

Diversity Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 6:30pm
Hybrid In-Person and Zoom Meeting
Meeting Room 1-2, City Hall, 111 N. Main St., Bristol, CT

Attendees: Marcus Patton – Interim Chair, Council Members Sandra Kamens, and Tony Lopes

Absent: City Council Member, Mark Dickau, Council Members Jordan Lopez, David Rackliffe, and Jeff Israel

Guest: None

1. Call to Order

The Interim Chair called the meeting to order at 5:34pm. A quorum was not present at this time in the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

a. September 24, 2024 Meeting Minutes

The Approval of the Minutes as tabled in the absence of a quorum.

3. Public Participation

There was no Public Participation.

The Interim Chair took this opportunity to thank Council Member Lopes for joining the August meeting on Zoom while traveling internationally.

4. Current Business

a. Council Members Open Discussion on Task Force

The Interim Chair began the discussion with a recap of the previous month's meeting regarding what the Council could accomplish, and how, if they became a Task Force. The conversation with Mayor Caggiano at that meeting was noted, and it was agreed that additional discussions were needed.

It was also agreed that the meeting's guest, David Haberfeld from the West End Association, provided helpful information and options when looking at the option of forming a Task Force. The main challenge being finances and fundraising.

Discussion continued around the goals of the Diversity Council, the need for funds to accomplish those goals, and the reasons why members have stayed with the Council to figure out their next steps. The main, shared factor is wanting to be agents of change for the betterment of Bristol. Options for publicizing involvement on the Council and events

like the Panel Discussions again included being part of Bristol Talks, and the city's Events Page and eSign messages.

It was noted that to remain under the city, the Council needs to have a balance of political party representation per the City Ordinances. If funds were to be given from outside entities, the Diversity Council would still need City Council to vote to approve them receiving the funds.

The Council agreed that this process of finding their way forward has been necessary and productive, and they'll continue the process until they're ready to vote on moving as a Task Force or remaining under the city. Members were encouraged that while remaining under the city, members attend City Council meetings and other meetings to represent the Council and observe how other Committees are run. The party affiliations of the Diversity Council were also discussed. Becoming a Task Force would eliminate the need for a balance party representation, and yet having all voices heard is important.

b. Council Members Open Discussion on Name Change

Interim Chair, in the interest of time, suggested the Name Change discussion be tabled until the next meeting. This was agreed upon by the Council Members.

5. New Business

a. Council's Active Return and What Does that Mean?

- When to reintroduce ourselves to the community. The Holidays? 2025?
- What can we handle? Social Media? Events? Conversations?

Discussion was held regarding how and when to best reintroduce the Diversity Council to the community since the changes within the Council allowed time for them to regroup. Ideas included members pairing up to volunteer at city events such as food drives, helping with Downtown Live at the Rockwell events, and similar types of community opportunities. Also, attending city meetings and during Public Participation, introducing themselves as Diversity Council members and providing a brief note of what they do and are trying to do. Finding the preferred strategy was key to this aspect of the discussion, and providing a uniform, consistent message when speaking as a representative of the Diversity Council.

b. Alliances

- West End Association
- Arts and Culture
- Parks, Rec, Youth and Community Services
- More

Additional discussion included which existing city departments and councils this group could partner with on existing events.

- c. **Next Meeting Vote on 2025 Meeting Dates** – *4th Tuesday of the month (Dates issued today) Jan 28, Feb 25, Mar 25, Apr 22, May 27, Jun 24, Jul 22, Aug 26, Sep 23, Oct 28, Nov 25, Dec 23*

The Interim Chair noted to table the vote for the 2025 meeting dates to the November meeting due to the absence of a quorum.

6. **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by the Interim Chair. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:56pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Arsego
Recording Secretary