



Wisdom to make a difference.

College-City Commission

AGENDA

July 24, 2017

4:00 - 6:00 PM

***2nd Floor Conference Room
Keene City Hall***

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Introductions**
3. **Review Minutes from June 26, 2017**
4. **Keene State College Staff Presentations**
5. **Subcommittee Updates:**
 - a. Neighborhood Revitalization
 - b. Inclusiveness
6. **New and Other Business**
7. **Next Meeting – Monday, August 28, 2017 in the Madison Lounge of the Keene State College Young Student Center**
8. **Public Comment**
9. **Adjourn**

City of Keene
New Hampshire

COLLEGE CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, June 26, 2017

4:00 PM

Madison Lounge, KSC

Members Present:

Darryl Masterson, Co-Chair
Bart Sapeta, Co-Chair, City Councilor
Paula Jessup
Chris Cusack
Joshua Jarvis, Alternate
Robin Picard
Chris Hrynowski
Marcia Kayser
Dottie Morris (via telephone)

Staff Present:

Tara Kessler, Planner
Kim Schmidl-Gage
Lieutenant John Bates, Fire Prevention Officer

Members Not Present:

Bettina Chadbourne, Councilor
Phil Jones, Councilor
Dick Berry
Kelly Ricaurte

1) **Call to Order**

Co-Chair Masterson called the meeting to order at 4: 10 PM.

2) **Approval of Minutes – May 22, 2017**

Ms. Kayser made a motion to approve the minutes of May 22, 2017, which was seconded by Ms. Hrynowski and carried unanimously.

3) **City of Keene Staff Presentations**

a.) **Frank Richter, Housing Inspector**

Mr. Richter was unable to attend the meeting due to personal reasons.

b.) **Lieutenant John Bates, Fire Prevention Officer**

Ms. Kessler introduced Fire Prevention Officer, Lieutenant John Bates. Lieutenant Bates stated that he took over as the Fire Prevention Officer in early 2015. He reported that the working relationship between Code Enforcement and the Keene Fire Department has improved significantly since that time. Lieutenant Bates said that Code Enforcement and the Keene Fire Department have developed a strong working relationship where Code Enforcement will immediately notify him of any compliance issues. He said that due to this strong working relationship the standard of housing has come up to a good minimum standard. He noted that the Keene Fire Department and Code Enforcement are both still looking to improve this standard on a greater scale.

Lieutenant Bates reported that the City has started a city wide inspection program for all rental properties and businesses. He said that the department planned to conduct fire inspections in more than 1,600 buildings throughout the City. Lieutenant Bates said that this was to prevent fires before they occur. Councilor Sapeta asked if the inspections were mandatory. Lieutenant Bates replied that the Citywide inspection program is mandatory and that based on the RSA's, the Keene Fire Chief Mark Howard has the authority to conduct inspections. He noted that it would take approximately four years to complete all of the inspections. Lieutenant Bates said that the department is currently focusing on the city's larger apartment buildings.

Co-Chair Masterson asked if the facilities at KSC were part of the inspection program. Lieutenant Bates replied in the affirmative.

Ms. Xanthopoulos asked how the inspections with the fire department differed from the inspections from the City. Lieutenant Bates replied the inspections of the Fire Department were focused on access and egress. Mr. Cusack asked if Lieutenant Bates noted any trends in any of the neighborhoods in the City where certain problems seemed to exist. Lieutenant Bates replied that the issues he has seen have been spread out throughout the City. He said that the issues he has seen include hoarding, disabling smoke alarms, cleanliness and other issues. He noted that the most common occurrence was the disabling of a smoke alarms.

Ms. Picard reported that Lieutenant Bates was brought into the orientation for students living off campus this past year. She noted that this orientation was mandatory for students to attend and students would face a fine if they did not attend. She said that Lieutenant Bates held a presentation on fire safety at the orientation. In addition, Ms. Picard said that there is a monthly meeting held at KSC with herself, Lieutenant Bates, Code Enforcement, the Director of Student Conduct, the Keene Police Department and Campus Safety to take preventative measures before issues occurred. Co-Chair Sapeta asked if the meeting could be expanded to include other members of the community. Ms. Picard said that she would like to see KSC students participate in the monthly meetings.

Ms. Picard said that when there are issues, she will work with the landlords and the tenants to resolve them and decide if disciplinary action is necessary. She noted that students living off campus are subject to the same code of conduct as those who live on campus.

Ms. Hrynowski asked Lieutenant Bates if the City would be interested in having an intern from KSC. She noted that there were many students at KSC that were looking for internships with occupational safety. Lieutenant Bates replied that he is always open to the idea of student internships.

Lieutenant Bates reported that the State of New Hampshire received a grant for free smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. The City was one of the towns that signed up for the free smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. He explained that if anyone owned a home or resided in an owner occupied rental property they would receive a free installation of smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detectors. Lieutenant Bates reported that these installations would take place in 2017 and that there was enough money from the grant to cover the owner occupied homes in the City.

The Committee thanked John for his time and the helpful information he presented.

4) Subcommittee Reports

a) Neighborhood Revitalization

Co-Chair Sapeta reported that the Subcommittee had a great meeting with Housing Inspector, Frank Richter. He said that between Ms. Picard and Mr. Richter there was a good combination of explaining the work of Mr. Richter's department and KSC. Co-Chair Sapeta said that Mr. Richter provided a list of how many inspections were conducted last year, the number of violations and a list of properties that needed additional work completed. He reported that Ms. Picard would create a draft that contained all of this information for the next CCC meeting. Ms. Picard said that Mr. Richter reported that he saw a lot of fire safety issues and that the volunteer inspections were helpful in order to upgrade the housing. She said that people in the beginning were skeptical of the volunteer inspections but in the end people were welcoming the inspections. Ms. Picard said that Mr. Richter also discussed the best practices in Keene and having open communication. Mr. Cusack said that it was clearly evident that Mr. Richter's goal was to have safe housing for everyone.

b) Inclusiveness

Ms. Kayser reported that the Subcommittee met on June 12th and guest speaker Denise Burchsted was present for the meeting. She stated that Ms. Burchsted spoke to the Subcommittee about how to raise awareness of how people should treat indigenous people. Ms. Kayser reported that Ms. Burchsted declared a proclamation that October 12th was Indigenous People Restoration Day in Brattleboro, Vermont. Ms. Kayser said that the Subcommittee did discuss having this group present to the Subcommittee.

Ms. Kayser reported that the Subcommittee would hold a presentation on people of color for the Fall Festival. She said that the next Subcommittee would be held on July 10th at 4pm. The CCC decided to review the draft of Building an Inclusive Community at the next meeting.

5) City of Keene Boards and Committee Survey

Ms. Kessler provided the CCC with the Board Member Survey, which was created by the City Manager. She explained that the purpose of the survey was to assess city services provided to boards and commissions in order to ensure that the City is utilizing staff in the most efficient manner. Ms. Kessler asked the members of the CCC to fill out the survey and to turn in their responses to the minute taker.

6) New and Other Business

a) Presentations by City/College Staff at Future Meeting

Ms. Kim Schmidl-Gagne reported staff from Keene State College would be presenting at the next meeting.

7.) Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on July 24, 2017 at 4:00 PM in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of the City Hall.

Ms. Jessup stated that she was concerned that enrollment with KSC was down and wondered if there was a way that the City or the CCC could help improve the campus. She stated that Keene would not be what it is today without KSC. The Committee discussed the concern in the decrease of student enrollment.

9.) Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Co-Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:05 PM.

CCC Meeting Minutes
June 26, 2017

Respectfully submitted by,
Jennifer Clark, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Tara Kessler, Planner

DRAFT

Keene College-City Commission

Building an Inclusive Community

June 2016

INTRODUCTION

If Keene is to grow and thrive and be economically successful in the future, this will mean becoming a more inclusive and diverse community. Given the changing demographics of the United States, and the Monadnock region in particular, Keene will need to put some systems in place to adequately address these inevitable changes. After we submitted our Report and Recommendations for the original College-City Commission charges in the fall of 2016, President Huot and Mayor Lane further charged the Commission to explore how the City of Keene could create a welcoming community that is attractive to people of diverse backgrounds.

To that end, the College-City Commission participated in a facilitated discussion whereby we explored our issues and attitudes on diversity. It soon became apparent that the college has excellent resources for this but there are fewer in the community. We agreed that it would be a long, ongoing and evolving process and one that would involve creative ways to engage our current residents and newcomers of both entities in sessions to help educate and enlighten us all. It is essential to develop a sustainable and enduring plan to address this charge given to us by the President and Mayor.

THEMES

The four major themes of increasing diversity that we explored were:

1. Concerns
2. Benefits
3. Resources
4. Barriers

CONCERNS

Fears of: the unknown, potential conflicts, crime, "outsiders" taking jobs, less "... of the pie" becoming available, losing rights, becoming a minority in own community, danger/not feeling safe, some feeling different, not being accepted, being marginalized and harassed

Other concerns included:

The possibility of setting up laws/policies/rules that exclude groups of people based on majority vs. minority out of fear for something new or different

Having assumptions where our own beliefs need to change

Establishing and maintaining safety for those who may be perceived as different in religion, physical appearance, abilities, gender identification, country of origin, etc.

The difficulty of having diverse groups learning to come together, including language challenges, different values and traditions and cultures, while maintaining uniqueness and acknowledging that "birds of a feather like to flock together"

That unacknowledged fears will come out as anger

BENEFITS

Benefits of being more diverse include increased opportunities to celebrate our differences and how much we have in common as well as discovering new ideas and ways of thinking.

Other benefits include increased: resiliency, learning and personal growth opportunities, experiences, understanding, community strength, quality of life, and problem-solving ability.

With increased diversion, there is likely to be an infusion of a wide array of cultures, traditions, foods, opinions, knowledge and ideas, philosophical and religious beliefs. In general, ours could be an even more vital and interesting community.

RESOURCES

The current interest level, size and spirit of the community and college, open access to the city government process, the rich history of overcoming problems, our strong education system and well-versed and experienced people, and "a business community that wants diversity and should be willing to partner", all combine to make this an opportune time to make advances in our ability to improve our capacity for inclusion.

Among our other resources and supports are:

Keene State College, its Office of Diversity and Multiculturalism, The Cohen Center, the American Democracy Project, and wide offerings of clubs and programs such as Safe Space, Step Up, Common Ground, Candid Conversations, MVP, its LGBTQ community, and many more, its students, faculty and staff who bring so much from their various communities, and the College's willingness to share these resources with the Keene community

Antioch University of New England and community organizations including: churches, schools, MFS, MDS, other groups supporting those with mental health issues and disabilities, Historical Society of Cheshire County, Downtown merchants, Keene Chamber of Commerce, Keene Public Library, long standing City's Jonathan Daniels/Martin Luther King committee, Jonathan Daniels Center, Keene Police and Emergency Services, Cheshire Medical Center, Keene Recreation Department's cricket, soccer and Special Olympics programs and support, multi-cultural entertainment at KSC and the Colonial Theatre, a variety of ethnic restaurants, the Fall Festival on diversity, local support groups, and Brattleboro's Root Justice Center

BARRIERS

Lack of recognition that there is any issue, resistance to change, ignorance, fear of the unknown, insecurities, prejudice, stubbornness, isolation, narrow focus in our lives, lack of experience in spending time with others who are not the same, little economic diversity, "formal (lacking) way of working between College and City to move this forward"

Lack of opportunities to come here and limited job opportunities, current lack of diversity, few services for different groups (ethnic stores, etc.), lack of adequate support services in the City, cultural and language barriers, lack of "critical mass" for minority group support, laws and regulations,

After reviewing the results of our exercise, and recognizing the complexity of this topic, we suggest the following short, medium, and long-term recommendations. Given the current national climate on this topic there is a sense of urgency for some of our current residents.

residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Short Term (0-6 months)

- Community Conversation, April 18, 2017 - Completed
- Trans 101 or other LGBTQ topic Fall 2017
- Support for Green Dot Bystander Training at Cheshire Medical Center, Fall 2017
- Coordination with Educational director, Vicky Pittman at the Colonial Theater (and Historical Society of Cheshire County) for Monadnock Fall Festival on Saturday, September 30, 2107 screening of NH related films followed by discussions about racial diversity (examples of films Lost Boundaries and Shadows Fall North)
- Research methods for Keene to reassure and protect Keene immigrant and refugee residents who feel unsafe
- Include a representative from AUNE on the Building Inclusive Community subcommittee. This was done in April 2017.

Medium Term (6 months - I year)

- Spring 2018 series of workshops:
 - Collaboration between City of Keene, KSC, AUNE, Cheshire Medical Center
 - Possible collaborators and/or presenters would include:
 - Jim Waller and others at KSC Cohen Center
 - Jim Gruber and Abigail Walton at AUNE

Possible topics include:

- Inclusiveness and Diversity
 - Social justice/action
 - How to talk to children about diversity
 - How to be an activist
 - History of indigenous people in the Monadnock region
 - New Americans in Keene: Focus on new immigrants and refugees
- Research models of successful inclusion and diversity efforts (best practices) in college towns

-Compile a comprehensive list of Keene area resources

-Collect data - Conduct a Keene climate survey (similar to KSC Campus Climate Survey) via a variety of modes (including, but not limited to survey and focus groups)

Long Term (1 year or greater) Community/business survey

-Use data from Keene Climate Survey to inform future work – develop a plan of action

-Conduct an inventory of what Keene businesses are currently doing to promote and expand diversity. In other words, what are the larger businesses doing to successfully recruit and retain a diverse workforce and what resources do they have available to acclimate new employees to the Keene environment? Also, what steps are they taking to prepare current employees for the potential demographic shift?

-Continue to offer educational experiences and dialogue opportunities for community members – Need to develop a process to determine topics

-Examine policies, procedures and practices within the city of Keene and at Keene State College using an equity lens to make sure these are in line with our goals, mission and objectives associated with diversity, multiculturalism and social justice