

Community Alliance of West Haven
Special (Virtual) Meeting
Monday, February, 1st, 2021 at 7pm
West Haven, Connecticut

Start Time 7:13
Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call of Members: McGee, Patterson, Hamilton, Johnston (no quorum/can't take any action)
Absent: Last, Perno, Fleming, Bane

Celebration of Black History: McGee shares history of BHM inception (See tape)
McGee makes public the statement regarding online problems with Hoskie and public and reaffirms CAWH purpose/goals. Cites Alliance members' words from past used. (see tape)

Public Session (see tape for specifics)

- Letter Read into record from Antoinette Cameron
- Elinor Slomba 18 Fourth Ave Comment: Mentions a play she saw, cites a book for white audiences re: white supremacy, we are all socialized in racism....the goal is to learn. Important work. Mentions Mubarak Solemane and occasion to reflect. Patterns of conduct that we become socialized into.
- Samantha Degenarro 97 Holcomb Street, cites Johnston "we need to get comfortable with being uncomfortable" standards are not held equally, extra scrutiny that comes with leadership. Need to move forward. Ego and hurt feelings don't help. Name calling and going to jail are different. Would love to see ways we could help people's lives. Cites kids, bus stops to grocery, more important work to be done
- Monica 83 Stevens avenue: wanted to hear about police policies. Choose words wisely. I was saddened about CAWH was trying to be married to outside groups. Don't be discouraged from the important work.
- Shawnette James 59 fern street Referred by Maureen from Health Department. Excited about what she's hearing regarding work on racism and the changes that are coming.
- Jalen Hoskie 326 Washington Ave. Doesn't condone what police have done nor the backlash his mother received. Upset that not one person on alliance stood up for her on Facebook. Addresses Brandon directly. Says Brandon should have turned comments off. Mentions his mother as being defamed on BLM cites. His mother doesn't feel safe. (see tape for details)

Public session closed at 7:46

COVID 19- Vaccination

- Brainstorming educational and active ways to inform the community of COVID-19's vaccination process.
- Things to know: Registration, physical effects, should I be vaccinated?

Dr. Muhammad and Maureen from Health Department (see tape)

- Educating BIPOC community and reckoning with history of BIPOC people
- Concern (Mistrust) is valid, but we need to be honest and transparent.....vaccination will get economy and schools going. Get the word out to seniors.
- Events at the Italian American club. 65 and over is next phase. Wanted a mobile clinic. Limited vaccines. Visit City Website. No formalized plan for transportation of seniors. They don't advertise b/c people would show up and have to be turned away.
- Brandon: Minority communities, does DPH have any research data on vaccines? Is there a plan to research that? Dr Muhammad we cannot predict symptoms per ppl, vaccination helps boost immunity so you don't end up in ICU. Minority studies on-going or not being done.
- We know that vaccine works. Severity reduced by vaccination. Still too early to say..... Federal mandates and coherent message was missing in last administration. Patterson asks how many people in West Haven have been vaccinated. 14,000 (12%)
- VAMS--once registered, it lets you know when you can go. Gives site options.
- Caller question: will survivors get the vaccine? Yes, they should schedule for vaccine.
- Caller question: new variant. Dr. M says vaccine should cover it.
- Radius of other sites....Hillhouse Yale West Campus...don't underestimate local health dept
- Dr. Muhamad: Convey information in multiple languages! Awareness and education matters the most.
- Patterson: is there a plan to publicize anticipated reaction to gain confidence. Have you guys been vaccinated?
- Maureen had first dose...no reaction. Second dose: fever, chills possible. CDC and state has lit WH can post. Haven people leave with second appointment made and with lit on possible side effects.
- McGee: we need to build trust in the community overall. Establish relationship overall.
- Email health department Covid19@westhaven-ct.gov
- Robbin: senior residents that can't get out. Is there a plan? Maureen says no plan right now. State to give guidance.
- Maureen: Sites that don't follow protocol have been shut down.

C.A.W.H. Closing Remarks

McGee, Patterson, Johnston, Hamilton speak (see tape)

Adjournment Time (approximately 8:30, lost wifi at end of meeting due to storm)

Public Letter Emailed in:

Antoinette Cameron
89 Coleman St. Apt. 326
West Haven, CT. 06516

To whom it may concern,

I was saddened and disturbed by the events that played out in our community via social media over the last few days. An initial inquest for information concerning an event related to our city's police department turned into a gross display of immaturity and name calling. I am writing this letter to call attention back to the intended purpose of this committee.

As I sat in on several meetings, I felt inspired and hopeful for change. Though there were differences in opinions on how the Community Alliance could affect change, there at least was an acknowledgement that something needed to be done and quickly. Hearing that the resolution to declare racism a public health emergency in our town was passed reassured me that we were heading in the right direction and that our protests and complaints weren't in vain. However, this weekend's exchanges have cast a shadow over the work that remains to be done.

The work to cultivate an equitable society for our fellow westies is far too important to be thrown away over a few lost tempers and a war of words. The decisions made by the individuals involved, including a councilwoman, were very disappointing, and yet they highlight a very important issue, one that should be one the primary focus of this committee. Recent events have shown us that on a national level, there is a huge divide in beliefs. As a country, we have allowed this to go on far too long but this is a reflection of who we have become in the town of West Haven; a community divided by their experiences, wallets, hardships and perspectives.

An alliance implies that there will be cooperation between all parties involved. I have hope that this committee can and will unite the westies of all factions of our community. We must proceed with civility, transparency, and respect! I humbly request that all members of the Community Alliance remember what the purpose of this committee is and selflessly place the interests of the community over their emotions. We have far too much work to do to be distracted!

Sincerely,

Antoinette Cameron