



Amherst Community Diversity Commission

Tuesday, March 8th 2022

5:30pm via Zoom meeting

WELCOME AND CONFIRMING QUORUM: Dr. Khalid J. Qazi, MD, MACP, Commission Chair welcomed all the members and Gul A. Rahman secretary confirmed the quorum for the Amherst Community Diversity Commission meeting.

ATTENDING: Dr. Khalid J. Qazi, MD, MACP, Commission Chair. Deborah Bruch Bucki, RN, PhD, Amherst Council Member/Commission Liaison. Commission Members (in alphabetical order as of meeting on 11/11/2021): Dr. Mohan Devgun, Pam Keifi, Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre, Tom Lucia, Dr. Muhammad Asghar Khan, Gul Rahman, Ann Rohrer, Dr. Joseph Sankoh, Dr. Khalid Qazi.
Absent: Maria Rosario Cala.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES: First motion was made by Dr. Mohan Devgun and second by Dr. Muhammad Asghar Khan. Approved unanimously by the rest of the board members including, Pam Keifi, Tom Lucia, Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre, Dr. Khalid Qazi, Ann Rohrer, Gul A. Rahman, Dr. Joseph Sankoh.

Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre after opening of the meeting invited, on behalf of all the Commission members, Dr. Khalid Qazi for a farewell dinner arranged by the Board Commission members. Date and venue to be confirmed by Dr. Khalid Qazi.

LIAISON REPORT: Debbie Bucki thanked Pam Keifi for her efforts in updating the Calendar 2022 and Dr. Khalid Qazi for reviewing it. She also asked Dr. Khalid Qazi to send the final copy of the Calendar to Town as soon as possible so that Commission can adopt the Calendar 2022.

DIVERSITY COMMISSION CALENDAR: To Approve the Calendar 2022, first motion was made by Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre and second by Dr. Mohan Devgun. Rest approved **unanimously** by Pam Keifi, Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre, Tom Lucia, Dr. Muhammad Asghar Khan, Gul A. Rahman, Ann Rohrer, Dr. Joseph Sankoh, Dr. Khalid Qazi. Tom Lucia working with Williamsville School, Sacred Heart, Amherst School to send the Calendar for 2022. More Schools on the list as well for follow up.

Pam's report on recruitment for Amherst Diversity Commission: Suggested all Communities should apply including Hispanic Community, African American, native American, South Asian,

Chinese American etc. She also suggested that board to post for recruitment on the Town's website and Board members to reach out to friends and neighbor if anyone interested.

Any application can be directed first to Debbie Bucki for a personal appointment with resume so she can forward to the Town Board member after examining. Commission can have up to 15 members with requirements as follows;

- 1) Adult 18 years' old
- 2) Town of Amherst Resident
- 3) US Citizen (Clarification about the Status to be confirmed by Debbie Bucki with Town Deputy Attorney)

JUNETEENTH: Dr. Khalid suggested two points for future Juneteenth event;

- 1) Board should Identify a champion team lead for Juneteenth.
- 2) Recommended to work with senior center and Library for future events.

Pam Keifi brought up that Daemon College helped the Board last time 2021 to organize a Speaker and wish to reach out for same help this time too. Juneteenth 2021 included morning session and then luncheon. Event was a success with proclamations given as well.

Heidi Nicklaus and Tom Lucia took the responsibility for organizing Juneteenth 2022.

Dr. Mohan Devgun offered to find out from SUNY Buffalo state campus a speaker for the future event. Meanwhile Pam will work with Debbie to invite Sharon Hanson for her services as a speaker. Details to be discussed and shared in the next meeting.

PUNJABI CULTURAL SHOW: Dr. Mohan Devgun shared the update on the Punjabi Cultural event. No date has been decided yet but show has been structured for one hour as follows:

Three items 1) Bhangra- Punjabi dance 2) Music 3) Skit from the kids. Food will be served on payment.

Event in planning to be organized in the Senior Citizen Center as soon as the date is decided. Dr. Mohan Devgun also stated that he is planning the event in July and has community help so will not need much support from the Board. The Event will represent East Punjab but is open to everyone. Dr. Mohan was advised that, since the event is labeled as "Punjabi", Punjabi communities from both India and Pakistan should have the opportunity to be represented. It is the role of the Commission to be inclusive.

HOLIDAY DISPLAY: This year Holiday Display like , Easter, Baisakhi and Ramadan should be encouraged at the Amherst Library. Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre waiting on Religious Network Religious Community to have books available for kids for the Holiday display and also there is plan for high school students to write up articles on spring. Since Religious Network is more interested this time for the display in the Town of Amherst Library therefore Diversity Commission will ask Library for a comprehensive list of books for the children story times which later will be finalized by the Board. Snacks or food to be arranged as well. Dr. Khalid Qazi suggested to make a list of books before summer break for preparation and asked Debbie Bucki to coordinate with Library before June 30th 2022. Dr. Khalid Qazi also suggested that the display should be in the month of July 2022. Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre, Ann Rohrer and Tom Lucia (working with school Williamsville School, Sacred Heart, Amherst School) will volunteer to work on the display including Debbie's guidance. Kids from all races will be welcomed to the display event.

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: First motion by Dr. Mohan Devgun and second by Ann Rohrer. All Approved Unanimously.

MISSION STATEMENT: The purpose of this coalition is to enhance and increase cooperation, understanding, and dialogue among residents of diverse cultural, religious, socioeconomic and racial backgrounds, and to promote inclusion throughout the town. Some of the responsibilities of the coalition will be to study the demographics of Amherst; promote town-wide events that foster cultural awareness; increase minority participation on governmental boards and committees and in the Town's workplace; and to facilitate meetings designed to promote a better understanding of who Amherst is as a community.

Thanks

Gul A. Rahman
Secretary Amherst Community Diversity Commission