

Minutes, West Tisbury Task Force Against Discrimination Meeting, March 7, 2023, 5 p.m.

Present: Arielle Faria, Susanna J. Sturgis, Loren Ghiglione, Terry Kriedman, Ted Jochsberger

Absent with Regrets: Alexandra Pratt, Elaine Cawley Weintraub

The meeting was held via Zoom. Susanna chaired.

Previous Minutes (January 31, 2023). One correction. "Previous members should have been noted as January 10, 2023, NOT December 6, 2022. Loren made a motion seconded by Ted to accept the minutes of January 31, 2023, as corrected. **VOTE 6 YES 0 NO**

It was noted with regret that Brad has resigned from the Committee. His input and experience will be missed.

The first order of business was a discussion of the February 11th event (West Tisbury and You). The general consensus was that there was a poor turnout (about 25 attendees) given the efforts to advertise the event. Terry suggested that future events should involve a "celebrity" speaker. Arielle suggested a "hot topic". One example would be how the West Tisbury school is addressing "woke" issues. For example, what books were removed from the library (Dr. Seuss, etc.). Other topics included Elaine's program noted at a previous meeting (a program involving the West Tisbury Library and the Charter School concerning five Vineyard women who, in 1964, traveled to Williamston, North Carolina to register voters).

Loren suggested a discussion encouraging younger people to become involved in committee work. It was noted that Jessica Miller's presentation was effective. It was pointed out that among reasons for getting people not getting involved were work obligations and child care. For example, one solution could be to offer small stipends to help offset the cost of the latter. It was noted that, in order to recruit members, the Planning Board called everyone in town.

Loren brought up the topic of diversity in the school. What is being done to ensure that the people in decision making positions reflect the increased diversity of the student body. Terry pointed out that the high school is making an effort to address the issue given that there is a large number of Brazilian students. Arielle noted that the Island is starting to adapt (e.g., in the hospital, etc.). Terry noted that there isn't much diversity on committees. Susanna will try to get Joel Weintraub from the NAACP to come as a speaker.

Arielle wanted to know if people of color are applying for town positions and, if so, are they staying in the jobs. Also, if any bias or microaggression is reported. Loren and Arielle will follow up with the Personnel Board.

Susanna said that "Seeing White on Martha's Vineyard," a program developed by members of the Racial Justice & Human Dignity Committee of We Stand Together, might be repeated. The program is based on the 2017 podcast series *Seeing White* (<https://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/>) and used local sources to link the issues to connect each episode to Vineyard history and contemporary life.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

The next meeting will be held April 4, 2023, via Zoom. *[SJS note: The Task Force elected not to meet on April 4, so the next meeting was on May 2, 2023.]*

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Jochsberger
Recorder, *pro tem*