



Diversity Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 28th at 6:30pm
Hybrid - In-Person and Zoom Meeting
Bristol Public Library Meeting Room 3

Attendees:

Jaymie Bianca - Chair, Council Members David MacGregor Rackliffe, Alison Rae Willette, Marcus Patton, Sebastian Panioto - City Council Member

Absent: Council Members Derek Jones, Jeffrey Israel, Desira Nichole Powell, Mohammad Aziz and Kelly Pacheco Houston

Guests: Kelsey Rivera, New England Edibles, LLC

1. Call to Order: Jaymie Bianca called the meeting to order at 6:34PM. A quorum was present at this meeting.
2. Approval of February 28th Special Meeting Minutes

Jaymie Bianca requested a motion to approve the minutes. Member David Rackliffe put the motion forward and Alison Willette seconded it. All were in favor and the minutes were approved into the record.

3. Public Participation

The following public participants introduced themselves to the Council and fellow meeting attendees.

Manny Martinez, Current President and CPO of the United Way of West Central Connecticut

Laura Bailey from The Bristol Edition

Kelsey Rivera and Nick Cimadon from New England Edibles, LLC. (Zoom)

There was no additional Public Participation



4. Current Business

a. Social Equity Plan Vote

Kelsey and Nick Cimadon from New England Edibles presented their business plan and Statement of Purpose. They are a woman and veteran owned start up cannabis company seeking a food and beverage license to operate in Bristol. They're promoting equity and inclusion in the industry and in disproportionately impacted areas of the state. They spoke to the company's business culture that would include regularly giving back to the community. At the end of the presentation, Kelsey and Nick requested a letter of support from the Diversity Council regarding social equity to meet plan requirements.

David Rackliffe began a discussion that included clarification their planned role in the cannabis industry. Sebastian Panioto asked about a location as well. Nick Cimadon advised they hold a provisional license for food and beverage for adult use cannabis to produce edibles to sell as wholesalers to retailers in the State. They're currently looking at 169 East Main Street in Bristol for their location. Further discussion continued about the state and city's ordinances governing cannabis sales.

David referred them to the Economic and Community Development Board for the business discussion. Sebastian Panioto questioned the value of the council offering a letter of support without further information and discussion as a branch of city government. David agreed that additional time and more details of their plan is needed before the Diversity Council could provide the letter they're requesting. Marcus Patton asked if the Letter of Support has a deadline. Nick confirmed a couple of months' time as they need this approval before everything can be finalized.

Jaymie welcomed Kelsey and Nick to attend the Diversity Council meetings which they have expressed interest in doing. She encouraged the conversation to continue at future meetings.

b. Youth Coalition

Jaymie advised the Council that Bristol Eastern High School and Bristol Central High School are both planning their culture days. Bristol Eastern is holding theirs during the school day on April 28th, 2023. Bristol Central is



holding theirs both during school hours and after school with food trucks representing various cultures on May 17th. When the dates and times are confirmed, Jaymie will provide that to the council.

Jaymie mentioned it's time for Youth Coalition applications for the new school year. Notices will be put on social media and welcomed suggestions from the council.

c. Panel Series

The Council's consensus was that the February 28th Panel Series was well done. Sebastian Panioto reported back to the City Council about it and that other communities were present and would like to model the panel for their communities. David Rackliffe agreed that Jaymie kept the discussion moving and it was productive conversation.

Jaymie broached the topic of the next Panel Series event. Allison Willette suggested June as National Pride Month which the council agreed on. Discussion continued with meeting space and when in June, also a smaller event in April for Autism Awareness Month.

5. New Business

a. Member Resignations

Jaymie updated the Council to recent council member resignations. They include Desira Powell, Kelly Houston and Derrek Jones. Jaymie acknowledged their contributions to the council. With four open council seats, she is open to suggestions for new council members and asked that their names and contact details be provided to her.

b. April Meeting Vote

Jaymie will not be able to attend the currently scheduled April meeting, they don't yet have a Vice Chair, and they're now down a few members. Discussion included either cancelling the meeting or rescheduling it in April. The council asked for the Recording Secretary to look at April 18th and April 20th as possible alternate dates using the Library's Room #3 as usual. If the meeting is moved, it would be considered a Special Meeting. Sharon Arsego will check the calendars and respond to Jaymie with her findings.



Jaymie asked for a vote to move the April meeting. Dave Rackliffe made the motion to move the April meeting to either April 18th or April 20th, 2023. Allison Willette seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The motion was approved into the record.

Jaymie advised that Joshua Medeiros, Superintendent of Parks, Rec, Youth and Community Services from the City of Bristol put her in touch with the New England Carousel Museum for their Juneteenth event. Additional information on how the council might be involved with the event is forthcoming. The council agreed that it would be appropriate for them to be involved.

There were no other items discussed.

6. Adjournment

Jaymie called for a motion to adjourn. David Rackliffe made the motion which was seconded by Allison Willette. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Arsego
Sr. Administrative Assistant