

Meeting Minutes

Town of Hartford Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion (HCOREI) Hartford Town Hall, Room 317 and Zoom

Wednesday, June 5th, 2024, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

In attendance: Pat Autilio, Chair, Molly Armbrust, Vice Chair, Sara Campbell, Nancy Russell, Kim Souza, Mary Erdei, Susan Mullins, Joe Major (7:15pm arrival)
Beth O'Donnell, APD Director of Community Health

Pat called the meeting to order at 6pm

Approve Meeting Minutes 4/17

Sara moved to approve the April 17 minutes. 2nd by Molly. 6 in favor. 1 abstention (Nancy Russell).

6:02 PM Acknowledge and Welcome Community Members

Welcome to Beth O'Donnell. Introductions were made.

6:05 PM Member Comments and Announcements

Sara: School Facilities Steering Committee kicks off tomorrow and they have many goals relating to life safety and accessibility and overall strategic planning.

6:10 PM APD's Community Health Needs Assessment

Beth O'Donnell – APD's Director Community Health - External Affairs
Background is in quality improvement and human center design. Lot of experience with community collaboration and eldercare. Understanding the scope of things like food insecurity, homelessness, safety.
Focused currently on Community Health Needs Assessment. Community Health Improvement Plan to create innovations to meet new needs. Currently in the midst of the assessment. The survey is available and will remain open until the end of July. Will receive a report summarizing the needs related to each medical center within the Dartmouth Health organization.

Beth learned about HCoreI and wanted to engage to share the survey and to learn more about various community groups. Has been visiting the LISTEN dining hall, the Bugbee Center, and others to engage with the survey.

Typically, older white female-identifying respondents. Beth is trying to reach a broader audience to include various identities.

Many community organizations use the Assessment report.

Pat asks what are the boundaries of who they are trying to reach? Have to be living in a defined area. Greater Upper Valley region is defined by a map. There are areas where more data is needed which are being provided from the assessment consultant. Respondents that are younger than 45 is an example of a demographic that is lacking responses as are members of the BiPOC community. Discussed different methods of seeking respondents. Going to events and using incentives like gift cards has been somewhat effective. Several

networking connections were shared. Per Beth, this is the beginning of a relationship!

6:30 PM Juneteenth Planning

Joe provided an update via Pat (Joe arrived at approximately 7:15pm). The poster has been shared and Pat will share the press release. Joe is printing posters and will share with members for distribution. See press release for details. Will be looking for volunteers to cover a few things. Mostly, the committee should get the word out. Sara will request that the Parks & Rec department post the event to their outlets.

6:40 PM Discuss Staff Liaison Position

Pat had asked John to communicate with staff about becoming an HCoreI liaison. Per email from the Town Manager, HR provided a list of recommendations (attached). The Selectboard Liaison will inquire about the next steps during Selectboard comments section of the June 11th meeting.

7:00 PM Updates Discussion

HCoreI Charge Revision Update Approved by the selectboard on May 28th. Expecting approval from the School Board at the next meeting, June 12.

School Board Updates

- o How can HCoreI best assist Hartford Schools?

Nancy messaged the board to see if there are any needs and they primarily would just like to be kept updated on the committee's work.

The School District has sent out a useful survey to district members to ask for feedback about recently adopted policies around equity and inclusion. Sara requested more information about the outcomes from the survey once they are available. Nancy agreed to provide the committee with updates.

Regarding harassment: Per Nancy

If a parent with concerns; go to the teacher, then if needed to the principal, then if needed go to the superintendent, then if needed to the School Board only if/when the parent has gone through the chain of command and is not satisfied with the previous outcomes.

School recently added a title bar to instruct families on 'How to Report a Concern'.

Pat reminded the group that safe, anonymous complaints being able to be filed was one of the reasons to establish the NAACP chapter.

Molly gave an update that she has talked with a student interested in coming on as the HCoreI liaison. She will keep the committee informed of any progress.

Town/Selectboard Updates

- o Community Safety Review Project Updates

Ally gave an update on. Ally will request that the town post the survey on the Listserv and any social media outlets. Strategy Matters has organized some focus groups. Not sure of the exact schedule yet. Strategy Matters will be at the block party. Next PMT meeting is June 10th. Ally will share the context language to HCOEI to use for additional outreach. All committee members are encouraged to share the survey within their networks: Survey Link: [Hartford, VT Community Safety and Wellbeing Survey](#)

o VCLT Cohort

Kim Shared an overview of the data analysis provided by Abundant Sun at the May 28th Selectboard meeting. Kim shared the presentation slide deck with HCOEI via email and requested that it be added to the 05/28 meeting minutes of the board for public access. Kim also provided a summary of the 'Wicked Problem' that the Hartford Cohort Team developed a strategy for around increasing trust in local government.

Kim has been designated as the board training coordinator and is researching board development content including work on logical fallacies, critical thinking, recognizing bias and strategic vision updates (last done in 2019).

o IDEAL VT

Mary is having some frustration around the spread out geographically and has had some technical issues with the Teams attendance. Mary has been told by HR that she is not able to be reimbursed for mileage. Mary will follow up with the town manager about the request.

NAACP

Pat ceded his time for NAACP. No updates at this time.

Hartford student award (A. Raynolds Memorial)

Molly & Sara have been working. They'd like to have a table at Juneteenth for the Ann Raynolds Memorial Award. They are working on expanding the eligibility but still needs to be affiliated with Hartford School District.

Molly is still figuring out the appropriate pathway for the funds to be provided to the student(s) via the school district.

7:20 PM New Business Discussion

Consider adding a generic HCOEI gmail address that the Chair & Vice Chair can have access to.

Tabled for future agenda

HSD Gender Inclusivity Policy – Review for potential recommendations to the Town.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/11mFjqgXywYleXlclD6SGqaz0yg_8q0et/edit

7:43pm Mary moves to adjourn.

HCOREI Members

[Note: There is a pending change to the HCOREI charge that will reduce the number of voting members to seven. At this writing, this change has been approved by the Select Board, but still needs to be approved by the School Board. Therefore, this June 5th HCOREI meeting will still require six members in attendance to make a quorum.]

- Pat Autilio, Chair (through 4/1/2026)
- Molly Armbrust, Student Liaison, Vice Chair
- (shared) - Clerk
- Sara Campbell, Community Member – (through 3/11/2026)
- Susan Mullens, Community Member – (through 8/22/2025)
- Joe Major, Community Member (through 4/29/2026)
- Vacant, 5th Community Member
- Nancy Russell, School Board Member
- Vacant, 2nd School Board Member
- Kim Souza, Selectboard Member
- Mary Erdei, Selectboard Member
- Vacant, 2nd Student Liaison

Respectfully Submitted by Kim Souza

FW: HCOEI request for staff liaison

Pat Autilio <diversifiedpat@gmail.com>

Wed 6/5/2024 6:48 PM

To: Kim Souza <ksouza@hartford-vt.org>

[EXTERNAL EMAIL: DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

From: Paula Nulty <pnulty@hartford-vt.org>**Sent:** Tuesday, May 21, 2024 2:13 PM**To:** John Haverstock <jhaverstock@hartford-vt.org>**Subject:** FW: HCOEI request for staff liaison

Hi John,

I made recommendations below, which align with our discussion this afternoon. I don't believe anything can happen unless the first step takes place: "HCOEI, as a Selectboard committee, request that the Selectboard direct you as Town Manager to 'appoint a non-voting staff liaison' to HCOEI, per liaison policy."

My concerns on the last point may be handled, as we discussed, by you defining the role of the staff member as part of the committee. (Non-voting, etc)

Thanks,

Paula

Paula M. Nulty
Director of Human Resources
Executive Assistant to the Town Manager
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171 Bridge Street
White River Junction, VT 05001
(802)478-1101

From: Paula Nulty**Sent:** Friday, May 3, 2024 5:05 PM**To:** John Haverstock <jhaverstock@hartford-vt.org>**Subject:** HCOEI request for staff liaison

Hi John,

In regards to HCOEI directly requesting you "to invite a member of your staff to become (this) HCOEI liaison", I recommend the following steps:

- HCOEI, as a Selectboard committee, request that the Selectboard direct you as Town Manager to "appoint a non-voting staff liaison" to HCOEI, per liaison policy.
- Should that be approved, you as Town Manager reach out to staff, seeking to engage a staff member to liaise with HCOEI. You would then have the authority to appoint that staff member.
- Regarding the staff member: job description would need to be reviewed to see that it covers evening meetings. If it does not, that would be a discussion between you and the staff member.

An exempt employee would receive compensatory time for meeting attendance; a non-exempt employee would need to receive OT. The Department Head should be consulted for budgeting.

- Lastly, in considering the Personnel Policy, there is the matter of supervisors and chain of command. So there could be a situation where HCoreI makes a recommendation to the Selectboard, the Selectboard acts on the recommendation by directing action of the Town Manager, and the Town Manager then directs his own staff. This creates a level of direction from the HCoreI staff liaison, regardless of whether having final voting authority or not, to the Town Manager, consequently to supervisors and possibly peers. This could be viewed as a conflict with the Personnel Policy, as well as the staff member's job description. Care should be taken.

Thanks,

Paula

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