



Diversity Equity Inclusion Justice and Belonging (DEIJB) Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2025

City Council Chambers

37 Green Street

1. The Meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Chair Nafshi

Attending: Rabbi Robin Nafshi, *Chair*, Mayor Byron Champlin, Zoey Murphy, Karen Juall, Councilor Jennifer Kretovic, Sheila Zakre, Ghana Sharma, Alison Murphy, Amy Girourd-Crush

Noemi Wierwille arrived late

Becky Kennedy, Merrimack Valley School District Ex-Officio Member

Absent: Cara Meeker, Concord School District Ex-Officio Member), , Clement Kigugu, Vijay Bhujel, Councilor Ali Sekou, Moe Djabelarbi, Usha Shrestha

DEIJB Facilitator Bird Guess, Founder and CEO of The Racial Equity Group, attended via Zoom Meeting

2. Approval of February 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes. Motion to Approve, Councilor Kretovic and duly seconded. The item passed unanimously
3. Meeting Overview. Bird Guess, the DEIJB consultant from Racial Equity Group provided an overview of the meeting Agenda.
4. Review summary of feedback from previous listening sessions and public comments in 2023-2024. This was a review in a tangible way of reviewing efforts in the past and use as an onboarding for our work to expand upon previous efforts. Highlight was made on the 42 people provided feedback/ public comment. The breakdown featured 38 residents (90%) and 4 non-residents (10%). With this, there was also 8 Public Meetings by the previous DEIJB Committee. These meetings also included public input at these meetings. It was noted there were multiple people that provided input at many

meetings, but varying topics and input was provided, allowing for added points of discussion, just as relevant to our processes.

Key Takeaways came from these meetings mostly from former Mayor Bouley, Mayor Champlin and former Councilor Rice-Hawkins.

Multiple speaks spoke regarding inclusion and under-represented voices, enhanced accessibility and equitable access, extended hours of facilities/services.

Structural and Governance Policy Changes: Ensuring consistent recommendations were made for ensuring nontraditional voices and underrepresented communities are integrated into City Government.

Community Engagements and Empowerment: Inclusive communities with effective engagement as key, with suggestions of varied methods.

Creation of a Broader, More Inclusive Steering Committee, which is this effort. Asking people to voluntarily share their demographic background.

Next Steps from the report identified this was the Foundation Steps with recommendations. The data, while not quantitative and best practices, does provide important insights for the work of our new community outreach efforts from this expanded committee.

Racial Equity Group will work collaboratively with the Committee to ensure all community members, including underrepresented groups, representative of the Concord community, are heard. REG will also prepare a report regarding patterns and themes that emerge from diverse participant responses, and the results will contribute to the DEIJB Committee's Strategic Action Plan and inform City government policies and practices to advance DEIJB for all residents and stakeholders.

In follow up to the question regarding whether Focus Groups need to be public, per the City Solicitor, this is a service being provided for the City and do not need to be public meetings or noticed and can be conducted in confidence.

Rabbi Nafshi, asked if Bird Guess could also provide some talking points for asking individuals to participate in the focus groups. Using the Protected Classes identified by Equal Opportunity. The committee should be looking for people that might be missing from our under-represented communities. Amy Girard asked if we should be identifying people with lived experience is very important and having this voice at the table to be at the table. It was confirmed that we would be hearing directly from our under-represented community members and not necessarily the people leading the organizations identified on this list.

A deadline for submitting requests or recommendations of participants will be provided at a later date. We do not want to be excluding people but make sure that there are fruitful, deep discussions from lived experiences.

5. Provide update on focus group contact list of potential organizations who serve underrepresented populations, and individual potential participants. A list of potential contracts was provided by committee members of people that would be good people for our focus groups. The list came from members of the Committee in a survey distributed in mid-February. Our goal would be to have 5-10 people per focus group, that each will have representative of our diverse populations. Another concern of the committee was to assure that it is intentional to hear the perspective of the underserved person and not family members, or other speakers for underserved persons.

Mr. Guess provided a sample hand out explain focus group participation. It is in draft form for the moment and will be distributed to the committee.

6. Review Feedback on DEIJB Committee Structure and Purpose Questionnaire: Mr. Guess shared a sample of a Purpose Statement, Mission and Goals of the Committee. This will be distributed to the committee for discussion at the next meeting. Something to think about in advance of our next meeting. A Sustainable Committee is likely a recommendation that will come forward from these efforts. To gather and drop will likely not serve the community long-term. This is a journey and should be thought about as such.

Public Input: There was no public input

7. Adjournment. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Karen Juall and was duly seconded. The motion passed. The meeting closed at 7:15 p.m.