

Minutes

Town of Hartford Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion (HCOREI)

Hartford Town Hall and Zoom

Wednesday, February 7, 2023, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Attendees:

- Committee members: Pat Autilio, Molly Armbrust, Ally Tufenkjian, Joe Major, Lannie Collins, Susan Mullens, Miriam Wood (zoom).
- Guest: John Hverstock (town manager)
- Community members: Kim Souza, Mary Gannon, Heidi Duto (zoom), Michelle Boleski (zoom)

6:02 Call To Order

- Approve Meeting Minutes 1/17—Motion: Joe, 2nd Susan

6:03 Acknowledge and Welcome Community Members

6:03 Member Comments and Announcements

- None

6:04 Meet with Town Manager – Hartford Town Manager

- **Introductions**
 - Mr. Haverstock shared about his background, recent additions to Hartford staff, town meeting preparations and charter revisions
- **Questions/discussions**
 - Susan asked about what Haverstock has learned/noted since becoming Hartford town manager. Topics discussed:
 - High volunteer engagement in Hartford
 - Challenges around housing and homelessness (this is a town, state and national issue)
 - Hartford's participation in the the Welcoming and Engaging Hartford survey through Abundant Sun
 - Inclusion of part-time community nurse in upcoming budget
 - Community information officer
 - Bugbee Senior Center renovations
 - Fairview Terrace reconstruction/renovation
 - Retention and recruitment
 - Discussion around wage policy and working with a consultant
 - Possible redevelopment in WRJ (David Briggs)
 - Ally suggested "brief history of HCOREI"
 - Michelle shared her perspective on this (as a founding member of HCOREI)
 - Strategic plan and HSD Equity Coordinator were mentioned/discussed

- Mary and Kim added additional context later in meeting
- Haverstock highlighted February 20th Selectboard meeting where better access to town ordinances and policies will be discussed
- Conversation about collaboration between town and school district
 - Haverstock has met with Tom DeBalsi and is working on creating a calendar to ensure consistent meetings
 - Ally shared about the joint Sectboard and School Board meeting in June 2023 and plans for future joint meetings (May and September have been identified as ideal months)
- Susan asked about who if anyone is responsible for equity matters in the town

Discussion:

 - Someone responsible for equity would be beneficial for the town
 - The budget presents challenges
 - HCOREI is looking for a staff liaison. Could part of their position in the town be overseeing equity work?

6:50 Updates

- School Board Updates
 - None- *no School Board Liaisons at meeting*
- Town/Selectboard Updates
 - Community Safety Review Project Updates
 - Happening this year
 - Will result in recommendations and could inform and revitalize implementation of the strategic plan
 - VLCT Cohort
 - Results will be available soon and can also inform/revitalize implementation of the strategic plan
 - Results will be available to Strategy Matters (consulting group working on the community safety review)
 - So far there has been one in person and one zoom meeting
 - Discussion of how to better recruit and retain diverse community members. Hartford's challenges with retaining specifically Black women considered.
- NAACP (not on agenda)
 - It has been a year since the submission of membership forms
 - Pat and Miriam are in contact with the former head of the Boston NAACP who is interested in helping us
 - Branch approval may happen soon
 - leadership
 - Pat has been in contact with a possible candidate for a leadership position
 - Challenges with finding leaders
- Joint School/Select board meeting– discussed above
- Hartford student award (A. Raynolds Memorial)

- Explanation of award and background on Ann
- Molly is working on laying out the application process

7:12 New Business

- Follow up on subcommittee/working group open meeting law concern
- Reconsider committee makeup/number of liaisons
 - Any change in regards to this would have to be initiated by HCoreI
- Pat shared point of inquiry: What does systemic racism look like in Vermont
 - Book *Racism without Racists* by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva discussed and recommended

7:21 Adjourn—Motion: Joe, Ally 2nd

HCoreI Members

Pat Autilio, Chair (through 3/7/2024)

Molly Armbrust, Student Liaison, Vice Chair
(shared) - Clerk

Sara Campbell, School Board Member

Nancy Russell, School Board Member

Lannie Collins, Selectboard Member

Ally Tufenkjian, Selectboard Member

Susan Mullens, Community Member – (through 8/22/2025)

Joe Major, Community Member (through 5/2/2024)

Miriam Wood, Community Member (through 5/2/2024)

Vacant, 2nd Student Liaison