



Amherst Community Diversity Commission

Tuesday, September 13th 2022
5:30pm via Zoom meeting

WELCOME & ROLL CALL: Vice Chairperson Pam Keifi welcomed all the attending members of Amherst Community Diversity Commission and Gul A. Rahman secretary confirmed the quorum of the meeting.

ATTENDING: Vice Chair Person Pam Keifi, Deborah Bruch Bucki, RN, PhD, Amherst Council Member/Commission Liaison. Gul A. Rahman Secretary. Commission Members: Melissa Abel, Cynthia Bass. Dr. Muhammad Asghar Khan, Zhen Liu, Anne Rohrer, Dr. Joseph Sankoh.

ABSENT: Dr. Mohan Devgun, Maria Rosario Cala, Prachee Samant, Thomas Lucia, Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre.

June 14th 2022 Meeting minutes approved: First motion by Dr. Muhammad Asghar Khan, second by Dr. Joseph Sankoh. All in favor. Unanimously approved.

FEED BACK ON THE JUNETEENTH PROGRAM: Melissa Abel shared some good reviews about the Juneteenth attendance and luncheon as it was a successful event. Moreover, some feedback and discussion suggested to do such activities next time in the community not only in the Senior Center. In response Debbie Bucki said she appreciates the suggestion but luncheon is a good idea to host as it is more educational and reflects celebration but can definitely consider doing something in the community next time as well. Dr. Muhammad Asghar asked if the Juneteenth event can be hosted in the evening which Melissa Abel replied saying it can be accommodated in the evening provided the staff is available as they do other dinners on certain week days occasionally.

DISPLAY IN SENIOR CENTER/LIBRARY: Ann Rohrer and Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre are working on this project, will plan a meeting since Library is closed in October'2022 will try to get the display by November'2022. Holiday yet to decide.

SCHOOL BOARD LIAISON: Tom Lucia Education Coordinator Chairperson absent for September'2022 meeting so work in pending on other upcoming projects and will update the commission in the next meeting.

TOWN LIAISON REPORT: Deborah Bruch Bucki gave brief report about Juneteenth event and display at the library in the fall. She never got response from town supervisor of the Town of Board about the May mass Shooting event letter. Dignitaries who attended the Juneteenth'2022 event were Supervisor of Town of Amherst, Counsel member, Representative from the Assembly and Senator. Debbie asked the Commission Members to write a letter for a formal budget request to the Town of Amherst. Punjabi Heritage didn't happen in July will wait to hear from Dr Mohan Devgun in the October 11th'2022 meeting.

Commented [WU1]:

PUNJABI CULTURAL SHOW: Dr. Mohan Devgun will update the Commission later about the Punjabi Cultural program. Pam Keifi suggested that we should have a section in agenda for monthly Diversity Commission meetings under "Upcoming Community Events" board members' can discuss about other community events. Dr Joseph Sankoh mentioned there is a Calendar of events on the Diversity page which can be a reference. Debbie Bucki said it's under the Communication Item. Also the Calendar is only for general guidance for the community's' upcoming holidays. Debbie Bucki suggested Zhen Liu can be in charge of organizing an elaborated calendar of community holidays and events and share with the Diversity members on next meeting before sending it to the IT department.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Biography and pictures of all the Members' of Diversity Commission on the Town of Amherst website.

Work in progress dead line end of September'2022 to update any bios. Members informed and will pursue.

B. Budget/money request from Town to fund the projects of Commission.

Pam Keifi will send a formal request via email to request a budget from the Town for events & money needed for banner, supplies, name tags, pens, Amherst diversity logo, T-shirts, papers, brochure of Diversity Commission etc. To request the budget, deadline is end of September'2022. Asking budget amount \$1000.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. A proposed meeting with Supervisor Brian Kulpa to take place on September 26th'2022 at 5 pm at the Town Hall. Following points to be discussed;

1. How to Publicize different events organized by Diversity Commission?
2. How to get fast turnaround time when a statement/procedure is proposed by the Diversity Commission?
3. How to respond in racial issues & emergency scenarios of hate crimes?

4. How Diversity Commission can respond in critical situations with proper assistance and guidance from the Town?

5. What Holidays/events to celebrate and what kind of support will be provided by the Town?

Dr. Mohan Devgun, Tom Lucia & Heidi Nicklaus Lefebvre will take the lead to meet the Supervisor Brian Kulpa. Rest of the Diversity Commission members will join if available.

B. A working meeting to discuss the event Calendar for the year.

Zhen Liu and Heidi will work on this Agenda and update the Commission.

C. The possibility of meeting with the National Federation of Just Communities.

Debbie was reached out by Rene Patty Jones Executive Director of the National Federation of Just Communities and the President of Whole National Commission in August'2022. They met over zoom to discuss the issues to do more meet and greets in Amherst and also to talk about town's various other issues. For Example, town's concern and suggestion about Audubon name changing which is happening across the Board as well. Debbie Bucki has invited Rene Patty Jones on October 11th 2022 Diversity Commission zoom meeting to discuss more related topics and her concerns. Debbie suggested we need to form a small committee for further exploration.

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: Next Diversity Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday October 11th '2022 at 5:30pm via zoom. First motion to adjourn the meeting by Dr. Joseph Sankoh and second by Dr. Muhammad Asghar Khan. All in favor.

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