

Croton-on-Hudson Diversity and Inclusion Committee

April 27, 2021

Video Conference

MINUTES

Diversity & Inclusion page on Village website: <https://www.crotononhudson-ny.gov/diversity-and-inclusion-committee>

MEMBERS: Present, Not present

Chair: Leo Wiegman

Co-Chair: Maria Modica-Snow

Tsui Pappas Amy Melman Lisa Stefanoff Michael Mui	Jessica Ganus Aliyah Simpson Justin Johnson	VILLAGE TRUSTEES: Sherry Horowitz Guests: Alex Jacob Dyer, Chair, Valerie Leis, member, Arts & Humanities Committee
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1. Introduction and Opening Business

- a. Health and Welfare check of members
- b. Introduction of new members / guests.
- c. Leadership Transition: **Leo and Maria are serving as chair and co-chair in the interim and seeking replacements soon.**
- d. Adoption of minutes of prior meeting: **February minutes approval at attached below.**

2. Ongoing Activity Updates.

- a. Upcoming Monthly Celebrations/Recognitions

February	African-American History Month
March	National Women's History Month, Irish-American Heritage Month and National Deaf History Month (March 13 to April 15)
April	Diversity in Action Month https://dignityandrespect.org/april-is-diversity-month/
May	Asian Pacific-American Heritage Month, Older Americans Month

	and Jewish-American Heritage
June:	Gay & Lesbian Pride Month and Juneteenth (June 19)
September:	National Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month (September 15 to October 15)
October:	National Disability Employment Awareness Month and National Italian-American Heritage Month
November:	National American Indian Heritage Month
December:	International Migrants Day (December 18)

https://www.crotononhudson-ny.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif441/f/uploads/may_18th_res_78-2020_diversity_recognition.pdf

- b. Arts & Humanities Committee:** We were joined by two guests from the Village’s new Arts and Humanities Committee (Alex Dyer, chair and Valerie Leis) to discuss collaboration in forming a community wide committee to celebrate Lorraine Hansberry and her contributions to Croton and how that can be memorialized to put both Lorraine Hansberry and Croton “on the map”. The idea was suggested by one of the participants in the February Discussion Group regarding the history and relevancy of Black History Month, suggestions and ideas came up, Trustee Liaison Sherry Horowitz brought it up at a Board work session, and Mayor Pugh suggested we confer with Arts & Humanities. Alex and Valerie graciously accepted our invitation to attend this meeting.
- i.** Lorraine Hansberry lived in Croton, has a date of birth of May 19, 1930 and is buried at Bethel Cemetery. Cornelia Cotton and Gwen Sargent have planned a memorial gathering at her grave on the anniversary of her birth May 19, which would have been her 91st birthday.
 - ii.** Could we get the rights to show the film adaptation of “Raisin in the Sun” at the library or elsewhere, such as at Gouveia Park?
 - iii.** Contact participants from prior (e.g. February 2021) discussion groups interested in honoring Ms. Hansberry.
 - iv.** Also, we will coordinate with the Croton Free Library director, Jesse Bourdon, about reading resources. Jesse is in touch with the estate and literary trust of Ms Hansberry.
- c. Discussion Group Updates** (Maria, Lisa, Aliyah, Michael, Sherry)

(1) Last month the Village of Croton's Diversity and Inclusion Committee met on March 16 via zoom and held a conversation with community members that delved into systemic racism, a pervasive construct of oppression that has been so finely threaded throughout this country's cultural fabric that many question that it exists at all. The discussion was titled "What is systemic racism? Is it real, and why should it matter to me?"

In advance of the discussion, the Committee recommended reading/viewing a number of videos and articles which can be found on our website, as can resources from all prior meetings.

(2) On April 22, the group will discuss "The History of Race".

As a prelude to future discussions on the complex topics of systemic racism, we went back in time to the origins of race, a social construct, and the history of our governmental systems - the how and the why and how they are connected.

While watching a video by the author of *The Birth of a White Nation*, we discussed issues raised in the film, as well as the "science" and genetics of race, and how our history and the founding principles of the United States ultimately created a platform for systemic racism which impacts us all today.

Recommended readings and videos can be found on our web page.

All members of D&I are encouraged to attend future meetings!

(3) For May, our Discussion Group will take place May 26 (Wednesday).

(a) We plan a presentation on Asian-Pacific American Experience (Michael Mui & Tsui Pappas).

(b) The theme will be personal stories of growing up Asian-American

(4) For June, our Discussion Group will take place June 24

(a) We plan a presentation related to Pride Month

(b) The theme will be Experiencing LGBTQ with children and led by Lisa Stefanoff.

d. Schools Update (Aliyah, Maria)

- Hendrick Hudson District: No update, need to identify a liaison to Hen Hud schools.
- No update.

e. Croton Houses of Worship (CHOW) (Justin)

- No update.

f. Croton Free Library Update: (Amy)

- i. The book/resource recommendation and publication process is working fine.

g. Other Sub-Committee / Liaison updates?

3. NEW BUSINESS (30 minutes)

a. Text of statement D&I Committee recommended to the Village Board of Trustees (Sherry):

The Village of Croton-on-Hudson feels compelled to stand up and state its condemnation of the escalating verbal abuse and vicious, physical assaults on the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, leading to the tragic killing of 8 people, 6 of Asian descent, in Atlanta, Georgia on March 16, 2021.

The Village of Croton-on-Hudson also feels compelled to acknowledge and identify by name, all targeted, scapegoated and victimized populations, including, but not limited to: African Americans, Muslims, Jews, Native Americans, Hispanics, immigrants, women, the LGBTQ community and the differently abled.

The Village of Croton-on-Hudson believes unequivocally that all human beings deserve to live in peace, and rejects bigotry, ignorance and hate, in all of its forms. The Village promotes and appreciates the richness of a diverse community. It remains ever committed to its mission of creating an inclusive environment where all people are accepted and respected by virtue of their intrinsic humanity, and where all people can contribute their unique and special gifts for the benefit of the entire community.

We decided to forward this in the form of a resolution to the Village Board of Trustees for consideration and potential adoption. [[It was adopted at the Village Board Meeting on _____.]]

4. Administration (10 mins)

- a. Committee Membership: Required Training
- b. Review of received email communications (5 mins) (Lisa)
- c. Set next Monthly Meeting date:
 - i. 4th Tues of each month for the D&I General Meeting, next month: May 23, 2021. (We missed March)
- d. Set next Discussion Group date:
 - i. Next month: date set for Wednesday MAY 26th, 7 pm, (generally 4th Thursday of each month, but Wed for this month) for the D&I Discussion Group.
- e. Other business:
 - i) Committee members' bios for webpage: Set a deadline to collect info? (Tsui Pappas)
 - (1) Tsui will share the drafts as a Google doc and edit to include current committee members.

- ii) Call for presenters (Lisa)
 - iii) Setting goals for the D&I activities:
 - (1) Can we develop some simple, quantifiable metrics to report on a regular basis?
 - (2) How many participants in our Discussion Groups?
 - (3) How many books/resources recommended? How many hours (# Participants * length of Discussion Groups) of community engagement have we fostered (that would NOT have occurred with us)?
 - iv) *(See some drafts below, as a starting point for next month.)*
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