



City of Dover, New Hampshire

Racial Equity & Inclusion Committee



2022 Final Report – January 25, 2023
2021 Annual Report - February 9, 2022

Vision Statement

The City of Dover will be a welcoming and inclusive environment for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, or place of origin, and this will be a core value and priority of the City of Dover (R - 2020.06.24 - 100).

Elements of this vision include:

- A racially literate, curious and courageous community committed to a culture of education and continual learning.
- Diverse racial representation in city leadership & government, events, and activities as well as physical community spaces.
- Municipal policy & practices that lower barriers for those who have been historically kept out of participating in municipal processes or decision making.
- Established practices that mitigate harm and build relationships and trust within the historical context of colonialism, systemic racism, and white supremacy culture.

Key Accomplishments

Municipal Operations

- Recommended a Flag Policy to be adopted by City Council, and flew flags for Juneteenth and Indigenous People's Day.
- Conducted Employment Data Analysis to understand current diversity and available reporting.
- Identified 13 recommendations for the Police Department pulled from recommendations published by: *Black Lives Matter-Seacoast, Dover Blue and You, Governor's Advisory Council on Diversity and Inclusion, and the NH Commission on Law Enforcement Accountability Community and Transparency (LEACT)*.
- Discussed policies and recommendations with Chief of Police during a regular meeting.
- Recommended Proclamations were read for: *Black History Month, Women's History Month, Asian American Heritage Month, Juneteenth, Pride Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Indigenous People's Day.*
- Created a dedicated webpage to Indigenous History and Resources.

Key Accomplishments

Indigenous People Project

- The City now celebrates Indigenous Peoples Day on the second Monday of October.
- The City Council adopted a formal Land Acknowledgement at the recommendation of the Committee.
- Indigenous Peoples Day was celebrated in October of '21 and '22 where the flag of the Pennacook-Abenaki People was raised and flown in front of City Hall.
- Copies of the Land Acknowledgment were distributed during October's Apple Harvest Day.
- The Land Acknowledgement was read at several venues: Veterans Day, DALC Anniversary, Indigenous Peoples Day, Memorial Day, Arts Commission meetings, and opening day at the school district.
- Initiated discussions with Arts Commission on steps to create a permanent Indigenous 'monument' or installation.
- Recommended to and approved by City Council and School Board to install land acknowledgement plaques on [20] municipal and school buildings.
- Awarded grant from NH Humanities to fund plaques and educational programming.

Key Accomplishments

Community Building

- Established ongoing relationships with: Dover Public Library, Dover School Board, and the Woodman Museum.
- Collaborated with the Equity Vision Keepers.
- Met with staff from Dover Public Library on including disclaimers on certain historical records as well as including more media that provide Indigenous History.
- Attended Cemetery Board meeting to discuss history and naming of 'First Settlers' cemetery along with members of the DAR.
- Dover 400th added Land Acknowledgment to their Homepage.
- The Woodman Museum now displays a land acknowledgement poster.

Key Accomplishments

Committee Policy and Procedures Adoption

- Voted to disavow any stories or created material that is not historically accurate.
- Adopted list of Recommended Proclamations to be read by City Council.
- Established representation on Visioning Committee.

Recommendations

City Employment Practices

- Add an option for employees and applicants to self-identify as non-binary.
- Assess bias-awareness training program (the city has existing trainings in place that we can evaluate further).
- Set goals for workforce diversity and establish an action plan for meeting those goals.
- Provide feedback/training to applicants who are not hired on ways they can improve their candidacy.
- Revise EEO statement so that it is more welcoming to prospective employees.

Recommendations

Committee Structure

- Request the City Council to change the status from ad-hoc Committee to a standing Committee
- Maintain current scope of 'Racial Equity and Inclusion'
- Clarify scope to ensure committee is set-up to be an advisory committee with support
- Request formal staff support

Recommendations

Municipal Operations

- Communications
 - Provide better access to the city website for information on ward elections, employment opportunities, and the like
 - Explore how to provide disaggregated demographic data on survey results
 - Increase ways to reach to underrepresented groups on topics such as the above
- Board & Commissions
 - Revamp the Application in order to collect more demographic data
 - Formalize an equitable approach to recruiting
- Strategic Plans & Training
 - Each Department should initiate and implement DEI Goals. Recommend using the MA Municipal DEI Guide.
 - Implement a formal DEI training for city staff. (More formal recommendations to come)
 - Encourage appropriate response to mental health from Police Department
 - Encourage City Council to read land acknowledgement at all meetings and significant events

Recommendations

Indigenous Peoples Project

- Recommend reading the land acknowledgement at the opening of city council meetings. Especially close to Indigenous Peoples Day and Native American Heritage Month.
- City should acknowledge explicitly that the 400th Anniversary is the anniversary of colonization.
- Add “European” before settlement on 400th Webpage and Marketing.
- Recommend the reading of the Land Acknowledgement and the presence of the head speakers of the Cowasuck band of the Abenaki-Pennacook at key Dover 400th events.
- Establish an action plan to create an Indigenous Peoples ‘monument’ in addition to blueberry bushes memorial.

Future Goals for Committee

Municipal Operations

- Invite Department Heads to share their perspectives on diversity and review goals.
- Explore collaboration with other City Committees and local groups on racial equity and inclusion
- Review Diversity Training offered by the City.
- Expand connections and progress with Appointments Committee.
- Clarify opportunities for collaboration and engagement with Police Department.
- Continue working with Library and Equity Vision Keepers.
- Determine who manages Immigrant Park for future opportunities.

Future Goals for Committee

Indigenous Peoples Project

- Ensure sustainability of the goals of the Indigenous Peoples Project through educational institutions, public installations and committed individuals.
 - Continue discussion on establishing indigenous foraging rights for food and medicinal plants on Dover city lands.
 - Identify sponsors for the Indigenous Peoples Monument and form a committee.
 - Continue conversations with the Woodman Institute Museum about accurate Indigenous People history.
- Continue discussions with the Dover Public Library on their efforts to ensure that the public are aware of resources that provide accurate Indigenous Peoples history.
- Rename 'First Settlers Cemetery' to 'First European Settlers'.

Future Goals for Committee

Community Building

- Establish outreach beyond municipal entities such as the Children's Museum, DALC, and Woodman Museum to understand how they are supporting racial equity.
- Create two way communication public through listening sessions and/or surveys.
- Explore collaboration with other City Committees and local groups on racial equity and inclusion.
- Explore diversity training opportunities through Chamber of Commerce to expand impact of mission and goals.