

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Asst Town Administrator Becca Meekins
Tim Kaelin
Mary Leach
Shika Holland
Diedra Wrighting
Mariam Ibrahim
Virginia Simms George

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Lauren Bailey Jones

OPEN AND WELCOME FROM CHAIRMAN Tim Kaelin:

Mr. Kaelin welcomed the committee for a meeting of the Northborough Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting on September 2, 2021 at approximately 7:15pm.

Mr. Kaelin conducted a roll call of present members.

Ms. Meekins: Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021; a Bill Relative to Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency; signed into law June 16, 2021; this meeting will be conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance by members of the public will be permitted. This meeting will be streamed live but will not have an option for public participation. To view or listen only, please visit the Town of Northborough's web page which will bring you to the Town of Northborough's You Tube link.

Approval of August 5, 2021, Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve: Diedra Wrighting

Seconded: Becca Meekins

Roll call vote: Shika Holland; aye; Mary Leach; aye; Diedra Wrighting; aye; Becca Meekins; aye; Tim Kaelin; aye. Minutes approved.

Guest Speakers: Historic District Commission Members

Leslie Harrison, Norm Corbin and Bob Licht were present from the Historic District Commission. Norm Corbin started off with an introduction of members and the role of the Historic District Commission. Norm explained that the Historic District Commission serves as both the Historical Commission and the Historic District Commission. The group works closely with the Historical Society which is an independent non-profit group in town.

Mariam Ibrahim joined the meeting at 7:21pm.

Diedra Wrighting asked the members of the Historic District Commission about their background and why they were interested in becoming members of that Committee. Bob Licht has been in town since 1990 and has had a strong interest in history and was fascinated by the history of Northborough. He mentioned

many of the projects including the historical markers at the Westborough State Hospital, the Native American Trail project and how those have been of interest to him since joining the Committee. Bob mentioned that he is the newest members of the Committee.

Leslie Harrison happened upon the Committee by chance when she attended a meeting with a friend who was previously a member of the Committee. She has been involved since then and has always had an interest in historical projects and learning more about the history of time.

Norm Corbin has been a member of the Commission for the last 16 or 17 years. He was born and raised in Salem and has always had a strong tie to the history of his community. In his role with the Northborough Historic District Commission, he has tried to get protections for some the buildings and tries to do outreach about the value of the history of the town.

Diedra Wrighting asked a follow up question about how diversity impacts the work that they do? Norm Corbin explained the history of the town, and how it was settled by puritans out of Boston. They were Anglo-Saxon and Protestant. Much of the diversity was around religion. The town is much more diverse now than it has ever been. Leslie asked how the Committee can consider diversity more in their work.

Bob Licht mentioned that there was a very strong abolitionist movement in Northborough before the Civil War. The consensus in Northborough was that the purpose of the Civil War was to abolish slavery, not to preserve the Union. Many Northborough residents went to fight in the Civil War.

Virginia Simms George joined the meeting at 7:36pm.

Tim explained that he would like to see more opportunity for residents to learn about Northborough specific history. Leslie mentioned that the D&I Committee was planning to have a booth at Applefest. Tim mentioned that yes, the Committee would have a booth at the fireworks.

Norm Corbin reiterated that the Historical Society has many additional resources and documentation about the history of the town. Bob Licht mentioned that he would like to know more about the labor at some of the older mill factories in town. Norm mentioned that the Historical Society likely has information about some of these items. They have been existent in town for well over 100 years. They have more resources that they may be able to offer to the discussion. The Historic District Commission works closely with the Historical Society. Leslie mentioned that there are members on the Historic District Commission who are also members of the Historical Society.

Becca Meekins brought up the fact that the Committee is looking to develop a diversity calendar for various celebrations in town and hopes to incorporate some local history into those events. There may be an opportunity for the Historic District Commission or the Historical Society to be involved with the Library as the Town plans for future events. Norm provided some background on the history of the Nipmuc tribe in the central Massachusetts area, including some important Native American trails. The Committee put a sign up on Bartlett Street that signifies where the trail came through Northborough.

Bob Licht mentioned archeological sites in town that the Commission has been researching. There are about one dozen sites in Northborough, but they are kept secret due to risk of destruction of the sites. Leslie Harrison mentioned the Mary Goodnow gravesite. Norm Corbin told the story of Mary Goodnow. She was a resident of town in the early 1700's. She was disabled and working in the field when she was

attacked by a Native American tribe. Norm mentioned that there is a large historical granite marker in the field where she was buried. The tribe that attacked her was a tribe from Canada.

Mariam Ibrahim asked whether the Commission has communicated with the Nipmuc or other indigenous communities. Norm Corbin mentioned that the retired Chief of the tribe lives in Northborough, and he was contacted when they put up the signs/markers.

Members of the Historic District Commission departed the meeting at approximately 7:53 pm.

Review Community Guidelines for Facebook Page

The draft was provided to the Committee ahead of the meeting. Tim Kaelin mentioned that he felt that the draft covered all areas that should have been. Finalizing the guidelines are the final step before setting our Facebook page to live. The Committee adopted the guidelines as drafted and Shika will modify the Facebook page from private to public.

Mary Leach asked who would moderate the page. Tim explained that we had discussed prior and the Chair, the staff liaison and one other member will moderate the page. Tim recommended that Shika be the third moderator, as she was the designer of the page. Diedra asked whether those joining the group would have to confirm that they adhere to the guidelines. Shika said that it was possible for us to prompt new members to certify that they have read and agree to the guidelines. The first post will be about the listening session. The flyer that was developed for Applefest will be used on the page.

Applefest Coordination

Applefest is Saturday the 18th of September. The Committee will need to bring a table and chairs, tent, flags, etc. that are needed at the Fireworks for our booth. Mary Leach will bring a table, chairs, tablecloth, and tent. Diedra will bring a stand for the poster board size flyer. Shika will bring water to hand out if approved by Michelle Gillespie. Virginia suggested face painting. She also asked how many copies of the flyer the Committee would like made. Tim recommended 250-500. Virginia had said that she could get 200 flyers made but she will reach back out to them about increasing that number. Tim had mentioned that there may be some additional corrections and he would get the final to Virginia early next week. The Committee discussed the layout and content of the flyer further, as well as the plan for attending Applefest.

Other Business Before the Committee:

Becca Meekins asked the Committee about how they felt with filling Hamilton Soriano's seat as he is no longer a resident of Northborough. Becca mentioned that obviously there is a limited timeline given the Committee's deadline of the calendar year to make recommendations to the Board but was curious how the Committee felt. The consensus of the Committee was not to move forward with filling the seat due to the timeline.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn made by Diedra Wrighting

Motion seconded by Shika Holland

Roll call as follows:

Ms. Meekins: Aye

Ms. Simms George: Aye

Ms. Leach: Aye

Ms. Ibrahimi: Aye

Ms. Wrighting: Aye

Ms. Holland: Aye

Mr. Kaelin: Aye

Meeting is adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

by Becca Meekins

Northborough Diversity & Inclusion Committee