

CITY OF BARRE
PUBLIC BODY APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Committee/board: Diversity and Equity Committee

Date of meeting: Monday, November 16, 6:15 PM

Location of meeting: Zoom Videoconference with Call-in Option

Board/committee members in attendance:

- Ellen Kaye
- Danielle Owczarski
- William Toborg
- Joelen Mulvaney
- Marichel Vaught
- Christopher Roberts

Board/committee members absent:

- none

Others in attendance:

- Jake Hemmerick (City Council)
- Lucas Herring (Mayor)

Topic(s) Discussed

1. Call to order at 6:15 PM.
2. Adjustments to the Agenda.
 - a. No adjustments to the agenda.
3. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting
 - a. Waiting on Chris to determine who the seconder was for the flag policy and Black Lives Matter motion.
 - b. Moved to the end of the agenda.
4. Old Business:
 - a. Sub-committee reports (if any)
 - i. nothing to report
 - b. Definitions - Ellen
 - i. Ellen left the definitions the same except for culture, which the last sentence was removed
 - ii. **Joelen** suggested defining terms used in the flag policy to help with interpretation
 1. Danielle suggested hearing from Chris about what words to define in the flag policy
 2. Group determined that the term “social justice” should be defined based on discussion with council and added to the current definitions document
 - a. Lucas will send information about social justice
 3. Updates to the flag policy were discussed based on Council’s feedback - mayor option removed, timing for flying the flag on

behalf the city employee was updated, press release timing was changed from 5 calendar days to 2 calendar days, application to fly the flag was added, and added the minimum of 24 hours to fly a flag

5. New Business:
 - a. Process passing of the policy event - Joelen
 - i. see Round Table discussion
 - b. Special Flag application form
 - i. Lucas did not have any comments on the application
 - ii. Two flags have been proposed by council
 - iii. Committee reviewed application and made corrections. **Danielle** will update and send back out to committee and Jody.
 - c. Lucas - question about chicken ordinance - does the council want to review this or is it too ancillary to the committees mission - connection with food security
 - i. Chris and Danielle would liaise with task force
 1. membership would be created if committee members wanted
6. Set next meeting Date: Monday, December 21, 2020 at 6:15PM.
7. Round Table - Process passing of the policy event
 - a. Chris - Felt the group was well informed and respectful of differing views. Chris felt he could have been better prepared from his legal perspective.
 - b. William - Thought committee was respectful of each other. Wasn't comfortable with some of the chat responses and some councilors responses. Felt committee did a fine job. Felt that he made it clear about what he disagreed with as a private citizen. Respects the work that everyone on the committee is doing and does not want to give an indication otherwise. Is in agreement that we should discuss the best way to express dissent. Feels that each member brings something to the committee whether we disagree or not and feels we share the same goals.
 - c. Marichel - Felt the committee responded well and was respectful of the council and others point of view. Marichel thought it was good that we were all there. Concerned that as we move forward as a committee, do we need to say when we are or not in agreement. Marichel believes we should preface our statements and where we are coming from as an individual. Believed the committee should promote the consensus of the group. Marichel thinks this needs to be done in a way that does not confuse the public.
 - d. Ellen - felt that prepared statements were good and that we knew the policy well. Concerned about the City Council not sharing information during the meeting (the flag policy). Felt we could be more strategic and feel that the agenda should be more clear about what is being discussed. Felt dissent should not be done as a member of the committee. Feels dissent is good and represents the minority opinion.
 - e. Danielle - Felt good that the committee was prepared. Danielle will draft a letter to council about accessibility of information made available to the public in a timely manner before City Council meetings. Also felt that the committee should present a united front in their support of the committee decision. Noted that all disagreements in votes are documented in the meeting minutes and wants the minutes to be transparent to the public. Danielle encourages members of the

committee to recommend changes to the minutes if they feel their statement was not recorded accurately.

- f. Joelen - Felt group was well prepared and could be more strategic. Concerned about the sidebar chat and was happy that we didn't engage. Joelen was concerned when the council tried to amend the flag policy and felt they were cancelling out the work the committee had done and invested. Did not feel it was democratic and that the process is undermined when there is dissent on a committee decision, and feels statements should be made as the public portion of the city council meeting.
 - i. Recommend process for dissent at the next meeting.
 - g. Danielle - Recommendation that we work with the Civilian Oversight and Advisory Committee
 - h. Ellen - What is our role in the meeting addressing the Black Lives Matter flag in the meeting tomorrow.
 - i. William - Mentioned that the confederate flag was flown during the Trump rally and when he came down, there was no one flying the flag. He did speak to rally attendants and they said "they have the right to fly the flag". Also, spoke about flying the "Back the Blue" flag and having only one flag flown at the same time. William would support the flying of both flags.
8. Adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Action items

1. Group determined that the term "social justice" should be defined based on discussion with council and added to the current definitions document
 - a. **Lucas** will send information about social justice
2. **Joelen** - Recommend process for dissent at the next meeting.
3. **Danielle** - Update the special flag display application and send back out to committee and Jody.
4. **Danielle** - Draft a letter to council about accessibility of information made available to the public in a timely manner before City Council meetings.

1) Motion: Move to adopt minutes as amended.

Mover/Second: William/Marichel

Result of vote: All voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned:

Mover/Second: Ellen/Danielle

Time: 7:40 PM

Next meeting date/time/location: Monday, December 21, 2020 at 6:15PM via Zoom



Danielle Owczarski