

EQUITY TASK FORCE -- TOWN OF NATICK

MEETING MINUTES Conducted via Zoom January 28, 2021 6:30 PM

PRESENT:

Sue Salamoff, Designee of the Select Board and Chair of Equity Task Force
Christine Robinson, Member at Large and Vice Chair of Equity Task Force
Karen Adelman-Foster, Designee of the Select Board, Select Board Vice Chair
Dorothy Blondiet, Natick HR Director
Guimel DeCarvalho, Member at Large
Nora Elbasha, Designee of the School Committee
Jamie Errickson, Designee of the Town Administrator and Deputy Town Administrator
Eric Nguyen, Member at Large
Dr. Anna Nolin, Member at Large
Dr. Tina Opie, Member at Large
Dr. Marilyn Park, Member at Large

ALSO PRESENT:

Karis North, Natick Town Counsel
Daniel Zitnick, resident
Bob Bernsein

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft minutes 11/23/2020
2. Draft minutes 12/8/2020
3. "updated ETFmeetingtoshare128.docx"
4. Several pages from <https://gsb-sites.stanford.edu/anti-racism-and-allyship/> (not attached)

CALL TO ORDER:

Sue announced that a quorum was present and called the public meeting to order at 6:33 PM. She noted that a quorum was present, that the meeting had been duly posted, that the meeting was being recorded, that all votes would be held via roll call.

MINUTES

Guimel moved to approve the minutes of 11/23/20. Anna seconded the motion and it carried 11-0-0.

Anna moved to approve the minutes of 11/23/20. Guimel seconded the motion and it carried 11-0-0.

NORMS & POLICY PROCEDURES

Sue talked about the need to agree to disagree reasonably and assume good intentions. She asked for patience. Karen said that needed to be accompanied by good faith efforts to educate ourselves.

Sue introduced Karis North and started a discussion about Open Meeting Law.

- Karen: Can speakers be required to identify themselves or turn their cameras on or off?
Karis: They can be asked to do so, but only if they speak.
- Tina: Must we require people to do so? Some may not want to give their address. Would their address be a public record? Karis: Yes. It would be a public record.
- Sue: One or two members of the ETF could attend a BLM meeting. In that case it wouldn't be a public meeting. Karis: If the task force receives a document, it is a public record, even if there is a person's name on it. If a task force member reports back to the ETF about a conversation, they can withhold the name.
- Anna: NPS has a 'Speak Up' portal that allows people to make anonymous reports. Any document is considered a public record. But NPS can redact children's names, personnel info. Karis: that kind of allowed redaction doesn't apply to the town.
- Guimel: Can we publish on our website the opportunity to contact an ETF member or use an anonymous portal?
- Tina: Is self-reflection considered deliberation? Karis: it would still be public if done with a quorum.
- Anna: SC has learned much about OML. Even on a joint email someone puts an opinion or analysis in a joint email, that's deliberation. Anything beyond ministerial – location, schedule – that's deliberation.
- Christine: The number of people and the subject meeting matter. Karis: yes, but that includes serial communication or a so-called "rolling quorum." It means that any conversation about your work must be done in a public setting.
- Anna: If a quorum of the ETF attends the meeting of another body, if they participate, it's a violation. Sue: the ETF can post their own meeting.
- Guimel: Would subcommittees have to post? Karis: Yes. Subcommittees are not allowed to be established as a way to evade the OML.
- Jamie: Subcommittees also need to have minutes, record their meetings. Could, in theory, have an in-person meeting.
- Tina: If a quorum were at a different meeting talking in general about diversity, but not about Natick, is that a violation? Karis: It's only matters within the jurisdiction of a public body.
- Christine: How can the ETF share information internally – data, research, syntheses of reports from town bodies, etc.? Karis: you may share information as long as you don't discuss the information in the act of sharing it. If you send a doc along with any comment on it, that's an opinion on something within your jurisdiction. Karen: But no joint editing.
- Guimel: Can we jointly edit a document in a public meeting? Karis: Yes.
- Karis will update a presentation and send it to Sue.
- Marilyn: Re personal protection. What if someone files a claim against us as a body or as individuals? Karis: You are protected as any town employee is protected. This means

you're insured by the town, as long as you're acting within your jurisdiction. A contact list would be a public document, even if it's just shared with the Chair.

At 7:28 p.m., Karis North left the meeting.

Tina: Can the chat be enabled?

Anna: Make point of order, instead. They're not seen as rude.

CHARGE AND PROPOSAL FOR SUBCOMMITTEES:

Christine took the lead.

Christine shared her screen "updatedETFmeetingto share128.docx"

Regarding the charge: Do we need a public entity, what should its composition and charge be? Do we need a professional hire, and if so what should be that person's/group's job?

Tina: Yes to both

Christine introduced the idea that the ETF should take an equitable population approach.

Karen made a motion seconded by Guimel: "The ETF will take an equitable population approach. All traditionally marginalized groups in, but not limited to, the following categories shall be considered part of our charge: race, ethnicity, language, LGBTQ, disability, incarceration, religion, immigration/national origin, poverty, homelessness, gender orientation/identity, and age."

Christine conducted a roll call vote:

Sue Salamoff	Y
Christine Robinson	Y
Karen Adelman-Foster	Y
Dorothy Blondiet	Y
Guimel DeCarvalho	Y

Nora Elbasha	Y
Jamie Errickson	Y
Eric Nguyen	Y
Dr. Anna Nolin	Y
Dr. Tina Opie	Y
Dr. Marilyn Park	Y

The motion passed 10-0-0.

Jamie asked if we should change the charge to include non-governmental entities

Karen: Flagged that the ETF can't change the charge, Guimel: but we can make a different recommendation.

Christine: How do we interact with each other? We must "walk the walk" people have already been hurt.

Tina: Everyone on this committee should have some baseline training. Tina shared her screen (link is attachment 4).

Christine: we need to look at qualitative and quantitative data.

Guimel: It's paramount. How do we have a conversation without knowing all the data?

Sue: In the REMAP meetings learned that data helped them analyze needs.

Tina: This also affects the ETF time horizon. There is existing quantitative data.

Karen: There is existing qualitative data, too, from CBOs, etc.

Anna: We may gather info, but a consultant would crunch the information. This committee would gather data where there are gaps. But we'd have to know the landscape to know where the gaps are.

Eric: Data will help us recognize our own blind spots. To create the case for it, we need the data – and to understand what the scope is (is it a one-person, two-person, or committee job, e.g.)

Marilyn: Quantitative data should guide our qualitative focus. Racism exists where there are inequitable outcomes (Kendi)

Guimel: REMAP will be gathering data (and there's a grant for that). Will we have access to that?

Jamie: Will commit to bring any REMAP data to this group.

Tina: Add longitudinal data and "causal"

Eric: We need to think about the place of ETF work and make sure to center it rather than just look at existing processes.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE DISCUSSION

Christine introduced a draft committee structure (as described on attachment #3)

Guimel: Thinks the subcommittees are a good structure.

Anna: Thinks the subcommittees make sense and thinks we should have a consultant.

Christine: The consultant does not need to go beyond.

Tina: Likes how the subcommittees are divided. But would we need three consultants? Do we really need to have every single school in there? Don't want the consultant to do so much collection that we never get into analysis.

Christine: We should sample enough to do our work.

Marilyn: The consultant could help us prioritize to see what's feasible in our scope and what's in their scope.

Jamie: Could use an RFQ – refine the scope and set the qualifications of the consultants, and one qualification listed could be synthesizing information.

Christine: We'd want to oversample immigrants, documented and not, etc. And when an entity is formed, we will need a needs assessment.

Eric: This discussion points to the need for a consultant – if only because the scope of the work and the need for objectivity. We should figure out what questions we're trying to answer. We need to define "entity" for ourselves. And define what "equity" really look like in each of the subgroups.

Jamie: Sounds like we're in consensus regarding securing a consultant. The Select Board should sponsor an article.

Guimel: Can we start procurement before we have the money?

Jamie: Will check with the Procurement Officer.

Sue asked if there was any public input. There was none.

Sue asked for a motion regarding the possibility of a consultant.

Guimel moved and Eric seconded the motion that we ask the SB to sponsor an article at Town Meeting to request funds for a consultant /consultant group in the estimated amount of \$50,000 - 100,000 to support the work of the Equity Task Force.

Sue asked for a motion regarding the possibility of a subcommittee structure as proposed. The group preferred consensus. Sue asked members to send her an email with their top two choices of committee.

SCHEDULE:

Karen will put out a doodle poll.

ADJOURNMENT:

Jamie moved to adjourn at 8:34 p.m., Eric second the motion, and a vote was held by roll call.

Sue Salamoff	Y
Christine Robinson	Y

Karen Adelman-Foster	Y
Dorothy Blondiet	Y
Guimel DeCarvalho	Y
Nora Elbasha	Y
Jamie Errickson	Y
Eric Nguyen	Y
Dr. Anna Nolin	Y
Dr. Tina Opie	Y.
Dr. Marilyn Park	Y

The motion passed by a vote of 11-0-0.

Submitted by Karen Adelman-Foster

EQUITY TASK FORCE -- TOWN OF NATICK

MEETING MINUTES Conducted via Zoom November 23, 2020 6:30 PM

PRESENT:

Sue Salamoff, Designee of the Select Board and Chair of Equity Task Force
Christine Robinson, Member at Large and Vice Chair of Equity Task Force
Karen Adelman-Foster, Designee of the Select Board, Select Board Vice Chair
Dorothy Blondiet, Natick HR Director
Guimel DeCarvalho, Member at Large
Nora Elbasha, Designee of the School Committee
Jamie Errickson, Designee of the Town Administrator and Deputy Town Administrator
Eric Nguyen, Member at Large
Dr. Anna Nolin, Member at Large
Dr. Tina Opie, Member at Large (attending but as yet not sworn in)
Marilyn Park, Member at Large

ALSO PRESENT:

Dr. Donna McKenzie, School Committee

ATTACHMENTS:

Equity Task Force charge
Notes from Dr. Nolin's exercises

CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Salamoff, named by the Chair of the Select Board as the Interim Chair of the Equity Task Force (ETF), announced that a quorum was present and called the public meeting to order at 6:38 PM. She noted that a quorum was present, that the meeting had been duly posted, that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast on Natick Pegasus, that all votes would be held via roll call,

INTRODUCTIONS:

Members introduced themselves.

CHARGE:

Ms. Salamoff read the Task Force charge (attached) aloud.

ORGANIZATION:

Ms. Adelman-Foster nominated Ms. Salamoff as Chair and Ms. Robinson as Vice Chair, and each nominee accepted the nomination. Ms. Salamoff held a roll call vote for both positions.

Sue Salamoff	Y
Christine Robinson	Y
Karen Adelman-Foster	Y
Dorothy Blondiet	Y
Guimel DeCarvalho	Y
Nora Elbasha	Y
Jamie Errickson	Y
Eric Nguyen	Y
Dr. Anna Nolin	Y
Dr. Tina Opie	Not yet sworn in.
Marilyn Park	Y

The motion passed 10-0-0.

Dr.. McKenzie pointed out that Ms. Elbasha is a delegate of the School Committee

CITIZEN CONCERNS:

None.

DEVELOPMENT AS A TASK FORCE:

Dr. Nolin led several norm-setting and brainstorming exercises (attached)

It was decided by consensus that everyone will suggest at least one thing that should be a task for the ETF. Dr. Nolin will create a Google document for comments and feedback.

There was preliminary discussion about the importance of public outreach and collecting feedback.

Mr. Errickson told the group about Racial Equity Municipal Action (REMAP), a program for which Natick was selected in a competitive process by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). He will serve on the REMAP team, and recommends that several members of the ETF also join that team so Natick can avoid duplication of effort and each team can take advantage of the work of the other.

SCHEDULE:

It was decided that the next meeting of the ETF would be on Tuesday, December 8, 2020 from 6:00 - 8:00 PM, and the one after that would be on Tuesday, December 22, 2020 at the same time.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. DeCarvalho moved to adjourn, Ms. Robinson second the motion, and a vote was held by roll call.

Sue Salamoff	Y
Christine Robinson	Y
Karen Adelman-Foster	Y
Dorothy Blondiet	Y
Guimel DeCarvalho	Y
Nora Elbasha	Y
Jamie Errickson	Y
Eric Nguyen	Y
Dr. Anna Nolin	Y
Dr. Tina Opie	Not yet sworn in.
Marilyn Park	Y

The motion passed by a vote of 10-0-0.

Submitted by Karen Adelman-Foster

EQUITY TASK FORCE – TOWN OF NATICK

**MEETING MINUTES
Conducted via Zoom
December 8, 2020
6:00 PM**

PRESENT:

Sue Salamoff, Designee of the Select Board and Chair of Equity Task Force
Christine Robinson, Member at Large and Vice Chair of Equity Task Force
Karen Adelman-Foster, Designee of the Select Board, Select Board Vice Chair
Dorothy Blondiet, Natick HR Director
Guimel DeCarvalho, Member at Large
Nora Elbasha, Designee of the School Committee
Jamie Errickson, Designee of the Town Administrator and Deputy Town Administrator
Eric Nguyen, Member at Large
Dr. Anna Nolin, Member at Large
Dr. Marilyn Park, Member at Large

ABSENT:

Dr. Tina Opie, Member at Large

ALSO PRESENT:

Dr. Donna McKenzie, School Committee

ATTACHMENTS:

Charge
Development of an Initial Work Plan Rough Outline

CALL TO ORDER:

The Chair announced that a quorum was present and called the public meeting to order at 6:07 PM. She noted that a quorum was present, that the meeting had been duly posted, that the meeting was being recorded by Zoom, that all votes would be held via roll call. After brief discussion, consensus was reached that members would use first names.

CITIZENS CONCERNS:

None.

CHARGE:

Sue (Chair) read the Task Force charge (attached) aloud. We will go over in detail at another meeting.

OPEN MEETING LAW:

We will delay full discussion of this until everyone is present. Jamie can coordinate a schedule.

WORK PLAN:

Christine (Vice Chair) presented a document that preliminarily sketches out the steps that need to be taken and when.

Anna pointed out that NPS has a communications director. She can assist in this. NPS can help with feedback and data collection. Anna can be our data/communications liaison.

Christine pointed out we need to include outreach to those without school age children.

Guimel can help with Natick is United liaising for outreach

Karen and Eric will work on communications and outreach.

Guimel will do research about missions of like entities in town

Sue pointed out that for input, we may need ways to gather confidential input.

Guimel would like to invite people who have done the research to give testimony -- a town historian, for example. To provide context to define and shape what the problem is. Experts in housing policy, for example, who could speak to Natick's housing policy.

Christine: there's also the question of the intersection of national, state policy and how that affects us.

Guimel: How to ensure that national context fits into Natick.

Jamie: bucket what gov't, non-profits, etc, can do -- to ensure that we stay focused

Karen: Clarifying that we're not talking about preferences for a political party, etc.

Christine: Talking about how equity issues transcend Natick.

Eric: There are also things happening nationally that aren't happening here, but that influence us. PoC may say, e.g., I'm concerned about policing, whereas White people might say that there was no need to discuss that because it doesn't happen here.

Marilyn: We should develop a mission for the ETF. Maybe we don't need input on this. Should we start with who lives here? What are the steps to identifying equity gaps.

Jamie: Referred to Natick 2030 -- contains demographic data. Of course, new Census data will come out next year. Jamie will provide.

Guimel: By Feb 1st we need the definition of what this group is going to do. If in the meantime we can do data gathering and get testimony, but we may not need all of it to shape the ETF mission.

Guimel: We can split into subgroups to work on tasks

Anna: we can also separate the town into sectors/ our topics into categories (housing, education, transportation, etc) and define what needs to be looked at -- not that we need to be the group that attacks it.

Marilyn: Identify solid data. We also need qualitative data.

Guimel: We have the odd parallel and possible overlap between ETF and REMAP. How will that interplay happen, and aren't they gathering data?

Jamie: Grappling with the same. Could be an opportunity, and why it would be good to have ETF members on REMAP. Also -- REMAP will be more focused on Town Government side of things. REMAP will be looking primarily, though not exclusively, on the professional aspect of governance in town.

Anna: most powerful when the people are engaged with us, rather than an outside person telling us things. **We should mobilize the community to care about the very thing we're analyzing.**

Eric: Scope. We need to work on the limited timeline we have to fulfill the charge. If we are to recommend some entity, we need to justify that creation. How much justification do we need? We may not need to go through every bucket in town. We can think about the ones that have already created the most noise. If we can create the justification we know we have the need and consider what kind of entity would address that best. We should start talking about the "buckets."

Marilyn: would a town survey be a way to collect data.

Jamie: trying to identify the "buckets" by the February deadline.

Christine: Next meeting we should ensure we're all clear on the charge.

Jamie: Will clarify OML legitimacy of using Google Docs shared documents.

Nora: mission statement first is important. Will ask around to find out what fellow students think.

Next meeting will be December 22 at 6:00 p.m.

TASK FORCE CONCERNS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:39 p.m., Guimel moved to adjourn, Eric seconded the motion, and a vote was held by roll call.

Sue Salamoff (Chair)	Y
Christine Robinson (Vice Chair)	Y
Karen Adelman-Foster	Y
Dorothy Blondiet	Y
Guimel DeCarvalho	Y
Nora Elbasha	Y
Jamie Errickson	Y
Eric Nguyen	Y
Dr. Anna Nolin	Y
Dr. Tina Opie	Absent
Dr. Marilyn Park	Y

The motion passed by a vote of 10-0-0.

Submitted by Karen Adelman-Foster

ETF Charge: High Level Discussion:

Charge is answering the following questions based on research from other municipalities and community input:

- Do we need a public entity, and if so, what should be its composition and the charge of such an entity? Equity to be defined and discussed
- Do we need a professional hire, and if so, what should be that person's/group's job?

Equitable Population approach:

Traditionally marginalized groups within the following categories but not limited to: Race, Ethnicity, Language, LGBTQ, Disability, Incarceration, Religion, Immigration/National Origin, Poverty, Homeless, Gender/Gender Identity, Age.

Motion

Respect for the inherent dignity of all people:

How committee members interact and walk the walk

Data: Qualitative and Quantitative

Collect quantitative and qualitative data about the state of equity in Natick.

Use of existing quantitative data

Demographic data highlights community realities and needs

Use of existing data sources, qualitative and quantitative

Prime role of consultant is data collection and analysis

Data is a way to reveal the "reality" of data, overcome bias and expectations; extent of challenges;

Quantitative data guides our qualitative focus; look at outcome and data;

Policies, practices, and outcomes

Collaboration and coordination among Natick entities

Longitudinal data; causal,

TWO TIGHTLY RELATED CONCEPTS:

Need for consultant and possible subgroups to launch

Complementary role with other data being conducted

How to center work, unique needs

EFT Three Proposed Initial Subgroups for Consideration: Updated at any time

Subgroups are composed of ETF members. They interface with the public. OML obligations accordingly.

1) **Natick Community and Town Government Research Group:**

Liaison with the Select Board and Town Administration (Ongoing communication with town offices)

Natick Town Agencies and Designees for example:

Assessors Board of Health, Community Economic Development, Community Services and Senior Services, DPW, Fire Dept., Bacon and Morse Institute Libraries, Police Dept., Recreation & Parks, Veteran Services, Natick Organic Community Farm, Natick Disability Commission, Natick Town Seal Review Committee, Parks and Recreation, Community Services, Council on Aging, Housing and others

Community Organizations for Example: Natick Interfaith Clergy Association, Natick Center Associates, Natick Coalition for Change, Natick Community and Government Chat, Natick Cultural Council, Natick United, Natick Black Lives Matter, Natick Families of Color Unite, Natick Moms, Natick Dads, Natick is United, Natick Native Americans, Shared Sisters, Natick 180, SPARK Kindness, Family Promise Metro West, OUT Metro West, Natick Families of Color, and others

Interface with numerous existing groups, see appendix.

- Agree on protocols to collect and collate existing information and solicit and or accept testimony as appropriate.
- Create a process for sub-quorum receiving and anonymizing of testimony.
- Compile data in a central repository open to the public per ETF protocols TBD.

Analyze for patterns with consultant.

Provide draft analysis to ETF.

2) **Municipal Governments Research Group**

Identify municipalities with Equity, Diversity, Racial Equity and/or DEI Committees and/or staff. Report on how they are defined, structured, rationale, and how they function. Also, seek input from the participants as what works, the challenges and what does not work.

Develop frameworks for protocols, consistency, comparability.

Look for certain attributes if appropriate.

Comparable towns and innovative approaches

Compile documents in central repository open to the public per ETF protocols to be determined.

Analyze for patterns with consultant.

Provide draft analysis for ETF.

3) **Natick Schools Research Group**

Collect quantitative and qualitative data about the state of equity in Natick Public Schools and other schools in Natick pre-K through high school (private, parochial, before and after school programs, METCO, etc.)

Interface with numerous existing school and education activities.

- Agree on protocols to collect and collate existing information and solicit and or accept testimony as appropriate with consultant.
- Create a process for sub-quorum receiving and anonymizing of testimony.
- Compile data in a central repository open to the public per ETF protocols TBD.

Analyze for patterns with consultant.

Provide draft analysis to ETF.

ETF Subcommittee Role:

Process:

Types of questions to be asked and agree on protocols.

Development of survey

Recommendations on people, organizations, towns, models to be included.

Ongoing discussions, analysis, sense-making,

Aggregation of data

Agree on initial subcommittee structure.

Committee members send an email to Christine or Sue outlining their interests or questions; helpful to send a first and second choice.

Like to have consensus

Further discuss at a future ETF meeting after the subgroups organize.

ETF: Is there a need to hire a consultant:

Need for a consultant to work across all committee work and do intensive data collection and initial analysis.

For Future Meetings

Discussion on Data

Types of data

Consistency across subcommittees

Demographic data

Data access and storage