

**TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD  
INCLUSION COMMITTEE**

**Meeting**

**Tuesday, September 24, 2024, 5:00 p.m.**

Springfield Town Library 43 Main Street

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83498337249>

Meeting ID: 834 9833 7249

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**Agenda**

1. Call to Order

In attendance: pattrice jones, Charis Boke, Caroline Comley, Carol-Lynn Knight, Tara Chase, Traci Price, Char Osterlund

Absent: Dan Bannan

Called to order 5:01

2. Additions / Subtractions to the Agenda

None

3. Public Comment

No members of the public in attendance.

4. Announcements

Charis was invited to join a workgroup to develop and implement the next state level health improvement plan. This may help advance goals to improve affordable, accessible housing. Relevant to this committee because of the connection between lack of housing and healthcare professionals.

Pattrice shared that it is banned book week, all week at 1:00 the library is reading banned books- anyone is welcome to read from a banned book this week. Can also send a recording of yourself.

VINE is receiving a spirit of the ADA award from the gov't committee for people with disabilities- coming to the sanctuary to give the award on October 10th at 2pm.

5. Approval of Minutes of July meeting

No recommended changes

Motion to approve made by Charis; Tara seconded; unanimous with Caroline abstaining because she was not present.

6. New Business

1. hate speech incident at Riverside Middle School

Patrice has permission from child's grandmother to share- an 11 year old boy in his first week was called the n word by another student. Was upset; older sister who also attends the school went to the principal. Principal said there was nothing they could do. Traci shared that this is happening in many schools around the area; a bullying investigation could've been done.

First school equity meeting is tomorrow at 3:30; can be brought up at that meeting.

Tara asked if the school board has been contacted; they have not. There was another incident this week outside of school.

Legally the n word is not considered hate speech- can't legally suspend but other action can be taken.

Caroline will ask her principal about TRSU's policy on this- Caroline/Char will ask at equity committee meeting tomorrow.

Patrice wonders about contacting the principal and asking about what he would do in a situation like this and what the response would be-without using names- agreement that this is a good idea, patrice will get in touch with Nate.

Another incident also occurred with an older sibling- older man walked up to him when he was with his friends and accused him of being on his lawn the night before- called the police- police came and questioned the sibling.

Tara will send an email to police chief on behalf of the committee asking about this incident: heard from a townsperson about an incident of racial profiling against a child by the police and we would like to know the workflow procedure in this incident; what was the decision making process in response to this call and what actions were taken by the police.

2. form or email address for public to notify committee of issues

Came from July meeting- mechanism by which members of the public could tell us about things that happen in town- Charis working on google form.

How to disseminate: put in the library- youth section, on declaration of inclusion webpage, on top of every agenda.

Question from Char- feels a bit like a vigilante group, neighbors 'telling' on each other, unsure whether this is a good idea.

Don't want to encourage people to 'tell' on each other, just share experiences of bias/prejudice occurring to them- or an experience they had where they felt included.

Charis will share the form with all team members, we will give feedback if we have it and approve it at the October meeting.

### 3. Town budget advisory committee

The question was raised- will the committee be considering the impact of its decisions on the inclusiveness or lack thereof of Springfield? Char shared they don't talk about policy, just money- but it could be relevant to this committee's work, e.g., in the past they wanted to cut funds to the library which is disproportionately used by elderly, youth, lower income individuals, etc.

There can be public comment so we have the ability to comment/participate if we're not members of the committee.

Char will send the agendas and keep us posted as this develops.

## 7. Old Business

### 1. Welcome packet for new members

Tara is working on it.

### 2. Visits to other town committees

Char sent a request to the trails committee to see if she can attend the October meeting.

Carol Lynn went to the cemetery committee meeting- they were excited to have her. Got a sense that they listen to complaints- a towns person was upset about a tree that was cut down. Carol Lynn is going to airport committee meeting and was invited to the zoning committee meeting.

Zoning committing is coming to the October meeting- Chuck Weiss.

3. SSD Inclusion Committee update

No update; first meeting of the year tomorrow.

4. HR department practices

What are the practices, what kind of training/oversight is there for human resource employees? What protections does the town provide for non-union employees?

Head of HR for the town- Charlie (unsure of last name) Caroline will look into this and report out at next meeting.

5. Subcommittee reports

1. Youth

Did not meet this month.

2. Stigma reduction

Did not meet; patrice shared VINE had the Break the Bias event. Nobody attended- want to try again- more testimonies, maybe it would get more attendance if it were an inclusion committee event.

There is interest- timing/availability- sometime after January- patrice will loop in Tracey Craft. Tara and Charis are interested; Michelle Carrera will reach out to both about setting up a zoom meeting.

6. Review of selected town policies and procedures

1. health officer

Have sent email to Chuck; Caroline will forward the response to all members.

2. police department

Tara will already be contacting police chief about profiling incident; she will also add an invitation to a committee meeting.

8. Potential Recommendations to Selectboard

None

9. Set date of next regular meeting: October 22, 2024, at 5:00 PM

10. Adjournment

Tara motioned to adjourn; Char seconded; unanimous  
Meeting adjourned 6:15pm