

**CITY OF BARRE**  
**PUBLIC BODY DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**Committee/board:** Diversity and Equity Committee

**Date of meeting:** Monday, August 16, 2021, 6:00 PM

**Location of meeting:** Zoom Videoconference with Call-in Option

**Board/committee members in attendance:**

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

**Others in attendance:**

- Michael Greig
- Steve Mackenzie - Barre City Manager

**Topic(s) Discussed**

1. Call to order at 6:00 PM.
2. Acknowledgement
  - a. We acknowledge that Barre City was developed on Sokoki Abenaki land, which the Western Abenaki nation never ceded, made treaty for, nor were they conquered. We aspire to create a space in our meetings that is inclusive, participatory and equitable. We acknowledge we all come from different experiences and that our experiences may be affected by racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, ableism and many other systems of oppression. We are here to address equity within the systems of our city in order to inform the City Council of our findings. We acknowledge that systemic inequities exist and do not debate the personal experiences of marginalized and underrepresented community members. With that in mind, it is important that we are thoughtful of the impact of our words on each other in this space.
3. Adjustments to the Agenda.
  - a. No adjustments.
4. Participants/visitors open mic
5. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting - 7/19/2021
  - a. No changes except basic formatting. Approved.
6. Old Business:
  - a. Working Group Reports
    - i. Community Education – Chris
      1. Alison (last name Joelen will email) was tasked with looking into literature and broadening search to include equity, housing, community with hopes that books will be purchased with grants.

2. William - summer reading program at Spaulding and daughter is reading a graphic novel by George Takei about growing up in internment camps.
  - a. <https://www.amazon.com/They-Called-Enemy-George-Takei/dp/1603094504>
- ii. Barre City Equity Impact Assessment Tool – Ellen/Danielle
  1. Meeting had a surprise guest invited by Chief Bombardier who may be the interim chief (Larry Eastman)
  2. Discussed sharing the tool for other committees to go through the tool and explain how to use it.
  3. Steve Mackenzie recommended going through him to introduce the tool to other committees.
  4. Joelen contacted a few folks to discuss the tool
    - a. Planning and Zoning Commission
    - b. Arts Committee
    - c. Housing Committee
    - d. Rick DeAngelis, Director, Good Samaritan Haven
  5. The group did not continue to go through the FIPP with the tool partly b/c the chief said it was unchangeable except to personalize it.
  6. Joelen asked Svetlana if she would be willing to work on creating a schematic that was helpful for people using the tool.
  7. Danielle remarked that simplifying the tool would be helpful if we can keep it effective, but make it easier for committees to fill out. Can we compare it to the REAL assessment tool introduced by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns?
  8. Ellen is interested in developing a training for the tool
- iii. Community Needs Assessment - Marichel
  1. Phone call tomorrow with Jenna Koloski to get suggestions on outreach and how to help make their outreach for All in For Barre more inclusive.
  2. Joelen - Looked into producing a map that identifies vulnerabilities/demographics within the city neighborhoods and Steve Mackenzie will look into city language around underserved / vulnerable populations
- iv. Policies and Procedures - William
  1. 782 rental properties, 2634 units, 141 single-family homes, 473 owner has Barre City address, 33 from Barre town, 88 nearby towns, 58 out-of-state, 1 out of country
    - a. 9 have 20+ units in them with 524 units - all have Barre City ownership
    - b. Additional 9-16 units - 127 (none out of state)
    - c. William provided additional detail for small units
    - d. William will put this information into the Google Docs working groups folder

- e. Ellen asked a clarifying question about how the information was analyzed looking at concentration of ownership based on owner
- f. William noted that the address of rental property owners (Barre City address) does not indicate “good” or “bad” landlords.
  - i. Joelen noted there was a need to identify corporate ownership
  - ii. Joelen remarked about abandoned properties and how to understand the current state of those properties if they could be used to create affordable housing
    - 1. Danielle recommended being aware of properties in floodplains or located in other areas that could be unsafe when buyouts or floodproofing could be options
  - iii. Joelen made a recommendation to ensure new parking areas are built in a way that infiltrates runoff
  - iv. William made a recommendation to consider funding available to help first time owners
  - v. Joelen - Invite Ericka Reil and Teddy to talk about low income home buying options
- v. Liaison Reports: Barre Unified School District D&E Committee
  - 1. School is backing off on the Anti-racism policy
  - 2. Danielle asked about notes from the previous meeting about an Anti-Critical Race Theory speaker being invited to the meeting. Danielle remarked the importance of having transparency in messaging and ensuring both sides are represented equally in discussion and led by facts, not opinions
- vi. VLCT D&E Committee – Ellen
  - 1. They convened a reset meeting that included reframing the charge and the work of the group
    - a. VLCT Committee’s Charge: The Equity Committee’s charge is to help create an action plan that outlines concrete ways that we will actively promote equity and inclusion, both within the organization and with our members.”
    - b. The Work: 1. The Committee’s work will assist municipalities (external) as well as VLCT’s operations (internal). The action plan will establish tasks and a timeline to accomplish them. 2. The committee will discuss and investigate tools municipalities may need and how to develop them, as well as explore other ways the League can support its members as they seek to establish a culture of equity in their own communities.

2. Ellen alerted Mayor and Steve to transition role on VLCT D&E Committee to Mel Cambel (City Councilor) and discussed training opportunities - funding and options - on Equity topics
  - a. VLCT is thinking about the recommendation for transition since the group is going to discuss how they onboard new members
3. Steve is going to look into VLCT providing sponsorship for local training exercise and public programming or could ARPA funds be used for this as well and need to ensure any funding used will be audit requirements - Council will be ultimate arbiter of how ARPA funds will be used
  - a. library has agreed to provide support (use of building)
- vii. Other Connections
7. New Business:
  - a. August 25 “All In for Barre” community meetings - Joelen
    - i. All facilitation is being done in the same way at each session - they asked if Xusana Davis would facilitate along with another facilitator
    - ii. Opera House 4:15 to 4:45 - Chris (also attending aging discussion), Marichel, and Joelen (and maybe Ellen)
    - iii. Ellen recommended splitting up among the groups to put an equity lens and discuss how to include equity in the conversation
8. Set next meeting Date: Monday, September 20, 2021 at 6:00PM.
9. Round Table
  - a. No input.
10. Adjourned at 7:15PM.

#### **Action items**

1. **Joelen** - Invite Ericka Reil and Teddy to talk about low income home buying options
2. **Joelen** - Looked into producing a map that identifies vulnerabilities/demographics within the city neighborhoods and **Steve Mackenzie** will look into city language around underserved / vulnerable populations
3. **Steve** - is going to look into VLCT providing sponsorship for local training exercise and public programming or could ARPA funds be used for this as well and need to ensure any funding used will be audit requirements

**1) Motion:** Move to adopt minutes as amended.

**Mover/Seconder:** William Toborg/Marichel Vaught

**Result of vote:** All in favor

**Meeting adjourned:**

**Mover/Seconder:** Ellen/Danielle

**Time:** 7:15 PM

**Next meeting date/time/location:** Monday, September 20, 2021 at 6:00PM via Zoom

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danielle Owczarski'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Danielle Owczarski