommendations for updates/changes; town got \$15,000 from Community Foundation,

Better Connections is a state grant - hoping Equity Committee will help by writing a letter of support

-Paying Contractors & Presenters-

-wait on having presenters to give time for new members to get up to speed and also to solidify the process for payment (Ceilidh & Myles will work on this)

Proposal for Next Steps:

- Issues with equity committee email -no emails seem to be getting through & are bounced back to sender -needs to be addressed
- at least 4 people have attempted to contact/express interest, so there will likely be more new members at our March meeting
- give another month for new members to settle in; in March, go over in a bit more detail the ideas we've already come up with
- creating "buy-in" for each town department -start small and build from there
- Creating and developing connections to marginalized communities and other groups of people working towards equality
- When all seats have been filled, solidify group and short/interim/long term goals

Questions:

- What are we prioritizing and how? What is the timeline for accomplishing our goals?
- What can we do now? What will need more time to accomplish?

Meeting adjourned 7:42 pm

Next meeting: Monday March 1st, 6 pm, via Zoom

Items for March meeting: rescheduling our meeting time in order to facilitate working with other groups? Fleshing out our goals and solidifying next course of action to present to the town for action; update on payment process for contractors & presenters