

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
INTERVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – October 20, 2020**

5:55 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

Acceptance of the October 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes was postponed until the next meeting.

INTERVIEWS FOR THE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Wenisa Tran

Ms. Tran indicated that she currently works as a Clinical Pharmacist at UMass Memorial Medical Center and cares for a diverse population, which has taught her the importance of empathy and being open-minded. She can bring to the Committee her personal experience as an Asian American woman with multiple sclerosis, who has had to overcome many obstacles in life.

Ms. Tran added that she has worked with various committees through her work and understands what it's like to work with a group of people who have differing thoughts and opinions and goals. She has experience with gathering a group of people together and to come up with a unified outcome.

Lashika Holland

Ms. Holland indicated that she and her husband decided to set roots in Northborough based on its small-town feel and sense of community, as well as the strong school system. She has worked in the marketing and pharmaceutical fields for over 10 years. She has personal experience as a black woman who has been targeted by open racism. She is ready to lend her voice, time, and ideas, in partnership with other committee members, to progress toward a more diverse and inclusive community.

Ms. Holland added that she would like to see what policies pertaining to diversity and inclusion are already in place and what modifications can be made to better the community.

Sherry Clark

Ms. Clark indicated that when she helped with a campaign of a Muslim American in Northborough, she realized that our community still has a long way to go in terms of diversity and inclusion. She has been running diverse scout groups in town for the last 9 years, interacts with youth through her job from multiple races and has an education background in Sociology with an emphasis in Human Services. She also works at Trinity Church and planned a Faith Fair that was open to the community as a whole to celebrate and learn about the various different religions represented in Northborough.

Ms. Clark noted that she would like to see the Committee begin with inviting real feedback from the general population in town, including the youth. This could be through a survey or other means of communication. She considers herself an extrovert and would have no problem talking to people and facilitating difficult conversations. She would also like to see this Committee work with school department to incorporate diversity and inclusion in the classrooms and after school activities.

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

Diedra Wrighting

Ms. Wrighting indicated that she is an African American and has lived in Northborough for the past five years. She has twin boys in the fifth grade at the Zeh Elementary School and would like to play a role in fostering an inclusive community that they will grow and thrive in. As Executive Director in the ADVANCE Office of Faculty Development at Northeastern University, she has experience in developing courses to raise awareness of implicit bias and other psychosocial phenomena, and their role in processes, and evidence-based strategies to mitigate their impact.

Ms. Wrighting noted that she also has experience in developing needs assessment surveys, adding that focus groups provide more flexibility than surveys. She would like to see focus groups where people can really engage and talk to one another. Lastly, her extensive study in race, racism, equity, diversity and inclusion can help with developing the framework for this Committee.

David Lorenzi

Mr. Lorenzi indicated that he has lived in Northborough for over 30 years and raised his family here. His interest in serving on this Committee stems from what is going on all around the world. He feels that this problem is so large that change needs to start in our homes and in our communities.

Mr. Lorenzi noted that he owns a CPA firm and his extensive experience in negotiations and management makes him suitable to serve on this Committee. He can offer compromises to problems and work to resolve disputes by helping all sides understand the contrary viewpoint.

He would like to see the committee be comprised of different races, religions and ethnic backgrounds and to create and encourage an atmosphere of openness in our community. His ideas for outreach to gain a better perspective would be to include Algonquin graduates who have already begun to raise their voices. The Committee should create a process to address their concerns and create awareness.

Cormac MacManus

Mr. MacManus indicated that he is an immigrant who came to the United States 11 years ago. He is a PhD level behavior analyst who examines the scientific analysis of behavior-environment interactions that influence learning. He works with children with autism, along with a wide variety of educators and clinicians. He is pursuing a Doctorate Degree in behavior analysis and expects to complete his studies by the end of this year.

Mr. MacManus noted that he is interested in serving on this Committee as someone who came from Belfast Ireland, an area of the world who has seen much conflict. He has seen what a non-inclusive society can do to people. He feels it's important that his son is raised in a world where people are not treated differently because of how they look, where they come from or what they believe in.

In his profession, he works collaboratively with a diverse group in order to implement procedures that will help students be successful. He would like to see the town consistently hold events that will continue to bring people together to ensure that all voices are heard.

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 7:25 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 the Diversity and Inclusion Committee