

Minutes, WT TFAD Meeting, June 7, 2022

APPROVED on July 5, 2022

Present: Susanna Sturgis, Alexandra Pratt, Terry Kriedman, Brad Cortez, Loren Ghiglione (via Zoom). The meeting was held in a conference room at the West Tisbury library.

We called the meeting to order a little after 5 p.m.

The **May 3 minutes** were **approved**.

Follow-up on anti-racist training in Chilmark

Susanna hasn't been able to catch up with Mike Hugo, director of the MA Association of Health Boards. *[SJS later report: I caught up with him but couldn't get much useful info so gave up.]*

TFAD role in town hiring decisions

This was deferred to next meeting when we hope to be able to hear from selectboard member Cindy Mitchell and/or Maria McFarland, Personnel Board administrator. *[SJS note: One of us should follow up on this.]*

Report on Pride flag raising, Pride Month & Oak Bluffs flag policy

Susanna reported that there was a good turnout, multiracial and multigenerational, for the Pride flag raising at Ocean Park on June 1. It got good coverage in the *Martha's Vineyard Times*, but there has been nothing in the *Vineyard Gazette* although Mark Lovewell was there taking pictures.

The OB Selectboard has formed an ad hoc committee to deal with flag policy. Susanna is on it as a representative of the MV NAACP. She explained the distinction between "government speech" and the 1st Amendment – why Boston City Hall ran into trouble by denying a Christian group to fly its flag from a public flag pole. She thinks a key is to have criteria for deciding what flags can be flown. The NAACP is trying to get permission to fly the Juneteenth flag. *[SJS note: As you may have read in the papers, including the Boston Globe, the OB Selectboard refused to even put the NAACP on the agenda, so the Juneteenth flag didn't fly. I'll report further on this at our July meeting.]*

West Tisbury is flying the Progress Pride flag but Alexandra said it doesn't have a specific flag policy.

The library has received threats about the Drag Queen Storytime on the morning of the 11th. The program was offered before Covid without incident. The threats are new.

Town board and committee survey results

Loren sent out about 120 of these via snailmail, with SASE. About 20 have been returned so far, which is already a much better return rate than the electronic version. He had to compile a

mailing list since the town doesn't keep a master address list of all current board and committee members. So far he's funded the project out of pocket, but town administrator Jen Rand has asked for his expenses and we believe he should be reimbursed. So far it's been out of pocket.

Alexandra raised concerns about giving out the home numbers and emails of staff and officials more generally. *[SJS note: Let's talk about this further. The concerns are warranted. How can officials, especially our elected representatives, be more accessible without putting them in danger?]*

Possible future events

We discussed two possibilities:

- “What Makes West Tisbury Tick” was first offered in early 2017 and again in 2020. Several board members and officials explained how the town is organized, what the various boards do, and ways to get involved. This might be a useful step toward diversifying town boards and committees. Alexandra said about 20 people came in 2020 version. Susanna attended the 2017 version, and it's where she signed up as a poll worker (which she still is). Loren had some email correspondence with Doug Ruskin in response to the survey; he will forward it to us. This would involve working with other town officials, board chairs, etc. Soon after New Year's seems a good time because it's after the holiday season and at the very beginning of election season, when nomination papers become available for prospective candidates.
- TFAD meet and greet in the fall. This would be an in-person version of our Zoom event from the fall of 2020. It might include some sort of program, e.g., a film or speaker.

New members

We currently have 6 members and are very open to new members. Discussion of an ideal size seemed to settle between 9 and 12. It was noted that a quorum is more than half of the total membership. With 6 members, our quorum is 4 – it would be the same with 7 members. *[SJS question: How do we go about recruiting new members?]*

The meeting was **adjourned** at 5:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susanna J. Sturgis
Recorder