

TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2011, 7:30 AM
Room 201
Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT

Attendees: Patricia Wei, Judy Hamer, Nick Rudd, Stu Losen, Harold Bailey (Presiding), Bernicestine McLeod, Brian Fagan

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 AM.

New Business:

- What's Up?
 - 1) The Film Series on Civil Rights and people involved in that movement by Bill Buckley and Tracy Sugarman is to be used by the Board of Education.
 - 2) Osama bin Laden comments:
 - The general consensus was in keeping with what we heard in the news reports. Namely, that people are glad he's gone; however celebrating is unseemly. Celebrations were for the most part carried out by younger people. Fox News paused to congratulate Obama, but questioned the burial of bin Laden at sea. Burying him right away was in keeping with the 24-hour Muslim custom of burial and was a brilliant solution so that his burial site won't be the destination of pilgrimages, etc.
 - We wonder what the impact of the assassination will be on this town if any (there are not many Muslims here; but there are 9/11 victims here). Malloy and Blumenthal made passing comments. No other comments have been heard thus far.
 - What are they saying in the classrooms? Will this action ease pressure on the "good" Muslim now that the "bad" Muslim is gone? What are the dynamics in the different communities – for those of the Jewish faith, for African Americans, for the majority community, for example? The dynamics of stereotyping may differ between groups. However, a central theme is that people need ways, no matter what their backgrounds are, to let out their underlying aggravations. Bottom line, people in general have a problem with difference.

Old Business:

- Programming Strategy and Game Plan
 - Last month's panel: We did not have a big audience, but there was a lot of interest.
 - Going forward, we should pursue a conversation around what Bill Howe has reported at the state level with regard to multiculturalism – maybe involving educators. The more provocative we can be in titling our sessions, the more awareness there should be and more people should respond.

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- We should continue working with the Board of Education here in Westport to prepare students for the world from a multicultural point of view. There is a continuing opportunity to do this based upon the work that has already been done with respect to the 21st century skills session.
- A problem going forward is how to garner more participation from parents (attendance at conversations, etc.) as it involves their children.
- TEAM Westport will be consulting with the library media centers in the schools about a small grant they will be receiving to spend on diversity library materials.
- Re-raise possibility of more involvement with Norwalk, particularly through the school system.
- Barbara Butler wants to show some of the rediscovery films by Bill Buckley and Tracy Sugarman at the Senior Center at various times during the fall. This is a series of ten 30-minute films about Black inventors. One idea would be to involve the Young Peoples Film Festival (kids from Norwalk and Westport) to take films of the reactions of the adults in each group in order to create conversation.
- The transcript of last month's panel discussion is on our site.

Patricia, Harold, and Judy will be meeting with a PTA Council co-president later today.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 AM. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, June 7, 2011, at 7:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernicestine McLeod
Secretary