

**TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes**  
**March 4, 2014, 7:30 AM**  
**Room 201, Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT**

**Attendees:** Maggie Mudd, Dolores Paoli, Judy Hamer, Brett Aronow, Catherine Onyemelukwe, Harold Bailey (Presiding), Bernicestine McLeod, and Barbara Butler

**Guests:** Reverend Alison Patton, Pastor, Saugatuck Congregational Church  
Kelle Ruden, Community Relations Director, Westport Library

The meeting was called to order at 7:37AM.

**Approval of Minutes**

Brett moved approval of the minutes for our February 4<sup>th</sup> meeting and Dolores seconded. The motion passed. The minutes were approved.

**Discussion with our Guests:**

On this past Sunday, the film *The Amistad* was screened at the Westport Library co-sponsored by Saugatuck Congregational Church, Wilton Congregational Church, and TEAM Westport. It is a powerful piece. The ensuing discussion could have gone on for an hour or so. Approximately 53 were there to view the film and 35 or so stayed for the discussion. It was a three and a half hour commitment. A reporter from Westport Now was also there on Sunday.

The discussion diverged away from the film on Sunday demonstrating that people would like to talk about issues and this gave them an opportunity. Materials re: *The Amistad* are also being developed for schools. We have more materials to post.

There is now excitement about screening and discussing *12 Years a Slave* which was mentioned Sunday before it was brought up as part of the discussion points. We are going to suggest that people read the book since there is much more in the book than in the movie and that they read the book before discussing.

**Action:**

- 1) Discuss the book on May 17<sup>th</sup> at 2-3:30 PM at the Library with the discussion being led by Judy.
- 2) Screen the film on May 31<sup>st</sup> at 1 PM. The Library calendar will come out around the 28<sup>th</sup> of April.
- 3) One thought is to have a speaker a week or so after the screening and discussion of the movie or wait until fall. Judy will also contact her nephew, Christopher Brown at Columbia, whose academic expertise is 'slavery' to see if he might be able to do the lecture.
- 4) We can talk about a continuing series on Race, History, and Culture emphasizing that "Black History=American History" and making it clear how what happened 'then' affects us 'now' as observed in the book The New Jim Crow.
- 5) Kelle is trying to get a speaker for the *Intimate Apparel* run and may need help in doing that.

Kelle also announced that Clive Davis will be doing the Malloy Lecture this year on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, that the *Kids for Cash* movie just came out this week, and that IndieFlix and Hoopla are screening services that are now available at the Library. With your library card, you can sign up and download.

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**What's Up?**

Judy and her husband, Bill, recently did a talk comparing *Oh Freedom* with incarceration rates and "Stand Your Ground" with specific reference to Trayvon Martin and Jordan Davis to help people understand the issues. There are people who will not want to talk about Trayvon Martin. In general, people in Westport are interested in policy and will discuss it that way. Stats: "Stand Your Ground" laws exist in New Hampshire. In a "Stand Your Ground" state if a white person shoots a black person, chances are that 17% of the time they will get off. In a non- "Stand Your Ground" state, the chances are 9% that they will get off. If a black person shoots a white person in a "Stand Your Ground" state, the chance of getting off is 1%.

**Education Committee:**

Diversity Essay Contest –

- The Diversity Essay contest is going well. We have received 25 entries. Each judge will get the packet containing all of the essays by this Thursday. Then they will read, use our agreed-upon scoring rubric, and get together on March 16 at the Library to work out any disagreements. They will then have the names of the winners.
- Other ideas –
  - Should we do a non-\$ prize? For example, honorable mention.
  - We can feature the winning essays on our website for a period of time.
  - Perhaps we can get a guest op-ed in the local print publications.
  - We should reach out to WSHU.
- We should have another meeting before March 31<sup>st</sup> to review media approach, etc.
- Next week we'll meet to coordinate PR and to plan the actual ceremony.
- Get data on how students found out about the contest for future reference.

MLK-Staples Soccer Event—

- Dan Woog has contacted us about the MLK High School soccer team from NYC coming to Westport in August. The jUNE Day organizers are involved. Would we like to be involved?
- We are interested but will brainstorm more on how we should be involved.

**Marketing Committee:**

- We may have some interest from outside sponsors when we host the Amistad later this year.
- Coverage about TEAM Westport in 06880 should be linked to FaceBook.
- Westport Now coverage should be reposted.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 AM.

The next meeting will be at 7:30 AM on Tuesday, April 1, 2014 in Room 201 of Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

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Bernicestine McLeod  
Secretary