



TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes
April 4, 2017 8:00 AM
Room 309, Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT

Attendees: Harold Bailey (Presiding), Ramin Ganeshram, Steve Daniels, Dolores Paoli, Catherine Onyemelukwe, Bernicestine McLeod, Zoe Tarrant, Elaine Daignault, and Susan Ellis

Guests: Karen Kleine, Catherine Lewis, Monica Stromwall (Weston), and Effie Thieme (Weston)

The meeting was called to order at 8:13 AM.

Approval of Minutes: Catherine O. moved that we accept the minutes from our March 7, 2017 meeting. Ramin seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously and will be posted.

Programming:

- 1. Recap: Essay Contest** – We had a nice event last night at the Library. It was a shining success. Attendance was excellent. We had representatives from a majority of the town institutions and organizations as well as from other entities and the public. The three winning essays will be posted as well as more details about the process that was followed to ensure anonymity in judging. There are other plans underway to have the essays featured in other venues around town.
- 2. Recap: Confessions of a Skinhead** – Several of us attended this session on March 8th. The turnout was excellent and it was an interesting story.
- 3. Playhouse** – “The Pianist of Willesden Lane” premieres this week. A session “From Hate to Hope: A Conversation with Holocaust Kindertransport Survivor Ivan Backer,” was conducted at the Playhouse on March 29th. Several of us attended this.
- 4. Conversations** – *Political Correctness* is the title of the next scheduled conversation to be held at the Westport Library on Sunday, April 23rd at 3 PM. Maggie, Althea, and Rev. Alison Patton are working on this.
- 5. TEAM Westport Reads** – was launched on March 27 at the Westport Library with a good turnout to discuss Michelle Alexander’s The New Jim Crow. Zoe and Catherine L. are coordinating these sessions. The next session is scheduled for May 1st at 7PM in the McManus Room. The book being discussed is The Hate You Give by Angie Thomas. TEAM Staples would like to invite the students who submitted essays to come to this session since this book is a Young Adult book. The book for the June 12th session is The Warmth of Other Suns by Isabel Wilkerson. There is a long list of books to read eventually. Films need to be discussed as well – including the current movie *Get Out!*
- 6.** We are working on scheduling a conversation on policing in Westport partnering with the Chief of Police and the Interfaith Council as well as the town.

Education:

Food for thought and action: How do we attract teachers and administrators of color to Westport? We need to be proactive and educate the town, where necessary, as to how important this is to us and especially for our children. There is an opportunity for us to do this.



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New Events:

- We were made aware of a session to be held in September: “Welcoming the Stranger” – that investigates the role of the Church, courts, schools, and cities in providing sanctuary for immigrants. The Interfaith Council is involved in this effort.
- Celebrate Westport – The British Are Coming is an exhibit at the Westport Historical Society.
- Memorial Day Parade – Theme: Honoring Veterans Today and Forever. The parade will be held on Monday May 29th if members of TEAM Westport will be able to participate.
- Debby Irving, the author of Waking Up White will be speaking in New Canaan on Wednesday.

Marketing:

- Web: We need content for our Blog and our Newsletter. We can always contribute book reviews or play reviews or past events and link, as well, to other material that is of interest. Also we should expand our contacts and encourage subscriptions. We can also use input from all age groups and the community.
- Reading Recommendations: We are still compiling recommendations for books and reading material. Susan stated that the theme next year for the book group to which she belongs is: African American authors. She welcomes suggestions.

Governing:

Althea Seaborn is now an official member of TEAM Westport. We are looking at establishing ex officio seats for organizations such as the Board of Education and the PTA Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 AM.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 2, 2017 at 8:00 AM in Room 201 of Westport Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernicestine McLeod
Secretary