

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
INTERVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES – October 13, 2020**

6:00 p.m. - Introduction to Remote Meeting

As meeting host, Chief David Parenti stated that this Open Meeting of Board of Selectmen Interview Committee is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of COVID-19. In order to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, the Town of Northborough has been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings, and as such, the Governor's Order suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location.

He added that all members of the Board of Selectmen Interview Committee are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. The Order allows this Committee to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda. Members of the public who wish to view the live stream of this meeting may do so by going to "Northborough Remote Meetings" on YouTube via the link listed on the agenda.

Lastly, ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting will not feature public comment.

Chief Parenti confirmed that the following members of the Board of Selectmen Interview Committee were remotely present and could be heard.

Selectman Leslie Rutan  
Selectman Timothy Kaelin

**ACCEPTANCE OF MEETING MINUTES**

Selectman Kaelin moved the Sub-Committee vote to accept the minutes of the September 14, 2020 meeting; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion. The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Selectman Kaelin	"aye"
Selectman Rutan	"aye"

**INTERVIEWS FOR THE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE**

Jean Cahill

Ms. Cahill indicated that although she does not have direct experience with working on such a Committee, she does have a deep personal concern that the community be welcoming to people of all races, ethnicities, religions and identities. She has experience with organizing community dialogues in an effort to help breach the community divide and feels that it is important to hear experiences that shape perceptions of biased treatment.

Jean Cahill Cont. . .

Ms. Cahill envisions that this Committee can identify barriers to residence, employment, participation, and education in our community. It's important to ensure fair employment practices that invite diverse candidates and newcomers to Town. She hopes that this Committee can invite confidential sharing from the community about instances of discrimination.

What attracted her to serve on this Committee is the opportunity to brainstorm with others to define its scope. Some strengths that she can bring to this Committee – she is a good listener, respectful of differences, fair arbitrator, consensus decision maker, and values different opinions from her own.

She noted that she would withdraw her application to make room for anyone from a diverse background who wishes to serve on this Committee.

Valeria Schmidt

Ms. Schmidt indicated that she tends to think outside the box and would be comfortable working on a Committee that does not yet have a set framework. She is originally from Germany, but grew up internationally due to her father's profession. She is trained in racial justice, conflict resolution and mediation.

Ms. Schmidt envisions taking part in building a community where everyone is free, regardless of their gender, skin color, ethnic background, disability or financial situation. She believes that in order to dismantle all injustices in our community, we need to look at our education system, government, administration and law enforcement. A strength that she can bring to the Committee is her ability to gather, organize and present information in a way that is understandable and to encourage others to do the same.

She noted that she thinks it is crucial that people from marginalized groups, especially those of color, be represented on this Committee, adding that she would withdraw her application to make room for anyone from those groups who has expressed an interest in serving.

George Brenckle

Mr. Brenckle indicated that his interest in serving on this committee came about when the Board of Selectmen first talked about this in June. He appreciates the peaceful demonstrations and lawn signs, but feels that this Committee can go a long way in making real changes in this community, adding that real change comes slowly through incremental work.

Mr. Brenckle noted that he has some experience with diversity and inclusion, as he facilitates a leadership training program for IT professionals, which includes a significant amount of discussion around diversity and inclusion. He has been reading extensively about this subject as part of developing the details for a two-day program on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Additionally, he has served as a long-time Scout Master for

George Brenckle Cont. . .

Northborough's Scout Troops and has fostered diversity amongst the scouts themselves. He was also instrumental in inviting girls to join Boy Scout Troops. He looks forward to creating some concrete goals that will place Northborough in the forefront for diversity and inclusion opportunities.

Mary Leach

Ms. Leach indicated that she attended the Wayland Public Schools and participated in the METCO program. As a result, she had classmates and childhood friends of various backgrounds. She noted that she would like to see the public schools promote a website with a link to diversity and inclusion activities taking place so current and prospective residents can see the importance given to inclusion in classrooms and on playgrounds.

Ms. Leach indicated that as a realtor, she has enrolled in an upcoming course "At Home with Diversity". By developing a business practice rooted in inclusion and equality, she can better help clients of all cultural backgrounds achieve the dream of homeownership.

She added that she had a college student staying with her family from Ghana and while visiting he noted that he did not observe diversity in Northborough. This shows how important it is that Northborough presents itself as a diverse and inclusive community in order to attract people to want to live here, do business here, and to be a part of a community that welcomes everyone.

Mariam Ibrahim

Ms. Ibrahim indicated that she grew up in Northborough and is currently a sophomore at Simmons University studying Political Science and International Relations. This past summer she started an organization along with a group of peers called Vote Northborough in an effort to engage young voters to become more involved in local politics and state government. She also launched a Town newspaper created by the youth for the Town.

Ms. Ibrahim added that she can bring a unique experience and perspective to this Committee as a young Muslim woman. She would like to facilitate more dialogue between residents and local policy makers, including the Board of Selectmen and State Representatives. She added the importance of creating a safe space to allow for students of color to be able to express their concerns and feel like they are being heard and served.

She noted that her leadership and organizational skills would be an asset to the Committee, adding that it's important that the Committee provide a space to allow people to share real experiences and feel safe in doing so.

Michaela Annunziata

Ms. Annunziata indicated that she is a Human Resources professional with experience in promoting diversity and inclusion initiatives. She is comfortable with public speaking, communicating and reporting, as well as leading both small- and large-scale initiatives. She has skills and experience in gathering input, assessing existing policies and procedures and developing reporting standards. These skills will help to find the scope of the Committee and to set goals and see them through to the execution phase.

Michaela Annunziata Cont. . .

Ms. Annunziata added that she would like to see a student ambassador on the Committee in an effort to engage middle and high school age youth.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Selectman Kaelin moved the Subcommittee vote to adjourn; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion. The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Selectman Rutan       “aye”  
Selectman Kaelin      “aye”

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Wackell  
Executive Assistant to the  
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. October 13, 2020 Meeting Agenda
2. September 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes
3. Applications to the Diversity and Inclusion Committee