

Hinesburg Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Committee

Charter

Approved February 1, 2023

Purpose:

To create an inclusive and more welcoming Hinesburg

Charge:

Resolution of Inclusion that the Hinesburg Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Committee (The Committee) operates under

https://www.hinesburg.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif6691/f/uploads/town_of_hinesburg_declaration_of_inclusion.pdf

Mission:

Develop tools, frameworks, and recommendations that the town can/should use as it seeks to establish a culture of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging across all aspects of town governance and organization (committees, departments, volunteer organizations)

Scope:

The Committee work will be to assist the town in evaluating its operations for inequities and areas in need of a diversity lens. Serves as a resource to provide guidance for town management, including but not limited to committees, the Selectboard etc., across town government

Core Values:

The Committee will be in a relationship with the community

The Committee strives for civic excellence

The Committee acknowledges that institutional and systemic racism exists and the town of Hinesburg is strengthened through diversity

Diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging should be embedded in the culture of Hinesburg and the governance process

The Committee wants the town to recognize the humanity of everyone who lives here

Strategy:

The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee (hereinafter referred to as The Committee) is a committee of the Town of Hinesburg. The Committee will seek and receive feedback to make informed recommendations to the town through a diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging (DEIB) lens. The Committee will intentionally encourage voices that are not heard and elevate the feedback of marginalized groups regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability and socioeconomic status.

Intention:

The Committee intends to improve the town through town governance by examining the structure through a DEIB lens and then provide town government with feedback and recommendations to the Town Manager and Selectboard including but not limited to policy, procedure, and scope of committee work.

The work will be informed by people who live here, including by marginalized groups and will use tools like the town web page to communicate the work transparently to the community.

Membership:

1. The Hinesburg Selectboard shall appoint all members to The Committee. Members shall be in alignment with the mission and in accordance with committee meeting norms.
2. The Committee may recruit and recommend members to the Selectboard. The Selectboard is charged with building The Committee and shall seek a mix of volunteers with the following characteristics:
 - Demonstrates a commitment to equity among all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, or expression, age, or disability and socioeconomic status.
 - Who will actively participate in the mission of The Committee
3. The Committee shall have no fewer than five (5) and as many as nine (9) members and shall include the Hinesburg Assistant Town Manager.
4. Members will serve a three-year term on The Committee commencing in April of each calendar year with up to two consecutive reappointments.

Administration:

1. The Committee shall meet twice a month on the first and third Tuesday of the month and may choose to meet more frequently as deemed necessary to accomplish its responsibilities in appropriate time frames. Additional meetings or requests to reschedule will be approved by consensus. The Committee will typically meet in person with virtual options as needed.
2. A quorum is defined as a simple majority of voting members (whether virtual or in person).
3. Committee consensus is reached when, after discussion, the majority of the members present agree that an action should or should not be recommended.
4. Members shall rotate responsibilities of facilitating the meetings and recording the minutes.
5. Some of the work of The Committee may be conducted by subcommittee or work groups as appointed by and responsible to The Committee. Member(s) of The Committee may participate on subcommittees or work groups.
6. At least annually, The Committee will review progress toward past goals and set goals and objectives for upcoming year to ensure alignment with Mission and Core Values
7. At least every other year The Committee will review and reassess the adequacy of this Charter and make changes to ensure efficient and effective progress

Committee Member Responsibilities:

1. Regularly attend committee meetings and, if appointed, workgroup meetings.
2. Devote the time and engagement necessary to accomplish committee goals.
3. Commit to ongoing activities to build awareness and knowledge of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging principles.
4. Appropriately represent The Committee and the principles of DEIB internally and externally.
5. Use a DEIB lens when making all decisions related to the work of The Committee.

6. The Committee is responsible for recommending actions and/or activities to the Town Manager's office and Selectboard.

Meeting Norms and Guidelines:

1. Listen actively – respect others when they are talking.
2. Speak from your own experience and offer reasoning behind your thinking.
3. Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks – focus on ideas.
4. Participate to the fullest of your ability – growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.
5. The goal is not to agree – it is to gain a deeper understanding.
6. Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses – they can be as disrespectful as words.
7. Ask questions for clarification to help avoid making assumptions.
8. Engage active listening with non-committee members to promote active discussions with all persons present.
9. Balance your participation - speak and listen.
10. Clarify when you are advocating vs offering an idea.
11. Say it now, in the room. Avoid waiting till later to raise an issue.
12. Ask for help. It's okay not to know.

