

Anti-Racism Task Force

Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2023

Attendance

<input type="radio"/> Pat Alston
<input type="radio"/> Darnell Ford-Co Chair
<input type="radio"/> Bobbye Peterson
<input type="radio"/> Reverend Anderson
<input type="radio"/> Joshua Cotton
<input type="radio"/> Ahmad Daniels
<input type="radio"/> Brian Gartner
<input type="radio"/> Kirk Hart
<input type="radio"/> Dr. Lee Morgan
<input type="radio"/> Absence: Sacha Armstrong-Crockett

Quorum: Yes No Start Time: 6:08 pm Stop Time: 7.14 pm

Call to Order: CO-Chair Darnell Ford called the meeting to order at: 6:08 pm Took attendance for the record and noted that there was a quorum.

Mondays, November, 13th 2023 for the anti-racism Taskforce, regular meeting-I call the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

In the Month of October the ARTF did not meet quorum. There are no minutes to approve.

Co-Chair Ford said: for the record, just letting you know Maria Scarlett will look into July 2023 and August 2023 minutes to see if we met quorum. The Task Force was unable to meet quorum for the month of September and October there are no minutes for those meeting.

Public Session: No one responded.

Approval of Agenda: Agenda was approved.

New Business:

The Committee could not vote on the Calendar as a calendar was not presented. Maria will create the calendar for 2024 for the December meeting.

Co-Chair Darnell Ford suggested to the Committee to take an honest look at the Task Force meeting times during the summer and during this winter months. He suggested that the Task Force might warrant that there's only one meeting. Before or maybe at some point during the summer, and then one during this holiday time, because we have found as you can see where we're not able to meet quorum for those times.

July and August are just really tough months for folks to be able to get free. At least for all of those months, so maybe one meeting strategically placed. At a particular time that everyone can agree, he left

the discussion open for suggestions. Please let Maria Scarlett know, she'll get that out and then we will review that and vote on it as needs to be posted before the next year.

Co-Chair Darnell Ford asked for the Calendar for the other City of Middletown commission. He wanted to know the meeting dates for certain commissions.

For example: Office of Equal Opportunity. Co-Chair Ford thought it may be a good idea to work with some of the other commissions that have ties to the Themes the ARTF will be working on. The other Commissions are having conversations that relate to the Themes and he would like the ARTF Committee to be involved in some way. Discussion ensued.

Co-Chair Darnell Ford emphasized the importance of having the calendar. Along with that, there are events that would be coming up on that calendar, which would mean Juneteenth, Black History month, Hispanic heritage, indigenous month, etc... events he feels that Task Force may be able to participate with or help organize with the community. He said whether we're working with Wesleyan or wherever, it may be, we want to make sure that we're looking at a robust calendar of things that we think we can either whether we support it collaborate with it.

Training

The Task Force will be doing another diversity training workshop in 2024.

Pat Alston Spoke on the City's hiring goals.

"For the last fiscal year, the city achieved, 11% goal achievement and I know we can do better. The other members of the monitoring committee, are pretty much accepting this percent. I think we can do better and, that is why I joined this task force because the monitoring committee is pretty much satisfied with where the city overall goal of 11% and I am not. To me, 11% goal achievement is embarrassing. And it just shows a lack of commitment. That's my opinion. And the city should do better and I think we can help. I do have a question, I believe the last I heard when we talked about the demographics and how many African American folks live Middletown, I'm getting around 30% are actually African American. I think it's a little high, but I don't have the correct numbers. The Democratic demographics of Middletown should be reflected in the job workforce. Progress should could be gradual, but it should be going upward. And it's not, it's not and 1 of the things that I was told was because the board of Education is no longer considered a part of City Hall, but, in my opinion, that means that the Board of Education was carrying the city. Now, that the Board of Education is not a part of the numbers, it shows where the city we is. It is a lack of progress. And that's lack of interest and lack of commitment".

Pat Alston asked if anyone had any information in regards to the demographics and how many African American folks lived in the City.

Almad Daniels said he believe that the board of Education numbers were low as well.

Bobbie said the goal for the Mayor is to make City Hall more reflective of the city, and we have seen some gains in the last few months but you are right there's more to be done. And I think that is something that makes sense this group to be talking about monthly examining and looking at our numbers. We were also talking about how we have been meeting internally to talk about things we can do. We have already implemented some of the things that were suggested of this group, including some places that we now post jobs where we hadn't historically posted jobs before and we are getting out into the community more. We have created the position that Maria is now serving in. Currently there is definitely more work to be done.

Bobbye suggested that we invite Faith Jackson and Director Richardson to talk about new initiatives that are coming out of both offices and things that have come from these meetings we are having.

Co-Chair Ford asked about the goal candidates and if the hiring process is keeping processes in place for hiring goal candidates and Bobbye said she would have Director Richardson answer that question in the next meeting.

Bobbye apologized for not having updated information on the status on the Citizen Review Board, she will have an update for the December meeting.

New Business

Current Theme workforce-Chairwoman Crockett was going to discuss but due to her absence this discussion will be put on hold.

Darnell talked about the work we are currently doing out in the Community. Making people aware of the Task Force and the work we will be doing and if they are interested how they can get involved. The Task force now have an information card that is handed out. There is a QR code that takes them to the website, where they will find updated information about the Task Force.

Darnell spoke to the members about selecting a theme from the list that they may want to lead. He said you do not have to own it, but at least it will have a lead person. He gave an example. Folks who might have an interest in arts and culture, may want to choose a theme that relates to arts and culture. The goal is to create projects and initiative that center around anti-racism and give recommendations to the mayor's office and anting that this task force can do to support or sponsor a guide to eliminating anti-racism so nothing off the table.

New members Status update.

There will be a few new names suggestion for the Task force in the December meeting.

Bobbye commented to Darnell that, according to the bylaws, you will need to be reappointed as the council representative. There is room for another Democratic Council representative and 1.

Darnell discussed the requirements for the new members. Ex. If they know what Anti-Racism is?

Old Business

Co-Chair Ford gave an update on Community Building, black lives matter crosswalk. It has been grounded out, which means, the public works office or department went through and took off all of the paint that was there from the initial mural and rounded up the. Crosswalk white stripes so now that leaves a clean slate for to go in and do the 3 crosswalks. The design was submitted, if you haven't seen the potential design, Maria, I'm going to ask if you could please get that designed to the task force that they can take a look at it.

The public works department, Howard, and specifically that once the mural is done. The proper stripes will be put on the outside of the crosswalks for safety. They are going to do a test, to make sure that it doesn't create an unsafe situation like before Darnell asked Bobby if there is a start date. Bobbye said she is not sure that we do have a start date. You know, the, the weekly rain that we've had has put us behind on a lot of things. In the spring, and, you know, we will be ready to rock and roll.

MOTION to adjourn made by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion was second by Pat Alton