



Together Effectively Achieving Multiculturalism

TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes

January 3, 2012, 7:30 AM

Room 201

Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT

Attendees: Harold Bailey (Presiding), Catherine Onyemelukwe, Glenn Lau-Kee (on Phone), Dolores Paoli, Judy Hamer, Maggie Mudd, Jocelyn Schur, Nick Rudd, Bernicestine McLeod, Steve Daniels, Barbara Butler, and Patricia Wei

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 AM.

The meeting minutes for past meetings were approved with one spelling correction and one addition.

What's Up?

1. We discussed the comment by one of the Republican candidates for President loosely paraphrased as 'he did not want to give everyone else's money to black people as social policy'. This has a lot to do with where we're headed as a nation especially in light of unfortunate comments made by several of the candidates on the primary circuit.
2. We mentioned the discussion over the redistricting of Fairfield County that seeks to remove Bridgeport from the 4th Congressional District and place it with New Haven in a different district.
3. We commented on the perceived move across the country to require drivers' licenses for voting identification. This is problematic in urban areas where a lot of people don't need a car and do not drive. This can destroy a whole population of voters. Currently voter rights are determined locally and are not consistent across the country.
4. Designation of the Baron's property for senior housing is an active topic in town.

New Business:

Letter from John Dodig, Principal, to the Staples community re: the need for sensitivity toward gay students:

- Harold sent a note congratulating John Dodig on the letter and stating that TEAM Westport will do additional programming with regard to this topic.
- The letter was well-written and timely. Teachers and parents have given good feedback.
- Any programming could be both for parents and for young people coming out. The findings demonstrate that there are problems with parents accepting the fact that their children are gay – more often mothers than fathers.

Action: Members of TEAM Westport and the PTA will meet with John Dodig to discuss programming on January 25th.



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Old Business:

1. Retail Diversity in Westport

This was discussed at our December 2011 meeting as to the town's approach to incidents that arise that involve discrimination.

Action:

- a. Barbara will schedule a meeting with Gordon Joseloff, our First Selectman, to include Harold and Gail Kelly, Assistant Town Attorney.
- b. The Outreach Committee envisions working with the Downtown Merchants Association. This is up for further discussion and planning.

2. Playhouse Partnership Update

As discussed in previous meetings, the Westport Country Playhouse will be presenting *A Raisin in the Sun* in October/November 2012. TEAM Westport, in conjunction with the Playhouse, has put together a list of possible activities surrounding the production involving the community and education.

Action: TEAM Westport members will meet with David Kennedy, Assistant Artistic Director, before January 20th to work through the list. Let Harold know who is interested in attending and when.

3. PTA: (covered above under discussion of the John Dodig letter).

4. Programming Strategy and Gameplan:

- a. We will be building upon our past activities including The Trailblazer Awards event and our role in providing input to the Social Studies curriculum changes that were implemented at Staples High School. We'll consider reflecting upon additional possible changes based on review of the effectiveness of the curriculum changes now in place.
- b. We have plans to continue to reach out to the Interfaith Council and to work with the clergy (as we have in the past) to interact with the community. Various means of contact will be employed.
- c. Possible program areas:
 - i. Town discussion of considerations with regard to sports teams ala Penn state.
 - ii. Do residents in town fear people who might be considered "outsiders"?
 - iii. Should we dig more deeply into the research Claude Steele presented? His research assistants live in town.
 - iv. Is there anything programmatically that we can do to address reporting in town that discloses someone's identity when suspected of a crime, especially when they are black?
 - v. Should we discuss the Lowe's incident where they pulled advertising support for a Muslim reality show and the possible implications here with regard to our community?
 - vi. Should we discuss the topics covered in the book by D. Sue, *Racial microaggressions and difficult dialogues on race in the classroom. Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology?*



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Committee Reports:

1. Education Committee:

The Education Committee Report is covered under the Staples letter section (see above).

Additionally, the Curriculum staff from the Westport School System will be our guests at the February meeting.

2. Governance Committee:

Action:

- Harold will send around what opportunities exist on committees to get input from members of TEAM Westport.
- Glenn is setting up a formal structure for *Friends of TEAM Westport* including a Board since that is a required element.

3. Marketing Committee:

- Nick continues with marketing. There is no real report needed at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 AM.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 7, 2012 at 7:30 AM in Room 201 of Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernicestine McLeod
Secretary