

Committee Members
Crystal Buckley
Dawn Budde
Lindsey Colelli
Susan Dietrich
Daniel Kerls
Zoe Rheault
Alan White



Medway Town Hall
155 Village Street
Medway, MA 02053
Telephone (508) 533-3264
Fax (508) 321-4988

TOWN OF MEDWAY
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Meeting

November 6 2023

**Medway Public Library
26 High Street, Medway, MA 02053
Conference Room**

Meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Dawn Budde.

Appearances

- Members present: Crystal Buckley, Dawn Budde, Lindsey Colelli, Susan Dietrich, Daniel Kerls, Zoe Rheault
- Members Absent: Alan White
- Others: Tatevik Holmgren, Member of the Public, Kailene Simon, School Committee Member and Tracy Rozak, recording secretary

Public Comment

Ms. Budde opened the floor for public comment, there was none.

1. Review and approve minutes.

Ms. Dietrich made a motion to approve the October 2, 2023 meeting minutes with the corrections listed below. Mr. Kerls seconded the motion and all were in favor. 6-0 passed.

Paragraph 4 - Change School Board to School Committee

Paragraph 6 - Change Marcus to Marques Crosby

Paragraph 7 – After “extremely busy” should read the Tech Integration Specialist who used to support the schools left the district last year, which further stretched IT resources.

Paragraph 7, - After Medfield & Franklin on line 3, add an “s” onto website.

Paragraph 7 - Change School Board to School Committee on line 4.

Paragraph 7- Should read Project Lead the Way.

Paragraph 8, -Should read Spanish and Portuguese.

Paragraph 8 – Change School Board to School Committee

2. Alan White's findings with his meetings with Allison Potter and Mr. Boucher.

Deferred to next meeting.

3. Susan Dietrich's assessment for languages in town.

Ms. Dietrich stated she does not have the final numbers. She reached out to the schools and Glenbrook Apartments. Spanish is the predominant language, with pockets of Haitian Creole and other groups. Ms. Simon stated she can ask Ellen Quinn, School Committee Secretary to get that information. The numbers went from 60 non-native English speakers to over 100 and 14 – 20 percent of those students were meeting the expected percentages. This population continues to increase so it will continue to impact that number. Ms. Dietrich reported that Medway residents at the food pantry are predominantly Spanish speaking with some French and Haitian Creole.

Ms. Simon stated the numbers of students that are delinquent is at 15 percent of the population. Of the school days so far, kids are missing more than 10 percent. They can't call the parents because they don't speak English. This problem is not just in Medway but statewide. Ms. Dietrich stated we are seeing more movement of students into town throughout the school year. With some migrant families in Massachusetts, parents may not register children for school right away until they know they will stay in a particular location. Ms. Buckley asked if Medway requires school staff to have the sheltered English immersion endorsement. Ms. Simon stated she was not sure but she stated that Milford's population just crossed over to non-predominantly English speakers.

Ms. Dietrich stated kids who don't speak English also have a diversity of learning challenges. She stated there are technological devices that can voice translate in real time. Ms. Buckley noted that Google Translate works well in Spanish but not in Haitian Creole. Ms. Colelli asked if the teachers are bilingual. Ms. Dietrich replied some are but some of the students are helping with translations and this takes them away from their own learning. Ms. Budde stated it is a challenge to get foreign language teachers. Ms. Simon mentioned the budget and stated we need to pare down our offerings so we are not spreading the teachers so thin. We need to prioritize hiring new teachers and pull away from some of the high level AP classes. Ms. Holmgren asked if we could create something on a volunteer level with residents who could help, a mentorship type program. Ms. Simon stated Joanna Cyr, the Wrap Around Specialties Coordinator is the liaison to students who don't speak English but need extra help or support and she will help the families to cover the costs. Mr. Kerls asked about the language line and Ms. Dietrich responded that they do use it as much as possible. Ms. Dietrich also stated all the newsletters they send out go out in five different languages.

Ms. Budde asked if we looked at Milford and Framingham to see how they do it. Ms. Dietrich stated those towns often have full fluent staff and are funded differently. Ms. Holmgren stated she could volunteer an hour or two to help if needed. She stated there might be other people willing to help and maybe they could start a group. Ms. Dietrich stated this could be a liability as anyone working for the town would have to be vetted. Maybe this could be more of a welcome wagon type of thing or neighbors helping neighbors. Ms. Budde asked if this is listed under volunteer opportunities on the town website. Ms. Dietrich stated it is not but it is a goal of this community. Ms. Dietrich stated the feedback from the community was that it's hard to find volunteer opportunities. Ms. Dietrich stated we offered as a committee to reach out to the chairs to get this information. Committees should list their volunteer opportunities and they should all be in the same format. Ms. Buckley asked if parents can get volunteer education advocates referred to by the school. Schools could refer new families to multilingual volunteers for support and to explain the resources available to them. Ms. Colelli stated it would be nice if the town had different clubs like a Portuguese club. Ms. Dietrich stated someone would have to start it and take ownership. Ms. Buckley stated she would explore this possibility with Medway Marches.

4. Go over feedback survey findings with Zoe Rheault and Dan Kerls.

Both Ms. Rheault and Mr. Kerls stated they do not have any findings yet. They stated they emailed Marques and Richard and have not heard back yet. This is still in progress.

5. Dawn Budde to share findings on cost of websites in other towns.

Ms. Budde stated she spoke to Christopher Meo from Holliston who said Holliston uses Civic Plus as their platform just like Medway. Ms. Budde reported that Holliston paid a onetime fee of 3K to upgrade from the old version to the new version. The Natick town website has their 5-year plan for their website on their website. Ms. Dietrich stated we might want to get the Select Board to put this on a town warrant at a town meeting if it's not too expensive. After that, we should coordinate with Allison Potter on the best way to go about this, as she is the town liaison. Holliston's website had some good bells and whistles. We should be looking at other websites from towns that use the same platform as Medway.

6. Talk about other areas of improvement for inclusion in town, ex. making signs in other languages, public transportation.

Ms. Dietrich asked the committee if we should have a structure in place to focus on our priorities. We should look back at what we presented to the board in the spring. Mr. Kerls stated we should do the four-box hierarchy at our next meeting to focus on the level of effort/impact of things to figure out which things are an easy win. Ms. Budde stated the town website is the low hanging fruit.

7. Discuss ways to outreach to more members of the community with different backgrounds.

A living document that lists volunteer opportunities would be a start. Mr. Kerls mentioned putting our priorities list on the website and he offered to put together a draft list of categories. Ms. Simon mentioned there may be grant opportunities available. Ms. Colelli mentioned GATRA.

8. Future agenda items

1. Mr. Kerls hierarchy
2. Mr. White's findings with Allison Potter

Adjourn

Ms. Budde made a motion to adjourn the meeting 8:08 pm. Mr. Kerls seconded the motion and all were in favor. 6-0 passed.

The next meeting will be on December 4th at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Tracy Rozak