



Town of Wellesley Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force

Phase I Report to the Select Board
December 6, 2022

History

- ▶ Summer 2021 applications & interviews of potential task force members
- ▶ Received almost 40 applications, 21 members were selected
- ▶ The Wellesley Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force convened on November 12, 2021, under the direction of Executive Director Meghan Jop & Assistant Executive Director Amy Frigulietti, with assistance from DEI consultant Lisa Smith-McQueenie
- ▶ Phase I: November 2021-November 2022
- ▶ Group convenes every other Wednesday



Task Force Membership

Melinda Arias-Voci	Gary Arthur*
John Benzan	Linda Chow
Tony Clark	Leda Eizenberg
Amy Frigulietti	Stephanie Hawkinson
Je'Lesia Jones	Meghan Jop
Glen Kim	Ann-Mara Lanza
Ayla Lari	Lisa Macdonald
Paul Merry	Lina Musayev
Lise Olney	Tere Ramos
Odessa Sanchez	Donna Stoddard
Robin Tusino**	



*Filled until January 2022

**Filled until June 2022

Our Charge: Phase I

- ▶ Create a **Vision Statement** for racial equity in Wellesley
- ▶ Create a **Mission Statement** for the DEI work for the Town of Wellesley
- ▶ Develop and identify a framework, group structure, and work plan that supports the goals of racial equity
- ▶ Establish community guiding principles and practices to support anti-bias, nondiscriminatory, and anti-racist behaviors and attitudes

DEI Task Force **Vision**

We envision the town of Wellesley to be a leader on issues of equity, inclusion and belonging, working to build an intentional community that respects and embraces the human dignity of every person and celebrates differences. We further envision the Town's acknowledgement of historic racism and bias, and seek the transformation of institutions, policies, actions and workforce to reflect and honor the diversity of the community. It is our vision to improve representation, participation, and opportunities available to underrepresented and marginalized communities including black, indigenous, people of color, LGBTQIA+, or due to ethnicity, national origin, or disability. We will work to dismantle institutional racism, heterosexism, ableism, and bias in Wellesley.

DEI Task Force **Mission**

The Wellesley DE&I Task Force will partner with the Wellesley community (residents, students, businesses, houses of worship, visitors, and employees) to create an environment where diverse people want to work, live, and/or open a business. We will strive with a racial equity lens to ensure that each member of the community receives fair and equitable treatment from public and private institutions and their fellow community members. Actions that support this mission:

- ▶ Tell the history of Wellesley in a broad, accurate, and honestly inclusive way
- ▶ Raise awareness about inequities and disparities in Wellesley
- ▶ Examine the challenges we face achieving diversity, equity and inclusion within our community and commit to formulating concrete and actionable recommendations with measurable outcomes
- ▶ Provide education and professional development – both in our community and in the municipal workforce
- ▶ Identify opportunities to create a diverse municipal workforce, encourage diverse representation within town government and throughout the businesses community
- ▶ Work with the community to implement recommendations and reach goals

Subcommittees / Working Groups

- ▶ Institutional Structures Subcommittee
 - ▶ Proposed Structure Post-Task-Force Subcommittee
 - ▶ Community Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee
 - ▶ Town Resolution Subcommittee
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- ▶ Equity Audit Subcommittee was added based on the Resolution Committee's findings and subsequent discussion with the task force

Institutional Structures Subcommittee

Charge:

- ▶ To identify town structures on which to focus for first round of DEI assessment
 - ▶ Town Meeting, Advisory, Town Moderator
- ▶ To recommend actions to address DEI gaps
 - ▶ Recruitment, Retention, Education, & Training

Institutional Structures Subcommittee

Next Step:

- ▶ Organize a workshop in late January/early February to provide foundational awareness of the importance of DEI efforts and to support the proposal to Town Meeting

Future Potential Opportunities:

- ▶ Offer training and education to elected and appointed officials on language and respecting differences
- ▶ Continue to promote recruitment of more diverse board members
- ▶ Work with the League of Women Voters on making information and education accessible

Proposed Structure Post-Task Force Subcommittee

Charge:

- ▶ Review/research DEI initiatives in comparable municipalities
- ▶ Create and present comparative analysis of most impactful structure to move forward the Town of Wellesley DEI agenda

Proposed Structure Post-Task Force Subcommittee

Performed Research - Benchmarking, Interviews, & Informal Discussions

Findings:

- ▶ Pros and cons to both DEI structures
- ▶ Each community has a DEI structure that is unique - no “perfect” model has been found so far
- ▶ Progress requires community buy-in and support
- ▶ Most communities have a hybrid of committee/staff

Proposed Structure Post-Task Force Subcommittee

Next Steps:

- ▶ Phased approach to implementation
 - ▶ Phase A: Town Government
 - ▶ Phase B: Community
- ▶ Interviews with town boards/departments
- ▶ Incorporate results of proposed equity audit
- ▶ Develop recommendation for the structure of future DEI work

Community Outreach & Engagement Subcommittee

Charge:

- ▶ Engage with and support subcommittees to ensure input, outreach, and engagement with the varied constituencies of the Town
- ▶ Brainstorm methods of education and outreach, programming, and community partnerships
 - ▶ Recommendations include: Houses of Faith, School organizations (eg. Central Council, PTOs, PTSO), civic organizations (eg. Wellesley Rotary, League of Women Voters)

Community Outreach & Engagement Subcommittee

Next Steps:

- ▶ Schedule open meetings or hearings
- ▶ Issue announcements about the dates and locations for task force meetings and objectives
- ▶ Build relationships with other community groups & identify task force members to serve as “ambassadors” to gather feedback
- ▶ Develop DEI “road show” to socialize ideas, educate and gather input from the community
- ▶ Consult with local businesses and reach out to educational institutions
- ▶ Focus on less well-known audiences (eg. those with cultural, language, accessibility barriers)

Resolution Subcommittee

Charge:

- ▶ Draft an Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias Resolution to be presented before Annual Town Meeting Town in the Spring of 2023

Resolution Subcommittee

- ▶ Developed a Resolution that serves both as a **pledge** to transform institutions, policies, procedures, and the workforce to reflect and honor the diversity of the community, and seeks **funding** from the town for an equity audit that will help us undertake this work
- ▶ Plans to share the drafted resolution with stakeholders to garner support and co-sponsorship for the resolution
- ▶ Identified the need for additional Equity Audit Subcommittee to determine scope

Resolution Pledges To:

- ▶ Work with our constituents, institutions, organizations, businesses, employees, and stakeholders to create a more welcoming and more inclusive Town of Wellesley.
- ▶ Improve representation, participation, and opportunities available to people of color and other underrepresented groups, as well as to dismantling institutional racism and bias.
- ▶ Respond to stop intolerance or hate based on race, skin color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, gender, gender identity/expression, class, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, disability, or any other like characteristic.
- ▶ Acknowledge, address, and repudiate any and all expressions of hate, prejudice, and discrimination, including all forms and expressions of exclusion, bigotry, intolerance, and bullying toward any individual or group.
- ▶ Work to transform institutions, policies, procedures, and the workforce to reflect and honor the diversity of the community.

Equity Audit Subcommittee

Charge:

- ▶ Review other towns RFPs and reports
- ▶ Create a definition of an equity audit
- ▶ Propose recommended scope of equity audit for Wellesley

What is an Equity Audit?

- ▶ Assessment that identifies level of commitment to equity
 - ▶ Broad or targeted
 - ▶ Internal: Evaluates policies, programs, and practices that directly or indirectly impact staff, volunteers, and the community
 - ▶ External: Measures community feelings of belonging and perceptions of bias
- ▶ Leadership tool that identifies focus for future initiatives
- ▶ Baseline for measuring success of DEI efforts

Equity Audit: Proposed Scope

- ▶ Broad equity audit rather than targeted racial equity audit
 - ▶ Look at all aspects of equity - Race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, color, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or other socio-culturally significant factors
- ▶ Internal audit and external climate assessment
 - ▶ Get complete snapshot of Wellesley today
- ▶ Partner with WPS
 - ▶ Build on DEI work rather than duplicate

Equity Audit: Desired Outcomes

- ▶ Evaluation of Wellesley's services and programs available to all community members, to determine barriers to access, and areas where inequities exist
- ▶ Evaluation of municipal documents, policies, practices and procedures that impact employees and volunteers in Town Government
- ▶ Community climate assessment, to report how inclusive, equitable and diverse the Town feels/presents based on feedback from Town leadership, employees, residents, business owners, essentially all who identify as community members
- ▶ Provide recommendations and cost estimates for improvements to enable equity in Wellesley

Cost and Timeframe Estimates

- ▶ Costs and timeframe vary based on scope and community size
- ▶ Cost estimates (from one service provider):
 - ▶ Internal audit: \$25-\$40K
 - ▶ External audit: \$55-\$75K
 - ▶ Optional foundational DEI training: \$2K-\$3K/session
- ▶ For comparison:
 - ▶ Brookline **Racial** Equity Audit: 8-10 months, \$100K
 - ▶ Newton Equity Audit: 6-7 months, \$135K
- ▶ Ability to leverage other DEI work:
 - ▶ WPS Racial Equity Climate Assessment
 - ▶ ADA audit (NRC self-assessment)

Your Support is Needed

- ▶ Support and Sponsorship for Town Meeting Article
 - ▶ Resolution
 - ▶ Equity Audit (\$100,000)
- ▶ Support for Phase II
 - ▶ Solicit support and co-sponsorship for the resolution & equity audit from other boards and committees
 - ▶ Host DEI foundational workshops
 - ▶ Schedule meetings and forums to socialize ideas, educate and gather input from the community

Questions?



THANK YOU!