
GoToMeeting | Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
4 So. Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT

MINUTES

In accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B and social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC to slow community spread of COVID-19, this meeting is physically closed to the public. The public may listen to the meeting live by calling 1 (872) 240-3212 and using the access code 995-076-269. Additionally, an archive video recording of the meeting will be made available at <https://mansfieldct.gov/video> for 12 months.

Public Comment will be accepted by email at FerraraMT@mansfieldct.org or by USPS mail at Town of Mansfield, Attention: Monica Ferrara, 4 South Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06268 and must be received prior to the meeting (public comment received after the meeting will be shared at the next meeting).

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mitoma called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Daggett, Evans (departure noted below), Fried, Lapuk, Lorenz, Mitoma, Nocton, Vaughan

Excused: Bruder

Commission members decided on consensus to consider New Business Item A before the approval of minutes.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 8, 2020

Minutes were approved on consensus.

4. MEMBER REPORTS

Mr. Mitoma reported on the current state of the nation, and shared an Op-ed that Mr. Mitoma and his colleague published regarding democracy. He reiterated how important the Human Rights Commission's work is especially in the light of recent events.

Ms. Lapuk thanked Mr. Mitoma for his Op-ed and stated that she shared it on her social media.

Ms. Fried reported that she has had a busy start to the new year. She wrote an Op-ed about managing your emotions when you talk to someone you disagree with, and is hoping that it will be published in *The Chronicle*. She held a discussion over Zoom on “What is White Privilege?”. She is enrolled in “My Grandmother’s Hands” project which is a 6 session program to discuss a book called *My Grandmother’s Hands*, which explains how abusive behavior is based in trauma and that we have a national trauma surrounding race in the United States. Everyone is able to register at Charter Oak Cultural Center. Ms. Fried also reported that wrote to the Chief Justice of the CT State Court with the hope of starting a Truth and Reconciliation Project in Connecticut. If this gains more traction she will bring it back to the group to see if the Human Rights Commission can engage in the project.

Ms. Schaefer, Human Resource Specialist, shared that at her first job she took a course in Communication Across Diversity. She explained how eye-opening and beneficial that opportunity was. She said that she thought Mansfield employees would be interested in something similar. Mr. Mitoma suggested that supporting professional development in these areas be added to a future agenda.

Ms. Bell, Youth Services, discussed the experiences she has had through the Youth Services program. She has also provided resources regarding anti-racist framework on the Youth Services Facebook page. The Youth Services Department will also provide information on MLK Jr day and resources for parents to facilitate conversations on race. She also reported that Farmhouse Crepes, and All About the Flavor are two black owned businesses in Town and that we can help promote equity by supporting these businesses.

Ms. Nocton attended a conference through Equity CT that was fantastic. She also submitted a proposal to the National Council on Equity for their conference in the fall. Ms. Nocton and Ms. Daggett are working on getting presenters for a speaker series at EO Smith.

Ms. Evans left the meeting at 8:06pm.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Assignment of Roles for Equity Review Review Documentation: Ms. Lorenz

Conducting interviews:

- Town Council, Boards, Commissions, Employees: Mr. Mitoma
- Town Residents: Ms. Fried, Ms. Vaughan
- Business Owners/Employees: Ms. Lapuk
- School Communities: Ms. Nocton, Ms. Daggett

Ms. Evans and Ms. Bruder will choose their assignments and then Mr. Mitoma will assist where a second commission member is needed.

Mr. Aylesworth stated that he would be happy to connect the HRC with a Town web-based survey account that has higher analytical capabilities.

B. Indigenous Peoples Day/Columbus Day

Members briefly discussed the letter to the Mansfield Town Council regarding changing Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day. Ms. Daggett stated that some credit should be given to the Mansfield student who brought this to the Commission's attention. Ms. Nocton agreed with this point.

The commission agreed on consensus that Mr. Mitoma send the letter to the Town Council and Board of Education with the above correction.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Introduction/Discussion with Mansfield Board of Education Superintendent and Communications Specialist

Mansfield Town Manager, Mr. Aylesworth, introduced himself to the Commission.

Mansfield Board of Education Superintendent, Ms. Lyman, introduced herself to the Commission. She briefly discussed the Board of Education's initiatives towards equity. This includes curriculum work, core beliefs, and ensuring all students have a full range of opportunities.

The Communications Specialist, Ms. Chatey, introduced herself to the Commission. She discussed some opportunities for outreach and engagement including social media, flyers, website posts, newsletters (to be sent out by email), etc.

B. Town Council Report Review

Members briefly discussed the report to be given to the Town Council. Ms. Chatey recommended adding a few examples of how other municipalities/communities have enacted policies to be more equitable.

Decision to send and report to the Town Council passed on consensus with the addition of examples.

C. Election of Officers

Ms. Nocton nominated Mr. Mitoma for Chair and Ms. Vaughan seconded the nomination. Mr. Mitoma was approved as Chair on consensus.

Mr. Mitoma nominated Ms. Fried as Vice Chair and Ms. Nocton seconded the nomination. Ms. Fried was approved as Vice Chair on consensus.

7. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. Town Charge

None.

B. Communications and Outreach

None.

8. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:41pm.

Submitted by Monica Ferrara
Assistant Town Clerk