



Amherst Community Diversity Commission

Tuesday, April 12th 2022
5:30pm via Zoom meeting

WELCOME AND CONFIRMING QUORUM: Dr. Mohan Devgun(acting) Commission Chair welcomed all the members and Gul A. Rahman secretary confirmed the quorum for the Amherst Community Diversity Commission meeting.

ATTENDING: Dr. Mohan Devgun(acting) Commission Chair. Deborah Bruch Bucki, RN, PhD, Amherst Council Member/Commission Liaison. Commission Members: Pam Keifi, Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre, Dr. Muhammad Asghar Khan, Gul Rahman, Dr. Joseph Sankoh, Melissa Abel Director Senior Citizen Center.

NEW DIVERSITY COMMISSION MEMBERS: Prachee Samant, Zhen Lui.
Both new members gave a brief introduction to the Board and were welcomed by all.

ABSENT: Maria Rosario Cala, Thomas Lucia, Ann Roehrer.

Dr. Mohan Devgun being a Vice Chair conducted the meeting as an acting Chairperson. The New Diversity Commission Chairperson and Vice Chairperson yet to be decided in the May'2022 meeting. Dr. Mohan Devgun offered his services to be the next Chairperson, while Pam Keifi opted for the Vice Chairperson. Gul Rahman still to continue on a secretary position. The final decision will be made for all positions in the May'2022 Diversity Commission meeting. All members to vote unanimously for the selection.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE APRIL MEETING MINUTES: First motion was made by Pam Keifi and second by Dr. Mohan Devgun. Approved unanimously by the rest of the board members including, Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre, Gul A. Rahman, Dr. Joseph Sankoh, Prachee, Zhen Lui. Dr. Mohammad Asghar.

LIAISON REPORT: New positions for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will be decided in May'2022 meeting. The board member terms will end by the end of year 2023. Debbie Bucki welcomed Prachee Samant and Zhen Lui for joining the Diversity Commission.

JUNETEENTH: Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre gave an update on the Juneteenth event. She met Tammy Jacobs from the senior center and discussed to organize a similar Juneteenth event from last year 2021 held at the senior center. Meeting was a success with further project planning to be discussed on second meeting scheduled for April 19th 2022 at 2pm with Tammy Jacobs and Thomas Lucia(after coming back from vacation).The Juneteenth will include youth components this year. Youth to be included this time as Thomas Lucia has connections with different school districts and they will be a great help with ideas. Food will be provided by senior center on tickets. Melissa Abel from Senior center also said few words to welcome the commission and host the Juneteenth and looking forward to partner with Diversity Commission and provide their services.

PUNJABI CULTURAL SHOW: Dr. Mohan Devgun shared the update on the Punjabi Cultural event. The event is scheduled for May 20th ,2022 from 11am - 6pm in the auditorium of North High School , Williamsville. The program will start off with food, served on payment followed by three items of Punjabi Cultural Show 1) Bhangra- Punjabi dance 2) Music 3) Skit from the kids. The Temple will make the flier, promote event and will rent the school auditorium. The Cultural show will be open to all communities. Large gathering expected as before. Dr. Mohan Devgun also mentioned that no help is required from Diversity Commission.

HOLIDAY DISPLAY: Ann Roehrer and Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre working together on holiday displays. Debbie Bucki mentioned due to Library construction in progress, the event will be pushed for December 2022. Since Diversity commission wants to have the Holiday Display the earliest by July, Melissa Abel will help to display at the senior center. Rest will confirm with the library as well for a second option Idea to cover youth from the library too. More coordination required to have two displays one in the Senior Center and second in Amherst Library. Regardless of time the holiday display will included Baisakhi, Ramadan and Easter items. Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre will coordinate with Ann Roehrer and let the commission know if further help needed. Zheng Lui and Gul Rahman offered to volunteer as well for the Holiday Display.

SCHOOL BOARD LIAISON: Thomas Lucia out of Country so no report this time but will be expected in next meeting.

OLD/NEW BUSSINESS: Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre discussed in Boundaries, Borders and Walls Global Art Project about a display & a statement letter by an artist named Albert Gilewicz . The project will reflect his ideas in the display at the senior center from end of June through August 2022.The entire collection of over 1000 individual creative works of art and writings by travelling to 4 continents, 18 countries and 14 states. Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre requested Diversity Commission to promote such ideas and visit the display. She also shared her thoughts on the project and showed willingness to attend the event at the Senior Center. Melissa Abel also expressed her thoughts about work in progress for the display.

OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Farewell Dinner was given on March 17th,2022 in the honor of Dr. Khalid Qazi former Chairperson by the Diversity Commission members and a

plaque presented to acknowledge his unwavering Support & Unrelenting Leadership to the Community.

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: Next Diversity Commission meeting Tuesday May 10th, 2022 at 5:30pm via zoom. First motion by Pam Keifi and second by Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre. 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