

COMMITTEE ON SOLIDARITY

PortlandCTSolidarity@gmail.com

Regular Meeting: Tuesday February 11, 2025 @7:00 PM

Waverly Senior Center -7 Waverly Avenue, Portland Connecticut 06480
In-person and via Zoom

Present: Cindy Tyler (Chair), P.J. Eason, Liz Hibino, Jacquilyn Davis in person. Nancy Goodwin, Hope Jones on Zoom.

Absent: Shelly Nolan and Kristy Fuller (alternates).

1. **Call Meeting to Order / Roll Call.** At 7:05 Cindy called the meeting to order and completed the roll call.
2. **Approve Agenda.** There was a motion by Cindy, seconded by P.J. to approve today's agenda. Vote unanimous, motion carried.
3. **Correspondence / Public Comment.** None.
4. **Approve Meeting Minutes.** There was a motion by P.J. seconded by Liz, to approve the January 14, 2025 minutes. Vote unanimous, motion carried.
5. **Donations and budget updates.** None.
6. **Calendar of notable dates / heritage months.** We discussed the updates Jackie made to the [Observances of Note](#) document, all were very grateful for Jackie's time spent on this, and the committee is supportive of sharing the calendar with town departments. Liz will email it and Cindy will ask Mike Pelton if it can be linked to the Solidarity webpage on the town website. Liz will add Asian American heritage month to next month's agenda. We discussed possible co-facilitators for the planned book discussion of George Takei's They Called Us Enemy on May 8. Liz will add a line about it in the solidarity column for 2/21. PJ will look into AAPI groups at Wesleyan University.
7. **Equity & inclusion efforts in Portland Schools & Town Departments.** Liz reported on her meeting on 1/22/25 with Dr. Britton, principals and admin staff. She invited the schools to utilize Voices of Portland/Gallery of Portland (recordings from 2024 Black History Month event) content to share with students. She encouraged student involvement in Juneteenth. There was also discussion regarding supporting ML students. Principals were receptive and follow-up is

planned. Liz will also meet with Ryan Ott, teacher of PHS Black & Latino Studies class later this week.

8. **SOBA (State of Black America) 2024 Report - discussion group updates.** An email has been sent inviting potential participants to the discussion group on 2/27. Committee members were encouraged to continue with recruitment. Liz will send the schools a blurb to add to their newsletters if approved by Dr Britton.
9. **Pride updates.** PJ registered the Committee for the Middletown Pride march on June 7. He will schedule a workgroup meeting for next month to discuss the march and sign making, as well as having a table at the PrideFest (following the march) to promote the Committee on Solidarity. He will discuss resources for the table with the workgroup. Liz will reach out to a local contact about designing and printing t-shirts for the march, which can be done as a fundraiser like last year. The Committee discussed ways to support Portland's LGBTQ+ community during this time. Jackie provided ally pins and other resources. PJ and Jackie will both be participating as speakers in the [True Colors](#) SOGIECon next month.
10. **Juneteenth updates.** Committee discussed updates from the most recent workgroup meeting on 2/10 including support for inviting the Middletown based band *At Last* to perform again this year. Liz will follow up with the band to obtain a quote by the next workgroup meeting on 2/24. The printed program with ads from local businesses was also discussed along with other options for displaying ads such as a QR code which would link to an online program with ads, or a poster. Considerations such as cost of printing and sustainability were discussed. The committee suggested the decision on which route to take and details such as how many booklets to print, should be made at the next workgroup meeting.
11. **Voices of Portland updates.** We are on track for this panel presentation happening Saturday 2/22/25 at 1PM at Portland Middle School. Planning team members visited with school staff last week. Committee members offered to help share the flyer online. Press releases have been printed in the Rivereast and postcards have been mailed. Re: refreshments, Solidarity Committee is in agreement to sponsor the reception. The easiest and most cost effective option is to purchase items from BJ's. The cost is expected to be about \$100 and committee members will ask for reimbursement from our account after the purchase.
12. **Social Work in Law Enforcement (SWLE) updates.** None at this time.
13. **Solidarity in the Community.** Outreach to community; membership: Solidarity column in Rivereast- Liz will send a second draft by this weekend. Statement of support to our community- Cindy drafted a statement to reiterate our commitment

to standing with our community against racism and bigotry. We will include self-care strategies from an article Jackie wrote. Within 2-3 days members will review and make suggestions. Cindy will then send an approved version to Mike Pelton to ask if it can be posted as a banner on the town website. Town events & meetings; Sign-ups for Board of Selectmen meetings- P.J.: February, Hope: March, Cindy: April.

14. Open Discussion/Public Comment. We discussed comfort, accessibility and pros/cons of meeting at Senior Center vs. Library. Members will consider the options and next agenda will include a decision of whether to move our monthly meetings to the library. Liz shared with the committee re: an email conversation involving school district staff about supporting ML students and having protocols in place (recommended by the state) in the event that immigration officials attempt to enter any of the schools.

15. Adjourn Meeting. There was a motion made by P.J., seconded by Liz, to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Hibino