



OBSERVER REPORT

Task Force Against Discrimination _ March 10, 2022
LWVM Observer: Shari Pressman

All members present

Guests: Natalie Belli, Julia Ferreira, Kim Grad, Megan Sweeney, approximately 30 students

Police Chief Dennis King reported that a sergeant detective from Marblehead's Police Department was investigating an antisemitic drawing at the Veterans Memorial Middle School; Chief King saw it as an opportunity to educate students about fairness. He reported that the Affordable Housing event showed the historical perspective of discrimination in town and that it's important to provide a welcoming atmosphere and work with the community to show support.

Megan Sweeney of Power Up will sponsor Article 35 on the Warrant at Town Meeting and would like TFAD's support for the article. Power Up would like to adopt TFAD's diversity statement to place on various websites. Megan has contacted Gary Spiess, Town Moderator; Robin Michaud, Town Clerk; and Lisa Mead, Town Counsel. Members voted unanimously to support Article 35.

Kim Grad, Director of Abbot Public Library, invited everyone to Conversations on Race with Jessica Ralli and Megan Madison, authors of "Our Skin: A First Conversation About Race" on MONDAY, MARCH 21, Abbot Public Library, 235 Pleasant Street. The program will be offered in person and online via Zoom. Kim reported that the library now has Zoom capacity for 500. Space is limited to join in person. See the library's website to register.

Helaine noted that TFAD will speak on "No Place for Hate" at Town Meeting.

Celia Sliney, a junior at MHS and Student Representative to TFAD, hoped for more experiences with Black literature in school and spoke about the February Vacation Book Read: Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson. Natalie Belli, Grade 6 ELA/SS teacher at Village School, facilitated a discuss of the book with about 30 students who attended the meeting. Ideas noted included when to speak up and when to ignore in an uncomfortable situation, identity and belonging, importance of family and relationships

with siblings, whether culture and tradition or laws and rules are more likely to determine behavior, moral universe.

Kim Grad suggested additional books the students could read. Liz Pruett, Media Specialist at Village School, will organize future discussion groups.

Julia Ferreira reported that the MPS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team offered professional development opportunities to all staff in all schools and that student DEI groups were forming. She looks forward to working with TFAD. Question whether presentation with Principal Henry Turner is on YouTube for those who missed it.

Reece spoke about the Safe Schools Program and working with Jamie Bloch and Rec and Park on making youth sports more LGBTQ+ inclusive. On March 31 from 6-8pm in the MHS Auditorium, a panel discussion is planned with transgender athletes led by Jeff Perrotti, founding director of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ+ Students.

Candace announced that this year's Juneteenth event will tentatively be held on Friday afternoon, June 10. She accepted the request to emcee the event. She and Alexis Earp will represent TFAD, which voted unanimously to support the Juneteenth celebration.

Lou Meyi noted that Conversations on Race, which the Marblehead Racial Justice Team co-sponsored with Abbot Library, got good support. He announced that on March 23 at 10 am, the MRJT and Marblehead Public Schools will present original framed portraits of Harriet Tubman and John Lewis to the Lucretia and Joseph Brown School. The presentation is expected to last about 30 minutes. The portraits will remain at the Brown School for a year and then rotate yearly to each school in Marblehead.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 26 at 7pm. Usual meeting place is Jacobi Community Center Board Room. Location TBD depending on Covid protocol.