

**CITY OF BARRE
PUBLIC BODY MEETING MINUTES**

Committee/board: Diversity and Equity Committee

Date of meeting: Monday, September 20, 2021, 6:00 PM

Location of meeting: Zoom Video Conference with Call-in Option

Board/committee members in attendance:

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

Others in attendance:

- Tom Kyle - public participant
- Steven Mackenzie - City Manager

Topic(s) Discussed

1. Call to order at 6:01 PM.
2. Chris read the 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. Steve is providing a report on equity training from VLCT
 - i. Steve was unable to get a hold of Ted Brady and will report back when he hears from him, but he was able to talk with Ted during the “All in for Barre” and ask if the group could help to subsidize training for the city. Funding may be available and the city would need to explore what the training would constitute.
 - ii. Steve encourages committee members to look at the VLCT agenda for the Town Fair and if committee members attend, they will need to send an invoice to the city for reimbursement.
 - iii. VLCT Town Fair: <https://pheedloop.com/TownFair21/site/home/> - October 4-8
4. Participants/visitors open mic

- a. Tom Kyle - saw meeting on FPF and is interested in learning about the group and what we are doing.
- 5. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting - 8/16/2021
 - a. Meeting minutes approved
- 6. Old Business:
 - a. Working Group Reports
 - b. Community Education – Chris
 - i. Plans to contact Loren Polk - Director of the Aldrich Library - will draft an email for Joelen to review for book discussion
 - ii. Allison (working group member) sent a list of graphic novels to review
 - iii. Ellen is a cataloguing librarian and happy to provide support in finding books
 - c. Barre City Equity Assessment Impact Tool – Ellen/Danielle
 - i. The working group met and discussed four primary topics
 - 1. Making the tool more user friendly
 - 2. Gathering data to use with the tool
 - 3. Development of a training video on how to use the tool
 - 4. Development/update of a presentation to the Barre City Planning Commission
 - ii. Ellen reminded the group of the commitment to make the use of the assessment second nature to city staff and committees with a long-term goal to ensure equity across all sectors of city business and services. Also thankful for Svetlana’s contribution to the group.
 - d. Community Needs Assessment - Joelen
 - e. Policies and Procedures - William - no new information
 - f. Liaison Reports: Barre Unified School District D & E Committee – Joelen
 - i. Group (Joelen will provide the name of the group) is developing a statement to respond to critical race theory issue with the request to the committee to consider joining in the pledge.
 - g. VLCT D&E Committee – Ellen
 - i. Group went through definitions related to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
 - ii. Went through defining Charter, Purpose, Charge, Mission, Scope, and Values
 - iii. Developed meeting norms
 - iv. This group will eventually help to inform and support towns across the state working on equity
 - h. Other Connections - no new information
- 7. New Business:
 - a. Member to serve on the Police chief search panel
 - i. Joelen volunteered to serve
 - ii. Brattleboro recently did a search with an equity lens, so Joelen will reach out to them to learn more about how they went about it

- iii. Steve is organizing the panel and will start with an organization meeting. Solicitation of position ends on the 14th of November. Hopes to have someone starting the first week in January
- b. Informational flyer
 - i. Joelen is going to work with Marichel to update
- c. Website and Flag photographs for web site - Danielle
 - i. Joelen asked committee members to keep an eye out for flags that show the diversity of Barre City residents. She will contact flag locations for photographs to develop a collage for the website
 - ii. Danielle presented website and asked for feedback from committee members on presentation
 - iii. Ellen recommended graphics that explain equity through visuals
- d. Reflections on “All In for Barre” community meetings – Joelen
 - i. Chris - Attended equity forum and provided feedback, but was unclear of the purpose and outcomes of the meeting. Curious to see what the follow-up will be.
 - ii. Marichel - Attended in person forums -Aging in Barre - Discussed what are the assets, what are the challenges, and what are the recommendations. Marichel gave feedback on having a Senior Advisory Committee and having a way for intergenerational connection. D&E Meeting - Mostly listened to the discussion and the back and forth on definitions. Believes it's difficult to have a discussion about the topic in a 90-minute time slot.
 - iii. William - D&E Meeting - Thought the meeting was interesting and polite despite the differing viewpoints. Thinks good ideas came out of it and believes the next steps are important.
 - iv. Ellen - Attended the general Online Zoom meeting in the afternoon. Also went to the D&E Meeting - happy to meet Xusana Davis, Executive Director of Racial Equity. Format was to describe assets, challenges, and issues related to equity. Clear message that there is no debate when it comes to everyone having the same human and social rights.
 - v. Danielle - Filled in online form related to climate change with a focus on environmental justice in Barre City including having central access in the city to cooling locations and clean water to keep cool.
 - vi. Joelen - D&E Meeting - Did not think facilitation was effective for the purposes of the short time period. The general setup was awkward to listen and look at speakers sharing information. Would have liked an evaluation. Joelen collected a list of people who might be interested in joining working groups and helping with events.
 - vii. Joelen - Who will be able to attend the September 29, 2021, meeting at 6:30PM?
 - 1. Ellen and Danielle (and Tom Kyle)
- e. Marichel’s resignation from committee and role as working group member
 - i. Marichel - Still wants to be involved when she can. Work responsibilities are piling up and she is focused on Vermont Elders and advocacy for older Vermonters. Will continue to organize the Central VT BIPOC group and

she will bring the voices of that group to the table when able. Staying on ADA committee and intends to collaborate on education.

8. Set next meeting Date: Monday, October 18, 2021 at 6:00PM
9. Round Table
 - a. Joelen - Asked the group to think about how we might want to respond to issues where residents feel threatened for speaking up on contentious issues. Things to consider - harassment and microaggressions.
10. Adjourned at 7:39PM.

Action items

1. Steve - Report back on discussion with VLCT on training opportunities.
2. Workgroups
 - a. Book discussion follow-up - Chris
 - b. Assessment Tool follow-up - Danielle & Ellen
 - c. Informational Flyer follow-up - Joelen

1) Motion: Move to adopt minutes as amended.

Mover/Second: William/Marichel

Result of vote: All except Ellen, didn't have the time to review.

Meeting adjourned:

Mover/Second: William

Time: 7:39 PM

Next meeting date/time/location: Monday, October 18 at 6 PM via Zoom



Danielle Owczarski