



Town Council Workshop Minutes

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging Committee Membership Selection

Tuesday, January 10, 2023
Council Chamber, Town of Orono Municipal Offices

Present: Councilors Gardner (Council Vice-Chair), Wingard (Community Dev Committee Chair), Laraway, and Birthisel

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM by Councilor Gardner.

Councilors acknowledged a lack of individuals identifying as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in the candidate pool. The group agreed to intentionally leave seats on the committee vacant to allow for further recruitment and inclusion of BIPOC members, as recommended by the Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. The group also expressed a desire to prioritize individuals with lived experience and/or knowledge and professional experience that will help the committee address current issues facing the community.

Councilor reviewed each candidate and unanimously agreed to the following slate of candidates to recommend to the Town Council for appointment to the DEIB Committee:

3-Year Term

Carlos Lopez Garcia
Anila Karunakar
Michael Williams
(Vacant for future BIPOC appointee)

2-Year Terms

Malcom Himshoot
Leah Hakkola
Emily Roth
(Vacant for future BIPOC appointee)

1- Year Term

Brian Pitman
Tessa Shanteler
(Vacant for future BIPOC appointee)
(Vacant for future BIPOC appointee)

In addition, Councilors identified alternate candidates if candidates selected elect not to accept appointment:

Theodate Lawlor (First Alternate)

Doug Johnston (Second Alternate)

Councilors expressed deep appreciation for the remaining candidates (Connie Carter, Richard Hollinger, and Kevin Roberge). The group was hopeful that all members who are not appointed will attend and participate in the DEIB Committee meetings as members of the public.

Finally, Councilors discussed the next steps in this process. They expressed that honoring and respecting the applicants should be the most important priority as the Town Council works through the membership selection process. If Council members want to have a substantive discussion of individual candidate attributes, they recommend that this matter go back to an informal workshop for this discussion. If Council members are fine with the recommendations or want to have a discussion that is focused on items related to appointment, but not individual candidates, they recommend that this matter be moved to a Council Community Development Committee Meeting. Councilors requested that the Town Manager circulate draft minutes to those who attended the meeting and then, if she accurately captured the meeting discussion, distribute to the full Council with a survey of whether any Council members want to schedule a workshop for a further discussion about individual candidates.

Meeting adjourned at 6:02PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sophia L. Wilson, Town Manager