

Commission for Diversity and Tolerance

Meeting Notes

September 8, 2016

Senior/Community Center

Attendance: Tom Getz, Hannah Wilson , Sheila Treiff, Tommy Furlong, Beth Horne, Shawn Judy Lacroix, Tommy Furlong, Rose Robinson, Shawn Flaherty , Peter Blaiwas, Kat Preftes

Guest: Nancy Earls, Learning Enrichment Center

Subcommittee for MLK Day of Service

Call To Meeting 6:10 P.M.

We explored the task.....K. Preftes read an email from Stephanie Walsh. She attended St. John's Prep Day of Service. She offered in an email that it is a big administrative task.

We learned that the FRS of Newburyport holds a Day of Service, offered in November. K. Preftes to reach out to Julie Amery

H. Wilson has attended Epic's Day of Service. Nancy Earles shared that Deb Szabo has a tie to a school in Lawrence. Greg Earls works at Lawrence Family Development and it might be a possibility to work with them. **We decided to pursue a local Day of Service.**

When would we hold the Day of Service? We are first reaching out to FRS to see if we could work with them or learn from them. We will decide at next meeting whether to hold the Day of Service on MLK Weekend or another time.

Who might offer service projects? We considered possible sites and agencies that might have a need for a service project. We would consider sending a letter to these organizations to explore interest with a follow up phone call.

Woodman Way—S. Treiff will find out about a community room.
Opportunity Works.

Nourishing the North Shore

Congregations

Pita Hall

YWCA

Among Friends

Pettingell House

Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center

The Greater Arc of Newburyport

Community Task Force

Scouts

Leo's Youth Branch of the Lions club

Kelleher Gardens and Learning Enrichment Center
Youth Services
Salvation Army? Concern about anti-LGBT stance
English Language Learners
Council on Aging

Where would we offer the kick-off meeting the day of the event? J. Lacroix is going to check with Opportunity Works and K. Preftes to check with the Superintendent of Schools. .

Why are we doing this? To honor the legacy of Doctor King, using it as an opportunity to remember him, teach about him and also to bring people together to create a what he called the Beloved Community—a connected community which demonstrates unity and a commitment to all.

Details before next meeting? K. Preftes to speak with FRS about their Day of Service. She will also speak with mayor about the possibility of service projects outside of Newburyport
P, Blaiwas and K. Preftes to meet with Ellie Davies of the YWCA

Next Day of Service meeting is September 22nd at 6 PM at Community Center

Regular meeting 7:05 P.M.

Tom Getz, Hannah Wilson , Sheila Treiff, Tommy Furlong, Beth Horne, Shawn Judy Lacroix, Tommy Furlong, Margaret McQuillan, Shawn Flaherty , Peter Blaiwas, Kat Preftes,
Guest: Ahmer Ibrahim, Newburyport resident

Public Comment:

Ahmer Ibrahim described an incident during Yankee Homecoming. Ahmer and his brother-law and their three children were downtown attending one of the concerts. As they crossed the street in the cross walk, individuals in a truck called out expletives and racial slurs. He was unable to get the license plate number.

The commissioners expressed concern and considered ways to bring it to light.

Kat offered suggestions from an article
Public declaration against “that kind of language”
Round table discussions about hate or intolerance speech-possible coffee house
Arenas where we talk about the consequences
Talk with kids
All of the community leaders to take on a leadership role: police, mayor’s office
etc.

We agreed that one possible course of action is to have a community wide agreement to have no tolerance for hateful speech or actions.

We considered supporting the Upstander Program offered at the Middle School-possible model for the community.

Kat will draft a statement for the paper which summarizes the event, and makes a statement about intolerant speech. It will include a statement on the CDT as a place to reach out to should an incident occur..

Meeting Notes from August 25, 2016 approved

Diversity and Tolerance Check-in:

Brent Fugate from Hope Church is the clergy group chairperson, S. Trieff will continue to pursue meeting with them.

Salem, MA No Place for Hate group—T. Getz will meet with them

K. Preftes to meet with Superintendent, They will discuss WPCR, Day of Service, and a possible school Liaison. The Leadership Council meeting is September 14th

Roadmap for coming year (from August meeting with additions)

1. Service Day: Details provided in notes above
2. Outreach would be made to Community Groups mention in the Day of Service list. (K.Preftes), Nbpt Police Dept., Clergy (S. Trieff)
3. Racism: Possibly create another Community Read using Debbie Irving's , Waking Up White as well as creating community discussions. Would work with existing community read group. Would explore possibly inviting Debbie Irving to offer her workshop.
4. We explored further the idea of a coffee house or supper but decided to table it until the next meeting. T. Getz will meet with Salem's No Place for Hate group to see what they have in place. Nancy Ledoux has been invited to share her experience of reaching out to community members interested in discussing these topics. Several topics and possible formats were considered.
5. Transgender film series and panel discussion at the High School for this fall. K. Shaw to update.
6. Black History Month (February)- H. Wilson suggested adding to the community efforts by recalling words of William Lloyd Garrison in a public way, possibly at the statue in Brown Square. Hannah to bring back an idea to discuss next month.
7. Women's History Month (March)- H. Wilson suggested dovetailing some efforts with the Girls Forward Group, increasing awareness of women in various careers. We considered a series of newspaper articles on prominent Newburyport women. S. Trieff knows some local scientists and H. Wilson has some contacts.

8. Spring- Ramadan 5/27-6/25/17 K. Preftes suggested doing something re: Islam before this or in conjunction with Ramada. An educational event would be considered.
9. Anti-Racism Poster idea. C. Walsh suggests creating a poster other students could sign committing them as “upstanders.” Some discussion ensued re: doing this in several schools, having a poster contest to raise enthusiasm for this effort.

Other business

P. Blaiwas to contact Councilor Vogel regarding CDT name

S. Trieff brought in the Globe article describing an incident in Wellesley as an example of good handling by the press

Wet Paint Action-Saturday, September 24th, Volunteers needed day of and day before. Contact K. Preftes. Cost is \$25.

Community Read-Dates are being finalized on Tuesday

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:18 P.M.