

**TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes**  
**February 10, 2015, 11:15 AM**  
**Seminar Room**  
**Westport Library, Westport, CT**

**Attendees:** Susan Ellis, Maggie Mudd, Steve Daniels, Brett Aronow, Judy Hamer, Stephane Kirven, Dolores Paoli, Bernicestine McLeod, Harold Bailey (Presiding), Barbara Butler

**Guests:** Karen Thorsen, Zoe Tarrant, Kelle Ruden

The meeting was called to order at 11:15 AM.

The minutes for our January 6, 2015 meeting were approved as amended.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**What's Up:**

1. Judy is running a series of programs for the month of February entitled "Diversity Matters" at Meadow Ridge in Georgetown.
  - a. Last week the documentary film by Bill Buckley, *Marian Anderson*, was shown to acknowledge "the past". Approximately 100 people attended and they had a lively discussion.
  - b. Next on the list this week is the showing of the movie *Fruitvale Station* to recognize "the present". The purpose of showing this is to get people to think about current issues with regard to institutional unfairness and social justice.
  - c. Thirdly will be a presentation by Harold, Zoe, and Judy about TEAM Westport, our children's books initiative, and our Scholarship Essay contest as indicative of hope for "the future".
2. Several of our members attended a session in Bridgeport presented by BCAC featuring three Freedom Riders. The session highlighted how urgent it is for young black men to be activists politically and socially in order to maintain hard-won voting rights, educational rights, and overall civil/social justice rights.
3. Harold spoke at the Unitarian Church on January 26<sup>th</sup> at their service in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Day. This had been rescheduled from January 19<sup>th</sup>.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

• **Education**

- Essay Contest: We have a sponsor for the full amount for the essay contest. The paperwork just needs to be filled out. The awards will be given on April 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30PM at the Library. The Library will put together the press release around this. Posters are up. We'll have to contact additional sources to get the word out before our deadline – including using FaceBook.
- Board of Education:
  - A community education conversation entitled "Re-up on Strategy 2025" will take place on March 25<sup>th</sup> in the evening at Staples High School. A presentation about the 5<sup>th</sup> Domain – Social and emotional learning – will be first followed by breakout sessions of groups of 10-15 people. We should attend.
  - The search is on for a new principal for Staples High School.

• **Programming**

- Westport Needs More Diverse Books: The presentation that was developed is up on our website. We'll think about whether to do a press release on the topic. A town like Westport should be addressing these issues.
- The New Jim Crow"/Justice Imperative Initiatives:
  - We are still trying to get programming and a conversation centered on the movie *Selma*. We can host lectures, etc. over a period of time to keep the conversation going. The Unitarian church would like to work with Rev. Alison Patton in some programming, so we can still plan a *Selma* event, most likely in March at the earliest.

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- We have no date yet to meet with Rev. Kendricks in regard to our earlier discussion about The Justice Imperative and how this template has been applied to Connecticut. Can we get Michelle Alexander to come here? For such an undertaking, we'd have to find a source of money. We can have some local speakers come talk as well.
- We had talked about trying to connect with Michele Norris and "The Race Project" some time ago. She, apparently, was at Quinnipiac recently. Again, we have to identify sources for funds. We have to start by packaging what we would like to do and would need.
- James Baldwin Project:
  - Karen Thorsen did a film about James Baldwin 25 years ago. Martin Scorsese recently wanted to use pieces of that film – the original 16 mm and masters – so it has been restored.
  - Now what? Karen has launched "Conversations with Jimmy" via a nation-wide outreach. The 87 minute-long restored film has been shown in Massachusetts. The overarching goal of doing this is to bring different groups together to talk about the film and about Baldwin himself. The film sessions have apparently been doing just that and people are inspired. The film is being used in a National Endowment for the Humanities project and she has requested a grant from the CT Humanities Council. She wants to show this in as many schools as possible and have faculty add James Baldwin to the curriculum wherever possible. Locally, the film will be shown at the Norwalk Public Library on February 14<sup>th</sup> and also at the Ferguson Library and Norwalk Community College and will be used in Bridgeport.
  - TEAM Westport is willing to partner in this effort. Karen has applied for a planning grant and will then apply for an implementation grant.
  - This year will be the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Notes of a Native Son.
- Westport Library Speakers: Dinaw Mengestu will be speaking on February 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Marketing
  - Web: Our forms for donating are located on the web if anyone wants to give. We are non-profit and are accepting donations. We have received some already.
  - Reading Recommendations: Brown Girl Dreaming, recent winner of the National Book Award.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for 8AM on Tuesday, March 3, 2015, in Room 201 of Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernicestine McLeod  
Secretary