



**TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes**  
**December 4, 2018, 8:00 AM**  
**Room 201, Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT**

**Attendees:** Judy Hamer, Susan Ellis, Catherine Lewis, Alison Patton, Karen Kleine, Maggie Mudd, Dolores Paoli, Harold Bailey (Presiding), Bernicestine McLeod, Catherine Onyemelukwe, Michael Barker, Zoe Tarrant, Elaine Daignault, and Ramin Ganeshram

**Guests:** Foti Koskinas (Chief of Police, Westport), Sam Arciola (Deputy Chief of Police, Westport), Jillian Cabana (Administrative Lieutenant, Westport Police), Eric Woods (Lieutenant, Westport Police), Rebecca Marsick (Staples High School)

The meeting was called to order at 8:06AM by Harold.

**Approval of Minutes:** Susan moved that we approve the minutes of our November 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. Judy seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The minutes will be posted.

1. Harold stated that there is a lot going on and acknowledged that this is the last meeting of the year.
2. We need to change the date of our next meeting. Harold asked if January 8<sup>th</sup> or January 15<sup>th</sup> will work. After discussion, our next meeting will take place on January 15<sup>th</sup>. We should have the schedule for 2019 then.
3. We discussed the process for vetting and handling reported incidents that are brought to TEAM Westport's attention especially in sensitive situations.

**PROGRAMMING:**

**TEAM Westport Book Club:** The next session is planned for January 14<sup>th</sup> at the Westport Historical Society. The book selection will be announced later.

**Essay Contest:** We refined the description of the essay topic which will be announced in January. Posters will be distributed in February on FaceBook and via other means including TEAM Staples. We are looking for sponsors and have received a suggestion for a potential sponsor to be contacted.

**Actions:** 1) Ramin will do the Press Release. 2) We need to find a venue for the awards ceremony in April since the Library is under reconstruction – approximately 100 anticipated attendees and press.

**Policing:**

1. Chief Koskinas announced that there is a vacancy in the police department for which he is heavily recruiting. He would like to have candidates from diverse backgrounds. One recommendation is that Chief Koskinas reach out to local universities. Several TEAM Westport members may know people to suggest. Have them contact the Chief.
2. Chief Koskinas mentioned the opportunity to populate display boards at the two Westport train stations (4x10 feet each) with public service announcements promoting positive messages. We would like to encourage the community to submit thoughts as well, including TEAM Staples. Catherine O. will coordinate this effort. Ramin, on behalf of the Westport Historical Society, offered assistance in coming up with sayings. She invited the police team to see the "Remembered: The History of African Americans in Westport" exhibit.

**MLK Planning Committee / Anti-Racism Training:**

1. The pilot class will take place on December 17<sup>th</sup> from 9:30AM-3:30PM. It will be conducted by a team led by Professor Ibram Kendi from the Anti-Racist Training and Research Center at American University. The purpose is to learn of a framework to be used by our town and community organizations in addressing structural racism and in changing these entities to be anti-racist. We reviewed the attendee list and added some attendees. Anyone not included in this class may be able to attend the next class scheduled to be held here. The intent also is for follow-on work including a webinar in 6 months to see what attendees have done as a result of the class. We will be asking again for money at the Dr. King Celebration event on January 20<sup>th</sup> primarily for the second class. Funding to support this upcoming session is still being requested, so if you have contacts, please let Harold know.



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2. Our speaker for the January 20<sup>th</sup> Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration is confirmed – James Forman, Jr., winner of the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Non-Fiction for Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America. This will take place at 3PM at the Playhouse.

**Library Partnership / Coming Events:**

1. Beginning in January, WestportREADS 2019 will feature the book Exit West by Mohsin Hamid, an award-winning novel that follows two refugees. The Library is asking for stories and pictures by December 11<sup>th</sup> about people and families who have immigrated. Dolores and Alison through the Interfaith Council know of a Syrian refugee family that can speak about their immigration experience. Saugatuck Congregational Church is planning an art exhibit on the theme of immigration.
2. Ramin will discuss her latest book The General's Cook on Wednesday at 7PM at the Women's Club.
3. Tanehsi Coates will be at Yale on Thursday.
4. Maggie will reach out to James Basker as a potential speaker again here.

**Westport Historical Society:** An exhibit on migrants will be installed after June providing an honest portrayal about the original settlers, involuntary migrants, sponsored migrants (granted asylum), etc. and will include artifacts, and immigration stories related to Westport. The exhibit will explore the evolution of immigration and migration with emphasis on “objects” since people relate well to them.

**Playhouse:**

1. Michael reported that *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* starts tomorrow and runs through the end of the month. It is a wonderful survival story about the Kindertransport just prior to World War II.
2. In 2019, all five plays will have an opportunity for programming involvement: *In the Heights*; *Skeleton Crew* (about one of the last surviving Detroit auto plants) by Dominique Morriseau who won a MacArthur ‘Genius’ grant in 2018; *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*; *Mlima's Tale* by Lynn Nottage; and *Don Juan*.

**EDUCATION:**

**Strategic Planning:**

Superintendent Palmer will attend our next meeting.

**Staples:** Rebecca reported the following –

1. Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson is a featured book.
2. The plan is for students to attend *Mlima's Tale* in September at the Playhouse.
3. TEAM Staples has been meeting (10-15 students) and engaging in thoughtful conversations. It has become a safe space for the students. TEAM Westport members are invited to attend a meeting. Just let Rebecca know when and she will let TEAM Staples know. They meet on Wednesdays after school.

**MARKETING:**

**Web Presence:** Please let Catherine O. know about any upcoming events.

A Staples student is working on refurbishing our website.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:44AM.

The next meeting will be held at 8Am on Tuesday, January 15, 2019, in Room 309 of Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernicestine E. McLeod  
Secretary