

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMISSION COMMITTEE CHARGE

Goal

Everyone who lives in Concord, works in Concord, attends school in Concord, participates in a Concord faith community, or visits Concord for whatever reason will be welcomed, valued, respected and heard.

Mission

The Concord Select Board is creating the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission (DEI) to support diversity, achieve equity, and foster inclusion for every member of this community, respecting all aspects of identities. The purpose of the Commission is to enhance and increase cooperation, understanding, and dialog among residents of diverse cultural, religious, socio-economic, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and to promote inclusion throughout the town. The Commission shall also critically consider intersections among these groups to facilitate learning, understanding, and unity. It is anticipated that the Commission will be a standing Commission.

Definitions¹

Diversity includes all of the similarities and differences among people, not limited to: race, gender identity, ethnicity, native or indigenous origin, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, appearance, language, accent, education, nationality, and political perspective or affiliation.

Diversity refers to population groups that have been historically underrepresented in socially, politically, or economically powerful institutions and organizations. These groups include, but are not restricted to populations of color, such as African Americans and Blacks, Latinx, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. They may also include lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender populations, people with disabilities and other groups.

Equity is an approach based in fairness to ensuring everyone is given equal opportunity; this means that resources may be divided and shared unequally to make sure that each person has a fair chance to succeed. Equity takes into account that people have different access to resources because of a system of oppression and privilege. Equity seeks to balance that disparity. Equity prioritizes efforts to ensure the most underserved and marginalized among us has as much of an opportunity to succeed as the most well-served and advantaged. By taking into account the various advantages and disadvantages that people face, we work to ensure that every person has an equal opportunity to succeed.

Inclusion is the dynamic state of operating in which diversity is leveraged to create a healthy, high-performing organization and community. Inclusion refers to the degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes within an organization or group. An inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It also enables

¹ Definitions in part excerpted from the LWVMA Toolkits for Members DEI/Resources

individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, engaged, motivated, and valued for who they are and for their contributions toward organizational and societal goals.

Membership

The DEI Commission shall be comprised of no fewer than seven (7) and no more than eleven (11) voting members, all residents of Concord, appointed by the Select Board for three-year, staggered terms (with terms of one-third of the members expiring each year). Members shall be reflective of the diversity of the Concord community. An active outreach program shall be initiated to ensure that the broadest range of residents is reached, with the goal that the ***majority of members shall be from historically underrepresented groups*** (as defined in the Mission Statement and Definitions above), with a range of expertise and experience. The more diverse the committee members are, the more viewpoints and opinions that can be taken into consideration. Members shall choose a Chair and Clerk. All meetings shall comply with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law, the Public Records Law, the Conflict-of-Interest Law, and all other applicable laws and regulations of the Commonwealth and the Town of Concord.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Gather first-hand experiences in Concord from historically disenfranchised and under-represented populations (including racial, ethnic, religious, etc.).
- Provide training for committee members to self-examine and recognize their own experience with historically disenfranchised populations and unconscious bias.
- Facilitate discussions and education forums for Concord residents and employers about issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Provide observations and identify areas of systemic racism in Concord. Develop recommendations of steps to be taken as individuals, organizations, and as a community to combat racism and embrace greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in Concord.
- Develop strategies and tools to assess the current racial climate in Concord (through surveys or other fact-gathering means) and to measure progress.
- Identify ways to promote awareness, engagement, and community building around diverse experiences and to create a more inclusive, welcoming community.
- Work in conjunction and in cooperation with other community, government, cultural and faith groups that are addressing DEI issues, so as to optimize the availability and use of resources.
- Suggest town-wide events or activities that foster cultural awareness and increase minority participation on government boards and committees.
- Periodically, and no less frequently than once every 6 months, brief the Select Board on progress made in identifying obstacles toward achieving DEI in Concord. Make recommendation to the Select Board to address problems that have been found. Assist with implementation of recommendations, as appropriate.
- In conjunction with the Select Board, periodically review and update the Commission's charge, in order to assure that its ongoing work is meaningful, targeted, effective and appropriate.