

Pelham Anti Racism Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

DATE: 3/15/2022

Meeting Facilitator: Jessie Jean-Louis Meeting Note Taker: Roy Regozin

Members in Attendance: Anne Stoddard, Charlie Lynch, Jessie Jean-Louis, Roy Regozin, Pat Schumm

Public in Attendance: Michael Hussin

Opening details:

Jessie called the meeting to order at 7:39

The Remote Meeting Script was read by Roy Regozin.

The Committee approved the minutes of the February 16, 2022 meeting unanimously.

Working Group Reports:

1. EDUCATION (Roy, Pat, Jessie)

The Committee discussed the response the working group received from Mary Kiely, Interim Coordinator of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, to the draft proposal the Committee had prepared concerning the use of common assessments for math courses, as well as the email from the working group seeking clarification of the response.

Roy said that Mary's response indicated that there already were common assessments for the math courses taught in the regional high school and the regional middle school, and that common assessments would be prepared for the math classes taught in the elementary schools after the new curriculum had been selected and implemented. Pat said she understood that the State would be providing funds to support implementation of the new curriculum.

Charlie asked whether the schools had the ability to break the results down demographically. He also wondered how they would handle the additional data, and whether that data might be used to identify trends.

Anne said the schools wanted accurate data which could be made available to the parents. Both Anne and Jessie noted that the validity of the MCAS results had been questioned. Jessie pointed out that

the Leverett and Shutesbury elementary schools were not under Mary Kiely's jurisdiction, so their math curriculum might be different from what is implemented in the Amherst and Pelham elementary schools next September.

Roy said the working group would inform the Committee when a response to the request for clarification is received.

Jessie noted that an inappropriate racial term had been used by a 5th grade student in the Pelham Elementary School, and that the incident was being taken seriously. She said that a restorative justice approach might be used, but that would require training everyone, including the students.

2. GOVERNANCE and HOUSING (Charlie, Anne, Matteo)

Anne reported that the planner will prepare a proposal during the next month or so for the project involving updating Pelham's bylaws and scanning the zoning regulations for issues pertaining to discrimination. She said the Planning Board intended to meet with the Housing Committee in June to finalize the proposal. The work will have to be completed before the end of December. In response to a question, Anne said she did not know whether the Chair of the Planning Board was trying to exclude ARAC from the process or felt that she was aware of the concerns of the ARAC from the joint meeting earlier this year. In either case, Anne said that ARAC should attend the Planning Board meeting in June. Anne said she felt that the Chair of the Planning Board did not think that discrimination was a problem.

Charlie said that the working group should meet with the Housing Committee to obtain their viewpoint on discrimination. He also said it would be a good idea for the Committee to participate in the Planning Board meeting in June. Charlie believes the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission is interested in discrimination.

3. OUTREACH (Roy)

Roy asked Michael how the reparations course had gone. Michael said it was full and the participants were engaged. He said it may be offered again, possibly with in person attendance.

4. HISTORY

Michael said he had seen a brochure published by the National Park Service describing events in the life of one William Condo, a slave who was born in Pelham and served in the army during the Revolutionary War. It is not clear whether Condo moved back to Pelham at any time after he was sold

to a resident of New Perth, New York. Michael said he would inform the Pelham Historical Commission.

This discovery amplifies the need to reconstitute the History Working Group.

5. PUBLIC SAFETY (Anne, Jessie)

Michael said that he had heard that consideration was being given to merging the Pelham Police with the Amherst Police. This would give Pelham access to the CRES program, if it is utilized by Amherst. Anne checked the Select Board minutes, and found that a possible merger was being considered. Anne said that the Pelham Chief of Police was scheduled to retire in a year and a half. This period of time could be used to decide whether to go forward with the merger.

Closing details:

A motion to adjourn was unanimously approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:35.

Next Meeting Date: April 26, 2022

Next Meeting Facilitator: Patricia Schumm

Next Meeting Note Taker: Anne Stoddard