

Diversity Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 25, 2025 at 6:30pm
Hybrid Meeting: In-Person and on Zoom
Meeting Room 1-2, City Hall, 111 N. Main St., Bristol, CT

Attendees: Marcus Patton-Interim Chair, Council Members Jeff Israel (Zoom), Sandra Kamens, and David Rackliffe

Absent: Council Member Tony Lopes

Guests: None

I. Call to Order

The Interim Chair called the meeting to order at 6:34pm, and a quorum was present.

II. Council Attendance

Council attendance was taken and noted above.

III. Public Participation

There was no Public Participation.

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Approval of Minutes from October 28, 2025

The Interim Chair called for a motion to approve the Minutes from October 28, 2025. Council Member Rackliffe made the motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Council Member Kamens. There were no changes or corrections noted. All were in favor and the Minutes were accepted into the record.

V. Current Business

a. City Meeting Updates

Council Member Rackliffe was unable to attend the monthly ECD Board Meeting, but he did attend the NACCP Freedom Fund event. It was well attended, and Bobbie Brown from the BOE in Bridgeport was the keynote speaker.

Council Member Kamens was unable to attend the meetings she had planned to and will check the calendar for December meetings to attend.

Council Member Israel was unable to attend the meetings he had planned to and will revisit his schedule. He took this time to mention the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service taking place tomorrow the 26th at 7pm at the Prospect Methodist Church on Summer Street.

The Interim Chair was unable to attend the City Council Meeting but did attend the Food Share/Food Insecurity Meeting with the Mayor and around 130+/- in attendance. The Interim Chair was able to raise awareness about the Diversity Council while there. Discussion of Council branded shirts and cards followed to raise awareness, encourage participation and build connections.

b. American Clock and Watch Museum Update

The Council thanked all who participated in the Mantels for the Season "It's Always Time for Diversity" themed display/entry at The American Clock and Watch Museum. Items such as 3D snowflakes, 1D snowflake art, gingerbread house garland and more were included artwork made by students from Bristol Central High School Art Club. The main piece is a photo mosaic that Council Member Israel created which includes Bristol iconography, key elements that symbolize a diversity of faith, etc. Discussion of the project details, design and goals followed.

The museum provided the Council with four (4) guest passes as part of their participation in the Mantels for the Season display. The Council discussed how to best use the passes and agreed to offer them to the Bristol Central Art Club.

The following motion was drafted and read as follows:

Motion to approve the offer of four (4) American Clock and Watch Museum passes to the Bristol Central Art Club (BCAC) leadership in appreciation for their contributions to the Diversity Council Mantel, and to be distributed to the art club members at their discretion.

Council Member Rackliffe made the motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Council Member Kamens. All were in favor and the Motion was accepted into the record. Interim Chair Patton will ensure the delivery of the passes to the BCAC leadership. The Council expressed their gratitude for being included in this year's event.

c. Update on "Words Matter" Event 1st Quarter 2026

Details of the "Words Matter" event were discussed in detail at length. The conversation covered options for the format and flow of the event, as well as various logistics, such as bringing in a featured speaker, and event goals. The Open Mic forum as used for the April 2025 Diversity Council Meet and Greet, a panel of writers and educators, and focusing on "hot button" words were among the ideas discussed.

An additional item update was provided through the Interim Chair from Superintendent Iris White. In a message to the Interim Chair, Ms. White met with the District Equity Leadership Team, and there's an interest in running community forums on equity in the Spring of 2026. The Leadership would like to partner with the Diversity Council in the planning of the events. More information will be forthcoming.

Also, the Guac n Roll Cash Mob was well attended and any additional data re: financials and numbers of orders has not yet been provided to the Council.

VI. New Business

a. Revisit 2026 Meeting Schedule

The Council confirmed they won't hold a December 2026 Meeting. The proposed meeting schedule was updated to include the meeting times.

The Interim Chair expressed the mayor's desire to offer a City Council Member liaison to the Diversity Council, but a member isn't available for the regular Tuesday meetings. Discussion of alternate meetings dates followed.

The Council Members are more regularly attending the City Council Meetings, and it's also possible that the City Council liaison assignments could be rotated. Rotating the post was noted

as a possibility that would encourage diversity in that role and raise more awareness among the City Council as well.

The proposed meeting schedule will be provided to the Town Clerk's Office for their recording purposes.

b. 2026 Diversity Council Strategy

The growth of the Diversity Council membership was discussed. There was a lot of interest in others joining, but no new members have been added yet. The 2026 Membership Strategy will be a new and regular meeting Agenda item. The need for a social media expert to help build awareness using the social media algorithm was introduced with brief discussion.

c. Holiday Opportunities

The food drive collection at the American Clock Museum was mentioned, and the All Heart Events page will have all the submitted seasonal events and fundraisers posted.

Planning for the next quarterly Cash Mob event will begin at the January 2026 Diversity Council Meeting. Members were asked to consider business categories of interest for the focus of the next Cash Mob and bring them to the January meeting.

VII. Adjournment

The Interim Chair called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Council Member Rackliffe and was seconded by Council Member Kamens. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:57pm

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Arsego

Recording Secretary