



TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2017 8:00 AM
Room 201, Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT

Attendees: Susan Ellis, Catherine Onyemelukwe, Zoe Tarrant, Maggie Mudd, Harold Bailey (Presiding), Bernicestine McLeod, Ramin Ganeshram, Althea Seaborn, Catherine Lewis, Karen Kleine, and Jim Marpe (First Selectman).

Guests: Rebecca Marsick (Staples High School), Julie Heller (Westport Public Schools), Cody Daigle-Orians (Westport Library), Alison Patton (Pastor, Saugatuck Congregational Church), Puneet Bhullar, and Carole Southall (Westport Country Playhouse)

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 AM.

Approval of Minutes: Catherine Onyemelukwe moved that we approve the minutes of our November 1, 2017 meeting. Susan seconded. The motion was approved unanimously and the minutes will be posted.

In remarks, Jim thanked the members of TEAM Westport for the role we play in our community. Harold thanked Jim for the support TEAM Westport receives from the town and from him personally.

Programming:

1. Essay Contest Planning – The committee is close to announcing the 2018 topic.
2. Conversations – We are looking at continuing frequent TEAM Westport Community Conversations. Althea and Maggie have a provocative theme that will be rolled out.
3. Interfaith Clergy/Interfaith Council – The Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration will be held on January 14th, 2018, at the Playhouse. Ibram Kendi, author of Stamped from the Beginning, will be the key note speaker. The program is being put together by representatives from the key sponsors including TEAM Westport, the Westport Country Playhouse, and the Westport Library along with the Interfaith Council. Susan moved that TEAM Westport, as a sponsor, contribute \$1,000 for the program. Catherine O. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Policing – In response to the controversy over offering a position in Westport to a New Haven detective, Chief Foti Koskinas (in a December 1 meeting) reviewed the rigorous hiring process that is in place for bringing on new personnel. The Department will be meeting regularly with TEAM Westport. We are still planning to have another “conversation” with Jeff Pegues and Chief Koskinas in 2018.
5. Library Partnership/Coming Events – Members of TEAM Westport participated as moderators in the Community Table session conducted at the Library on November 9th featuring Frank Sesno, author of Ask More. The next session will be held on January 29th, 2018, at which time Ibram Kendi’s book will be discussed.
6. TEAM Westport Book Club – The book club will discuss Ibram Kendi’s “Stamped From The Beginning” at 7PM on Monday, December 18th in the Higgins Room at the Library. Announcement of the session will be posted on our FaceBook page.
7. Exhibit – Ramin has spearheaded a proposal for TEAM Westport to put up an African American History of Westport exhibit during the May to July, 2018 timeframe at the Westport Historical Society. The exhibit can fit in with *Flyin’ West* at the Playhouse and TEAM Westport conversations as well that will take place during the same time.

Action: We need to appoint an Advisory Board for the Exhibit.



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Education:

1. Strategic Planning – Harold met with the superintendent and a consultant earlier in the year. It is time for an update meeting and to assign a point person in the school system for implementation. Rebecca and Julie attended a Border Crossers session. Border Crossers provides training and may be a fit for the teachers in the Westport Public Schools as to how to teach about race.
2. PTA– Zoe and Catherine Lewis presented to the PTA at Long Lots on the topic “talking to children about race”. It was a good session. They would like to present to more school PTAs.
3. Board of Education– Karen Kleine attended a conference session entitled “Where have we gone wrong; why are we still failing African American and Hispanic males?” Karen is very interested in looking at Open Choice and Westport’s commitment to the students who participate in this program. This includes looking at outcomes experienced by Open Choice students and how to address challenges.

Other:

The Darien Human Services Committee invited Harold to speak on December 6 at which time he will discuss TEAM Westport and our programming. They are looking at possibly doing something in Darien.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernicestine McLeod
Secretary