



Township of Bernards

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Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Thursday, January 28th, 2021

Virtual Meeting

Minutes

The newly commissioned Diversity and Inclusion Committee met on Jan 28, 2021 at 7 pm.

The Committee of 11 residents listed met in conformity with Resolution [2020-0234](#). (attached)

The appointed Chair John F Coelho welcomed the Committee which stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

Context

The designated Township Committee representative Joan Bannan was invited to share her views on the genesis of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, responding to the needs of the community to foster a spirit of inclusion and acceptance. The remit of the Committee and the means by which it would accomplish its objective were left to the members to define and map with bi-annual reporting back to the Township, although it was acknowledged more frequent updates would also be welcomed.

Observations and Reflections

Each Committee member was then invited to introduce themselves and share their own reflections on opportunities to foster an atmosphere of understanding and acceptance of each individual to further strengthen Bernard's Township as a welcoming exceptional place to live, work and grow. Reflections and recommendations from the committee in this introductory conversation were among the following:

1. opportunities to welcome new residents, agnostic of race and religion, enable greater receptivity with gender non – conforming & special needs individuals broadening community fellowship.
2. encourage parents to model exemplary values of acceptance, respect and tolerance to their children.

3. seek to enrich our society with diverse thought-leadership, sense of belonging and build this “as a competency”

4. strengthen outreach to seniors, veterans and those particularly isolated and affected by the pandemic. Consider inclusion into the Committee

Guiding Principles

Key Guiding Principles for Committee interaction were suggested and adopted to enable trust through self- awareness, mutual respect, assuming positive intent with acceptance of the validity of people’s experiences.

Engagement

This Committee committed to provide a unified face and communication to the community via minutes to the Township site and not engage separately (example through social media to avoid misinterpretation).

Public Comment

Public comment was invited and Mr J Crane and Mrs Stella Perna offered their compliments and observations to the Committee.

With no further business, the Committee adjourned with the next meeting scheduled for Feb 25, 7pm with members of the public invited to attend via Zoom

Submitted on behalf of the D&I Committee
by Chairperson John Coelho