

COMMITTEE ON SOLIDARITY

PortlandCTSolidarity@gmail.com

Regular Meeting

Tuesday March 11, 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: Jacquilyn Davis, Glenn "PJ" Eason, Liz Hibino, Hope Jones, Cynthia Tyler (Chair)

Also Present: Jennifer Billingsley (Library Director)

Members Absent: Nancy Goodwin, Kristy Fuller (Alternate), Shelly Nolan (Alternate)

Members of the Public Present: Janet Ellsworth, Parker Thibault

1. **Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call.** Cindy Tyler called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.
2. **Approve Agenda.** A motion was made by PJ, seconded by Liz to approve today's agenda. All were in favor, motion carried.
3. **Correspondence / Public Comment.** Liz shared correspondence from Portland resident, Police Lt. Matt Solak regarding raised House Bill 7202 "An Act Concerning Law Enforcement Training" also referred to as a Police Training and Social Work Bill. Matt explained this bill provides funding and support for police social work. He has offered to be a resource in discussing this with Portland PD. Liz will share materials with the committee; Cindy will follow up with Nancy Goodwin and Mike Pelton. Liz shared comments received on the Portland Social Justice facebook page, regarding the Town acknowledging Black History Month, and regarding public access to the facebook page. Liz shared re: the April 12th Social Justice Leadership Network meeting in Middletown with keynote speaker Anita Ford-Saunders, President of Middlesex NAACP. Nancy, Hope and Jackie plan to attend.

Parker Thibault gave a brief presentation regarding his offer of creating a pro bono 1-3 minute promo video for the Committee. Committee members and/or people who've been positively impacted by its work would speak about the committee and explain what we do for the community. The video could include 3-4 speakers. We discussed timing and location options as well as content. The committee expressed gratitude for this offer and agreed to get back to Parker.

4. **Approve Meeting Minutes: February 11, 2025.** There was a motion made by Liz, seconded by PJ to approve the February CoS minutes. All were in favor, motion carried.
5. **Donations and budget updates.** Liz reported that there was a donation received from attendees at the Voices of Portland panel event on 2/22/25 of \$21.00, deposited on 3/11/25. Liz submitted a receipt for reimbursement for \$70.00, for her purchase on 2/22/25 of refreshments from Adam's Market, for the Voices of Portland reception. Adams contributed a \$50.00 gift card to bring the total cost of refreshments down from \$120.00.
6. **Solidarity in the Community**
 - a. Calendar of notable dates - the committee reviewed this and approved an email to go out to town departments which Liz will send.
 - b. The committee appreciates that the Solidarity statement was posted on the Town of Portland website homepage banner.
 - c. Hope shared some ideas to update the committee logo.
 - d. Cindy reported on her discussion with Mike Pelton and Peter Lipka about creating a Committee on Solidarity website that could be linked to the town website. Members discussed pros and cons. Options to look into included Wix, CT Valley, and PHS. Jackie will have a conversation with Morgan at CT Valley.
 - e. A question from a message to the PSJC Facebook page was re: allowing the public to post events on the PSJC page (which is used in part to disseminate information about the Committee on Solidarity) in order to encourage more involvement amongst residents. Members' concern is that we don't currently have capacity to monitor public posts on the page. Suggestion to let commenter know that people can submit events/information to us and we can post them.
 - f. Members discussed an opportunity to participate in a podcast interview, as well as the promo video by Parker.
 - g. The committee agreed to earmark up to \$300 this fiscal year for promotion.
 - h. Town events & meetings; Sign-ups for Board of Selectmen meetings: tabled.
7. **Equity & inclusion efforts in Portland Schools & Town Departments.** Discussion on inviting student representatives to join Committee on Solidarity. Members reviewed communication with the high school and Board of Selectmen. Liz will draft a written proposal as requested by the BoS, and will communicate with the school about this.
8. **SOBA (State of Black America) discussion group updates.** A draft summary of the last meeting was shared. The meeting was informative; a follow-up is being planned.

- 9. Pride updates.** Workgroup members will discuss the t-shirt fundraiser at their upcoming meeting, including the offer from a local business, Pistachio Print Co. The committee agreed to earmarking up to \$500 for the Pride workgroup this fiscal year.
- 10. Juneteenth updates.** Liz reported on the decision to print advertisements on posters instead in a booklet. There was discussion on the band *At Last*, who is interested in performing again, and was very well received last year. The verbal quote was for \$1000. The committee members support this with approval by the Juneteenth Committee and Board of Selectmen. All members agreed to earmark up to \$1200 for the Juneteenth Celebration.
- 11. Voices of Portland updates.** The panel event was a success, with much positive feedback from attendees and panelists. The planning team continues to meet re: grant requirements and planning future events. The team is also sending thank you notes.
- 12. Film screening on homelessness.** This event will be April 28th at 5:45PM at Portland Library. Co-sponsors include Portland faith communities, Historical Society, Brownstone Quorum and Committee on Solidarity. Members discussed opportunities to help with flyer distribution, providing refreshments, set-up and breakdown/closing up the library. Discussed opportunities to share about CoS events and have a newsletter sign-up sheet. Jackie & Liz will help share the flyer online, PJ will help set up, Hope will help close-down the library. Jackie reported on a conversation with Jenn B re: resources for people who are unhoused. Jackie will create a resource list to bring to the event and Liz will update Caroline, the event organizer. Liz will send Jackie the CoS resource brochure.
- 13. Discuss location of Solidarity meetings.** Tabled to next meeting.
- 14. Open Discussion/Public Comment.** Janet Ellsworth commented that the committee is working on many different events and topics, all of which are important.
- 15. Adjourn Meeting.** There was a motion by PJ, seconded by Liz to adjourn the meeting at 8:58PM. All were in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Hibino