

Needham Unite Against Racism Working Group

6:00 p.m. March 22, 2021 Via Zoom

Agenda

Under Governor Baker's emergency "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, S20", issued March 12, 2020 and in effect until termination of the emergency, meetings of public bodies may be conducted virtually provided that adequate access is provided to the public.

To listen and view this virtual meeting on a phone, computer, laptop, or tablet, download the "Zoom Cloud Meeting" app in any app store or at www.zoom.us. At the above date and time, click on "Join a Meeting" and enter the meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89833277286>.

1. Approve Final Vision Statement, Guiding Principles and Intentional Practices
2. Law Enforcement 2: Update on Police Reform Law, Tidwell Report, and any questions submitted by Working Group members – *Chief of Police John Schlittler and Police Lieutenant Chris Baker*
3. Future Meeting Planning & Set Meeting Dates for April

March 29th - Discussion on report to 2021 Annual Town Meeting.
(*additional meeting*)

April – Public listening Session/Review of Working Group recommendations to date.

April – Final review & approval of report to Town Meeting.

May & June – Next Steps, Community Interactions, and items from the Working Group charge: How to engage BIPOC residents and others who have been marginalized due to their race or ethnicity; and Communication structures to ensure the sustainability and accountability of the Initiative.

A racial Equity Statement for the town of Needham...

Needham will be a community free of racism, racial bias, prejudice and discrimination. Our residents, schools, businesses, organizations and government will work together to identify barriers to racial equity and create solutions, opportunities, resources and support for removing them.

- We will work collaboratively and democratically toward a just, equitable, antiracist community.
- We will work to identify and change current policies, procedures, practices, and cultural norms in Needham that prevent meaningful access to opportunities because of race.
- We will create opportunities for the community to confront unpleasant truths and seek solutions that always amplify values of racial equity.
- We will intentionally create spaces for respectful dialogue and difficult conversations toward racial amity.
- We will actively engage with those who feel the impact of racism most directly, seeking their input, guidance, and honoring the wisdom of their experience.
- We will commit as individuals to be intentional in our efforts to learn and practice anti-bias and antiracism, transforming our thinking, attitudes and behaviors.

Guiding Principles:

1. Racial equity in Needham means that the experiences of people of color are the same as those of the white majority – from day to day interactions, housing opportunities, interactions with the police and other first responders, employment, and educational opportunities, etc. On the path to racial equity...
 - a. People of color will see others of color in leadership roles in government, business, the school system, and civic groups.
 - b. Our community will have opportunities to learn a more complete version of American history and its relevance to today's challenges.
 - c. Students in schools will experience equity with regard to all aspects of their education (e.g. placement, acknowledgement, recognition, engagement, discipline, curriculum and co-curricular involvement).
 - d. People of color will feel safe, validated and treated equitably with respect to public safety (e.g. arrests, use of force, motor vehicle stops, traffic infractions, handcuffing, and criminal applications).
 - e. People of color will feel safe, validated, included and treated equitably in all Town-related activities (e.g. town meeting/government, services and events).
 - f. In the decision making process, the voices and experiences of people of color will be honored and respected as valid (e.g. equity in hiring, engagement and promotion, programs and events are inclusive and equity minded, intentional anti-bias efforts are employed in all considerations).
 - g. All races will want to live here – Needham will be a desirable community for everyone. The town will take proactive measures to support a more racially and economically diverse and inclusive population (e.g. housing access, mixed income and diversity of housing stock).
2. A healthy and equitable community recognizes the harm created by implicit bias, intolerance and racism and strives to embrace diversity and inclusion by using a racial equity lens to promote anti-racist behaviors and attitudes in all aspects of civic and inter-personal living.
3. We value lifelong/ongoing self and group learning and critical social analysis to acknowledge and to further understand the dominance of white culture and privilege throughout US history, and the importance of disrupting racial structures that perpetuate it.
4. Becoming anti-racist means that we must tackle our own implicit bias, intolerance and discriminatory lenses - thus, bringing about restorative justice, healing and reconciliation to truly bring together the community we live in.
5. All members of the community commit to engaging with good will and respect in order to repair and build healthy relationships.

Supporting the following intentional practices will help Needham realize the vision for racial equity:

- *Seek to increase interactions and create/cultivate friendships across and among the various groups*
- *Commit to self-education to have a better understanding of and be more informed about race, racism, racial equity, race amity, and race relations.*
- *Foster safe environments for, and listen to residents who are, directly affected by racism and racial inequities.*
- *Engage in meaningful and productive conversations on racial issues with town/community members.*
- *Support those services, materials, expertise, scholarships, and organizations that advocate for racial equity.*
- *Stand up, speak out, and act against racism and racial injustice.*
- *Encourage vision, transformation and advocacy anchored in democratic action.*
- *Encourage and build public understanding of the need to eliminate racial injustice.*

NUARI Draft Vision Statement, Guiding Principles,
and Intentional Practices Revised (3/8/2021)

Potential Glossary Examples:

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

<https://www.theantiracisteducator.com/glossary>