

COMMITTEE ON SOLIDARITY

PortlandCTSolidarity@gmail.com

Regular Meeting

Tuesday April 8, 2025

7:00 PM

Waverly Senior Center -7 Waverly Avenue, Portland Connecticut 06480

In-person and Zoom B -- ID: 352 700 8408 / Password 113ct

Members present: Nancy Goodwin, Cynthia Tyler (Chair), Glenn "PJ" Eason, Liz Hibino, Hope Jones

Members absent: Jacquilyn Davis, Shelly Nolan (Alternate), Kristy Fuller (Alternate)

Also present: Jennifer Billingsley, Library Director

Members of the public present: Janet Ellsworth

1. Cindy Tyler called the meeting to order at 7:10pm and completed the roll call.
2. **Approve Agenda:** A motion was made by PJ, seconded by Liz to approve today's meeting agenda. Vote unanimous, motion carried.
3. **Correspondence / Public Comment:** Cindy reported on Voices of Portland attendees who expressed interest in Committee on Solidarity. Liz reported CoS was invited by Brownstone Quorum to table at Quarry Day on 5/31. Janet commented that when addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion it is important to remember accessibility (DEIA).
4. **Approve Meeting Minutes - March 11, 2025:** A motion was made by Nancy, seconded by PJ, to approve the minutes. Vote unanimous, motion carried.
5. **Donations and budget updates:** No updates at this time. Discussion re: reminding community members that we can accept tax-deductible donations.
6. **Equity & inclusion efforts in Portland Schools & Town Departments:**
 - a. Student representatives to join CoS- Liz reported this was approved by both BoS and Dr. Britton/PHS. Committee members are grateful for the support. PHS will get back to us re: recruitment of students.
 - b. Ryan Ott, teacher of Black & Latino Studies at PHS, invited CoS reps to give a presentation to his class in late May or June
 - c. Re: Town social services: J Billingsley reported on social services collaboration in town; Courtney Fitzkee (PYFS) and Sarah Elliott (Senior

Center) are driving forces. CoS resource brochure was mentioned in a recent meeting. CoS members will touch base with Courtney. This led into a discussion of social work in law enforcement. Reciprocal agreements with Middletown PD were mentioned.

- 7. SOBA (State of Black America) discussion group updates:** Interested participants were invited to the meeting: April 22nd - 6:30PM at Portland Library. Recruitment continues through social media and Rivereast.
- 8. Fair Housing Month / Americans With No Address film screening:** We discussed supporting this event through promotion, set-up, donating water bottles, and clean up. J Billingsley reported on visitors to the Library from Columbus House, an org that works with folks who are unhoused.
- 9. Asian American Heritage Month / They Called Us Enemy book discussion:** A Wesleyan student may be interested in co-facilitating the discussion. Promotion is underway for this event at Portland Library on May 8th.
- 10. Pride updates:** The workgroup cancelled meetings due to illness/family emergency. PJ will connect w/Molly (Pistachio Print Co.) re: shirt designs for Pride March.
- 11. Juneteenth updates:** The workgroup reported on updates re: food trucks, music, vendors. Nancy spoke with Police Officer Dan Knapp who said Portland PD will be happy to stop by the event. Discussed parking and ushering people inside for the program in the auditorium.
- 12. Voices of Portland updates.** The team is working on post-production details and grant requirements. Ryan Ott at PHS would also like to invite panelists in late May/June to speak to students in his class.
- 13. Solidarity in the Community:** The calendar of notable dates was circulated and received positive feedback. Nancy will draft this month's Solidarity column for Riversast. Promotion via website, video, etc will be tabled to next meeting. Committee agreed to have a table at Quarry Day. Sign-ups for Board of Selectmen meetings: Hope - April, Liz - May, PJ - June, Cindy - July.

14. Discuss location of Solidarity meetings: Due to current logistics, we plan to continue meeting at Senior Center Tuesdays at 7pm for remainder of this year. Idea of doing outreach at summer concerts (also Tuesdays at 7), possibly instead of summer meetings, was mentioned.

15. Open Discussion/Public Comment. Committee members thanked Janet for bringing our attention to the importance of accessibility for people of all abilities. It was mentioned that the CoS hosted a panel a couple of years ago at the Library to learn about the experiences of Portland residents living with (and caregiving for family members with) disabilities. It would be great to have another similar event.

16. Adjourn. There was a motion to adjourn the meeting made by Nancy, seconded by PJ. Vote unanimous, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Hibino