
GoToMeeting | Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
4 So. Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT

AGENDA

In accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B and social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC to slow community spread of COVID-19, this meeting is physically closed to the public. The public may listen to the meeting live by calling 1 (872) 240-3212 and using the access code 487-408-021. Additionally, an archive video recording of the meeting will be made available at <https://mansfieldct.gov/video> for 12 months.

Public Comment will be accepted by email at FerraraMT@mansfieldct.org or by USPS mail at Town of Mansfield, Attention: Monica Ferrara, 4 South Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06268 and must be received prior to the meeting (public comment received after the meeting will be shared at the next meeting).

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
April 14, 2021
- 4. MEMBER REPORTS**
- 5. OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. Equity Review Update
 - B. Emancipation Day Recognition Update
 - C. MLK Mural Project
- 6. NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. LGBTQIA+ Month
 - B. Drafting an Equity Statement
 - C. Naming of New Elementary School
- 7. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES**
 - A. Town Charge
 - B. Communications and Outreach
- 8. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

9. REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Community Conversations Proposal – Jane Fried, Vice Chair

10. ADJOURNMENT

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MINUTES

In accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B and social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC to slow community spread of COVID-19, this meeting is physically closed to the public. The public may listen to the meeting live by calling 1 (646) 749-3122 and using the access code 561-914-197. Additionally, an archive video recording of the meeting will be made available at <https://mansfieldct.gov/video> for 12 months.

Public Comment will be accepted by email at FerraraMT@mansfieldct.org or by USPS mail at Town of Mansfield, Attention: Monica Ferrara, 4 South Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06268 and must be received prior to the meeting (public comment received after the meeting will be shared at the next meeting).

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mitoma called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Bruder, Fried, Lorenz, Nocton, Mitoma, Vaughn

Excused: Daggett, Evans, Lapuk

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 10, 2021

Minutes were approved on consensus.

4. MEMBER REPORTS

Ms. Lorenz reported that she attended the Black Haven Webinar. She thoroughly enjoyed the webinar and the interdisciplinary approach of the game.

Ms. Fried reported that she is working on a discussion series put on by the Town of Suffield about getting people to talk to each other on a range of issues. She would like for us to add a program like this to our next agenda. She also attended a community conversations group on interracial dialogue, and she will be running a community conversations training program for the Windham Interfaith Coalition.

Ms. Nocton reported that attended she the Black Haven Webinar and part of the NAACP webinar. There is a guest speaker, Endawnis Spears, tomorrow night

(4/15/2021) for EO Smith. There is also another guest speaker, Arshay Cooper, in a couple of weeks, which individuals need to pre-register for this event. Ms. Nocton also reported that her students put something together for the Human Rights Symposium that is going to be at UCONN next week.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Equity Review Update: Draft Survey

The Commission reviewed the survey and agreed on discussed and made adjustments to wording, categories, and questions.

Members agreed on consensus that Mr. Mitoma would finalize the survey and send it out to the Town Managers Office to receive final approval.

B. Emancipation Day Recognition

Tabled until the next meeting on consensus.

C. MLK Mural Project Update

Mr. Mitoma provided an update on the MLK Mural project. Ms. Mitoma joined the meeting as a representative from CORE. Mr. Mitoma will continue to reach out to other Town Committees and entities to discuss partnering with the HRC for this project. It was agreed on consensus that the HRC will create a subcommittee for Management of this Project.

D. Windham Hospital Letter

Tabled until the next meeting on consensus.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Drafting an Equity Statement

Tabled until the next meeting on consensus.

B. Naming of New Elementary School

Tabled until the next meeting on consensus.

7. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. Town Charge

Nothing additional.

B. Communications and Outreach

Nothing additional.

8. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned on consensus at 8:38 pm.

DRAFT

TO: Mansfield Town Council
FROM: Mansfield Human Rights Commission
CC: Ryan Aylesworth, Town Manager
DATE: May 12, 2020
RE: Juneteenth Independence Day Proclamation

Background

On June 19, 1865, Union troops entered Galveston Bay, Texas, and announced to the 250,000 enslaved residents that they had been liberated by the Emancipation Proclamation. Although it was two and a half years since President Abraham Lincoln had decreed freedom for all enslaved people held in the South, this date when the news finally reached the western-most state in the Confederacy, became known “Juneteenth” and has been celebrated by the African American community as a “second independence day”¹ ever since. The date is symbolic, coming between the official enactment of the Emancipation Proclamation and the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment of the Constitution, which outlawed slavery nationally, on December 6, 1865. Even so, Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day, Juneteenth Independence Day, or Black Independence Day, has come to represent the triumph of the African American community over the crime of slavery and the long, ongoing struggle for real freedom in the United States.

Community-based celebration of Juneteenth began as early as 1866, when free black communities marked the day with cookouts, speeches, music, parades and prayers.² Statewide governmental recognition only came beginning in 1980, when Texas adopted the holiday. Since then, most states have observed the holiday in some form. In 2003, the Connecticut Legislature directed the Governor to declare the observance of “Juneteenth Independence Day” each year on the closest Saturday to June nineteenth.³ In recent years, many towns in Connecticut have also proclaimed the holiday, including West Hartford⁴ and Manchester, which in 2020 made the day an official Town holiday with a paid day off for town employees.⁵

The recognition of Juneteenth in Connecticut provides residents the opportunity to remember and commemorate not only the national legacy of slavery and emancipation, but the state’s own troubled history of enslavement. Slavery was practiced from the beginning of the colony

¹ <https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/historical-legacy-juneteenth>

² <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R44865.pdf>

³ <https://law.justia.com/codes/connecticut/2012/title-10/chapter-164/section-10-29a/>

⁴

[https://go.boarddocs.com/ct/westh/Board.nsf/files/BVN2RZ03826F/\\$file/Juneteenth%20Independence%20Day%20Resolution%20-%20Substitute.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/ct/westh/Board.nsf/files/BVN2RZ03826F/$file/Juneteenth%20Independence%20Day%20Resolution%20-%20Substitute.pdf)

⁵ <https://www.courant.com/community/manchester/hc-news-manchester-juneteenth-20201111-etdx7rt2c5efhdjmbww5jifa5a-story.html>

in 1600s, with both African and Native people subject to enslavement. The institution was fully abolished in Connecticut only in 1848, having pursued a painfully slow policy of “gradual emancipation” beginning in 1784. Even in ‘freedom’, the state’s black residents were subject to marginalization and oppression, excluded from schooling and certain professions, and legally disenfranchised in 1818.

As with the rest of the state, slavery is a part of Mansfield’s history. The first non-native settlers of the town of Windham, of which Mansfield was originally a part, were Englishman John Cates and the man he enslaved, Jo. The First Church of Mansfield baptismal records identify several enslaved individuals as part of the town’s original inhabitants: Betty, Mary, Prince, Tobijah, Fanny, Peg, Titus, Kate, and Charles. These men, women, and children were held in bondage by town leaders: Shubael Conant, James Salter, and Samuel Gurley. Unlike the these prominent white residents, we know little of the lives and experiences of those they enslaved.

By officially recognizing and observing Juneteenth, the town of Mansfield has the opportunity to contribute to rectifying this neglect. Efforts to uncover the early history of slavery in Mansfield is currently underway through a partnership between the community based group COR Mansfield, Mansfield Public Schools, E.O. Smith, and the Witness Stones Project. The Human Rights Commission is also leading a coalition seeking to erect a mural in town to honor the life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Town recognition of Juneteenth would contribute to this ongoing work to confront the legacy of slavery, anti-black racism, and white supremacy, and work to build a more just and equitable town.

Recommendation:

The Mansfield Human Rights Commission recommends that the Town Council authorize Mayor Antonia Moran to issue the attached proclamation.

If the Council concurs with this recommendation, the following motion is in order:

Move, to authorize the Mayor to issue the attached Proclamation recognizing Juneteenth.

Attachment

- 1) Juneteenth Proclamation

Proclamation
Town of Mansfield, Connecticut

WHEREAS, the United States of America, in declaring its independence on July 4, 1776, proclaimed "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness*"; and

WHEREAS, despite this proclamation, millions of individuals of African descent were held in bondage in these lands, constituting a grave crime against humanity; and

WHEREAS, the abolitionist leader and former slave Frederick Douglass spoke to white Americans of the Fourth of July holiday: "*I am not included within the pale of glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common. The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought light and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn...*;" and

WHEREAS, slavery was practiced in Connecticut until finally precluded by law in 1848; and

WHEREAS, slavery was practiced in Mansfield into the 19th century; and

WHEREAS, on January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, providing for that all persons held as slaves in all parts of the Confederacy "*shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free*;" and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, the final Confederate state in rebellion, and declared: "*The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property, between former masters and slaves and the connection heretofore existing between them, becomes that between employer and hired labor*;" and

WHEREAS, in 1866, Texans began marking the Juneteenth holiday with community gatherings and events, such as parades, religious services, speeches and readings, cookouts, and music; and

WHEREAS, communities around the country have increasingly adopted the 19th day of June as "Juneteenth Independence Day" to celebrate the end of chattel slavery and the resilience of the African American community; and

WHEREAS, the Connecticut General Assembly has directed the Governor to observe Juneteenth Independence Day since 2003; and

WHEREAS, in issuing the Proclamation recognizing Juneteenth Independence Day in 2020, Governor Ned Lamont stated, *“Simply recognizing a day and educating people about our country’s history is not enough. We must do more. We must take action to reach the goal of a more equal and just society;”* and

WHEREAS, the Town of Mansfield has recognized its responsibility to respect, protect, and fulfill the human rights of all residents, and to promote equity and racial justice.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MANSFIELD, CONNECTICUT:

- 1) That the 19th of June of each year to be Juneteenth Independence Day.
- 2) That on or around June 19th of each year the Town of Mansfield will support events that commemorate and celebrate of the end of African slavery in Mansfield, Connecticut, and the United States of America,
- 3) That the Town of Mansfield will direct the Town Manager to work with Town departments, the Human Rights Commission, and other stakeholders—including, but not limited to, scholars, historians, community leaders, and human rights activists—to develop activities and events to commemorate and celebrate Juneteenth Independence Day.

DRAFT

TO: Mansfield Town Council

FROM: Mansfield Human Rights Commission

CC: Ryan Aylesworth, Town Manager; Katherine Bell, Youth Services Supervisor

DATE: May 12, 2020

RE: LGBTQIA+ Pride Month Proclamation

Background

On June 28, 1969 patrons of the Stonewall Inn resisted unfair and inhumane raids against their queer space. The following year, Frank Kameny, Lilli Vincenz and other queer activists organized the first “U.S. Gay Pride Week and March” on the anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. Since then, each June has served as an opportunity for the LGBTQIA+ community, activists, and allies all around the world to commemorate the achievements of the on-going movement for LGBTQIA+ rights and important work still to be done to advance justice and equity for all. While Stonewall Rebellion was not the first demonstration in the queer rights movement, it is widely renowned as a major tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement and its anniversary has become synonymous with the celebration of Pride Month by the LGBTQIA+ community.

A key demand of activists, and a central theme of Pride Month, is to reject enforced invisibility and the shame such oppression is supposed to impose. Raising and displaying the iconic Pride Flag is an important symbol of visibility and inclusion. The symbol of the rainbow has long been a cross-cultural archetype of hope and it remains so today for the LGBTQIA+ community. Gilbert Baker, creator of the original Rainbow Flag described the intent as follows: “A Rainbow Flag was a conscious choice, natural and necessary. The rainbow came from earliest recorded history as a symbol of hope. ...A Rainbow Flag would be our modern alternative to the pink triangle.” This flag flew at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade celebration on June 25, 1978. Since then, Gilbert’s design has been adopted, adapted, and revised to represent the broad diversity of the LGBTQIA+ community such that no single flag can be said to be the “official” Pride Flag. For instance, on June 8, 2017, the city of Philadelphia adopted a revised version of the flag that adds black and brown stripes to the top of the six-color flag, to highlight people of color in the LGBTQIA+ community. This has been adopted by many to highlight intersectional solidarity and diversity.

“The fabric of freedom is an open weave, with spaces left for us to insert our own versions of the story.” – Gilbert Baker.

Despite progress achieved by the community over the past 50 years, ongoing challenges to the basic human rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals demonstrate the need to highlight Mansfield’s commitment to equal dignity. In previous years, led by Youth Services Supervisor Katherine Bell, Mansfield has recognized Pride Month to demonstrate this commitment. Therefore, the

Mansfield Human Rights Commission recommends the Town of Mansfield extend and deepen its efforts to recognize Pride Month and invite all of its residents to demonstrate acceptance, affirmation, and celebration of its proud LGBTQ community, by proclaiming June 2021 as LGBTQIA+ Pride Month.

Recommendation:

The Mansfield Human Rights Commission recommends that the Town Council authorize Mayor Antonia Moran to issue the attached proclamation.

If the Council concurs with this recommendation, the following motion is in order:

Move, to authorize the Mayor to issue the attached Proclamation recognizing June as LGBTQIA+ Pride Month.

Attachment

- 1) Pride Month Proclamation

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Antonia Moran, Mayor of the Town of Mansfield, Connecticut and on behalf of the Mansfield Town Council, hereby proclaim and recognize June 2020 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Plus (LGBTQIA+) Pride Month in the Town of Mansfield and urge citizens to actively promote the principles of equality, love, and acceptance throughout the community.

1.3 Develop and Adopt a Statement on Equity

15 Points

Action Updates

This action is available for the **current certification cycle** and was newly added in 2021.

Objective

Promote community cohesion and representation creating and adopting a shared vision for equity in your municipality.

Resources and assistance are available for this action. [Visit our "Equity Resources page" for more information.](#)

Complementary Actions:

- [Optimize for Equity](#)
- [Participate in Equity Training](#)

What to Do

1. Develop, adopt (through municipal governing body and/or board of selectmen), and publicly share a statement on your community's shared vision for equity. Your statement should be unique to your town, written through a lens that addresses both the town's specific history with inequity/injustice and the current challenges being faced. You should consider current municipal processes that promote inclusion and cohesion and that ensure adequate representation of all community members **(15 points)**.

You must use the following concepts within your town's equity statement:

- Recognition of a need for systemwide change, historic and current weaknesses in systems in place, and the need for a more equitable path going forward
- Your town's commitment to protecting current and future residents, with special consideration for marginalized communities
- A vision for future municipal processes that will address past and current inequities

Submit: Your town's equity statement, the date it was adopted by the municipal governing body and associated documentation of the adoption (such as meeting minutes or agenda), and a description of outreach conducted to make the statement publicly accessible.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Websites, Maps, Inventories, Checklists, Assessments, Plans, Ordinances, Policies, Regulations and Resolutions" (see ["Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document](#) for submission requirements).

Timeframe for Credit

Actions can either be "New" or considered for "Rolling Credit."

New Action Credit. Any action completed within the past three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification) is eligible for potential certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you may not claim New Action Credit for items that previously received credit.

Rolling Credit. For any action older than three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification), you must demonstrate ongoing, currently relevant, and meaningful impact in your community to be considered for certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you must apply for Rolling Credit for any item that previously received credit, even if it was completed within the past three years.

View the ["Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document](#) for detailed submission requirements.

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "Partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. For additional information, please see the ["Partners Guidance Document"](#).

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Municipal staff from all departments as well as representatives from existing local commissions, committees, or community organizations; civic leaders, representatives from neighborhood organizations, seniors and youth; and community members who rely on or are impacted by public services and amenities, including transportation, built infrastructure, local municipal operations, planning, natural resources, land conservation, economic development and retention, housing, arts and culture, food systems, public health, community engagement, equity, etc. may be helpful in implementing this action.

Funding

If available, below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the [Sustainable CT Grants Portal](#), which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the [Support for Your Town](#) page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- [The Funders Network Partners for Places Grant](#)
- If applied to Sustainable CT action: Conduct Health Impact Assessments: [Connecticut Health Foundation](#)

Resources

- [Sustainable CT Equity Support](#)
- [Glastonbury's Resolution](#)
- [Simsbury's Resolution](#)

Why This Matters

Building inclusive and equitable communities is a process that recognizes the intrinsic value of each member of a community and the need to connect; and is achieved when social, economic, and political opportunities are not predicted based upon a person's race, gender, age, or sexual identity. To build communities that embrace equity, Sustainable CT cities and towns will create a table where diverse relationships are welcomed and valued, where decisions are made collectively, and where success will be measured by having a variety of perspectives and experiences represented. Sustainable CT encourages cities and towns to include marginalized voices in their decision-making processes, and to specifically identify barriers to access for marginalized residents in order to identify and respond to community priorities.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS PROPOSAL
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
Submitted by Jane Fried, Vice-Chair
May 12, 2021

The best way to build trust in a community is through on-going personal relationships. These relationships should be respectful and give people opportunities to understand each other in the context of their mutual concerns. Areas of mutual concern often include schools, faith communities, places of business, town government, transportation and roads as well as community groups and activities

Creating opportunities for people to meet each other and discuss issues that matter to them can be one significant function of the HRC. The Town of Mansfield is very diverse but groups do not often have opportunities to get to know each other very well. I suggest that the HRC initiate a series of programs that give our residents opportunities to learn about the different groups of people who live here, their needs and the many ways in which each group contributes to our dynamic community.

1. Community Conversations – a series of 4-6 presentations to occur via WebEx or Zoom, open to the entire community. Speakers will be invited to inform listeners about their specific group or issue and its needs and interests. Potential topics include
 - people living with disabilities (especially students),
 - farming in Mansfield (history and current situation of local farmers),
 - being Muslim or Hindu in Mansfield,
 - being African American in Mansfield
 - Being white in Mansfield (the author of “Waking up White” has committed to working with us)
 - Being a member of the GLBTX community in Mansfield
 - “Dreamers” (people with DACA status) in our area
 - “Six Degrees of Separation,” a presentation on communication styles and mutual understanding among different groups (Speaker is willing to work with us. I have heard this presentation and it is excellent.)
2. The HRC is currently developing a community survey to identify human rights concerns in Mansfield. Once we have data from this survey we will have more information about the kinds of programs we would like to present to the community.
3. The program would occur in the early evening about once every two weeks between January and March, beginning with the Martin Luther King celebration and presentation of the mural which is currently being planned.
4. One person would moderate each program. Participants would use the chat function to ask the presenters questions and the moderator would screen the questions. All questioners would be anonymous.
5. The budget for this program would be about \$10,000, most of which would cover the costs of speakers. Typical cost of a speaker for a program like this is \$500-\$750, but people who are well known often charge more.
6. Sources of funding: There are several local foundations, one bank and a number of community partners who will be approached to collaborate with us including the Downtown Partnership, the UConn Agricultural Extension and the Mansfield Public Schools.

I am very sorry that I cannot attend this meeting. I am submitting this proposal to the HRC for consideration and additional thoughts. I look forward to discussing it with you at our next meeting in June. Thank you.