



Town of Bridgewater Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee

May 19, 2026

7:30 PM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84086517410>

MEETING AGENDA

Disclosure: Pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2020, An Act Relative to Extending Certain Covid-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, and the June 30, 2027, extension granted by Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this meeting for the Town of Bridgewater will be fully remote and accessible to the public through remote participation to the greatest extent possible. No in-person attendance is permitted. Citizens who wish to tune in to the meeting may do so via Zoom.

- A. Call to Order**
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - a) December 3, 2025
 - b) March 24, 2026
- C. Public Comment**
- D. New Business**
 - a) Town Council Presentation Updates & Discuss Scheduling
 - b) Progress on Survey - Update from members
- E. Old Business**
- F. Additional Items for Discussion**
- G. Adjournment of Meeting**

DEIB Committee / Dec. 3rd Minutes

A. Call to Order at 7:04p

- a. Present: Ashley Hansen-Brown, Phil Nichols, Jane Meyrick, Joshua McGraw, Sherley Phillips

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. November 12th, 2025

C. Public Comment

D. New Business

- a. Committee Members' Reports on Assigned Tasks
 - i. Phil: Harvard University offers a grad level certificate for DEIB for \$550 per person, but they don't have funds to support it.
 - ii. Shirley: Looking into grant funding, specifically nonprofit funding.
 - 1. Didn't see much available.
 - 2. Will continue to look, especially for new grants opening up in January.
 - 3. Looked into Mass Cultural Council funding.
 - iii. Ashley: Working on the presentation for the town council meeting.
 - 1. Introduction of committee members (photos optional).
 - 2. History of the committee.
 - 3. Data from surveys showing identity-based mistreatment and lack of inclusivity.
 - 4. Quotes from survey participants.
 - 5. Strategic goals and current priorities (creating a town belonging survey and potentially collaborating with BCCR to host a belonging forum).
 - 6. "Creating a town belonging survey and potentially collaborating with BCCR to host the belonging forum."
 - iv. Jane: Review Survey & Analysis Drafts
 - 1. A template was developed to analyze the data, using AI to generate generalized questions; a starting point and subject to change.

2. Two lists were created: a comprehensive list with subcategories (social connections, trust and civic engagement, etc.) and a shorter sample version; a starting point and subject to change.
 3. Both versions include a rating frequency scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) and an open-ended question for qualitative feedback; a starting point and subject to change.
- b. Subcommittees as a Solution
- i. Subcommittees can be created to work on specific tasks without violating open meeting laws.
 - ii. Creating a temporary subcommittee would require a posted agenda, but meetings could occur in public places like the library.
 - iii. Creating a subcommittee doesn't have to be a permanent thing.
- c. Discussion of Action Items for Future DEIB Agenda Items
- i. Each member should review the survey items, make notes, and jot down ideas for the next meeting to decide on the questions.
 - ii. Jane should consider the subcommittee option and whether she wants to support it.
 1. If Jane wants Josh to send back any type of notes or anything that they have on her surveys, he can definitely do it that way and interim.

E. Additional Items for Discussion

- a. Discussion of Presentation Findings
- i. A committee member was surprised that people don't feel satisfied with certain situations.
 - ii. Consolidating categories related to treatment by neighbors or police was suggested.
- b. Sharing Ideas and Contact Information
- i. A member wishes there was a way to share ideas and partner with each other between meetings to have something "salable" to discuss.
 - ii. They want to be able to share contact information to reach out in the interim between meetings.
 - iii. Josh's response was to bring it up in a meeting.

- c. Open Committee Rules and Violations
 - i. Concern that meeting outside of official committee meetings would violate open committee rules.
 - ii. Any information shared can be done through Josh as a conduit to maintain a public record.
 - iii. It would be great to have each other's contact information to better prepare documents or launch a program.
- d. Clarification
 - i. Josh clarifies that with such a small committee, discussing items with three or more members outside of meetings becomes an open meeting law violation.
 - ii. All committees are being scrutinized to ensure they are posting meeting minutes and agendas correctly.
 - iii. Josh suggests sending information to him for distribution to the committee.
 - iv. He mentions that there is no limit to the number of meetings the committee can have.
- e. Transparency and Public Involvement
 - i. All discussions about DEIB need to occur in meetings to ensure transparency to the public.
 - ii. The goal is to give credit for the committee's hard work and allow the public to be involved in discussions.
- f. Initial Survey Feedback & Recommendations
 - i. Ashley thinks the survey is a good start, especially with the inclusion of demographic items to compare responses between marginalized and non-marginalized groups.
 - ii. If Jane wants to hear feedback, members can send it to Josh, who will forward it to Jane, labeling who made the recommendation.
 - iii. Jane has the option to support this process or continue as is.
 - iv. Everything must be done in public as they are public servants.
- g. Subcommittee Discussion
 - i. If the committee can't meet for a couple of weeks, a subcommittee might be a good idea.

- ii. Josh advises that because it's not on the agenda, the creation of a subcommittee might be out.
- iii. Josh recommends posting an agenda for a 5-minute meeting to create a survey subcommittee.
 - 1. Ask for a motion to form the survey subcommittee and then ask for volunteers.
 - 2. Josh will be in touch with the chair to get their agenda items.
 - 3. Members can email schedules to determine availability without violating open meeting laws.

h. Meeting Schedule and Agenda

- i. Members can send survey recommendations to Josh to forward to Jane.
- ii. The agenda can include voting on the subcommittee.
 - 1. Members are not forced into creating a subcommittee.

i. Next Meeting - Wednesday, December 17th at 7pm

F. Adjournment of Meeting at 7:42pm per roll call vote

- a. Jane motioned to adjourn; Phil seconded

DEIB Committee – Meeting Minutes

Date: March 24, 2026

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **7:00 PM**.

Present Members:

- Ashley (Chair)
- Jane
- Phil

Town Employees: None noted

Public Attendee: Sam

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a) Approval of minutes from the previous meeting was **postponed** to the next meeting.

C. Public Comment

a) Sam attended as a member of the public to observe and offer insights.

D. New Business

a) Town Council Presentation Preparation

- Ashley shared the draft presentation and requested member bios and photos.
- Jane added her role as a special education paraprofessional.
- Phil provided a volunteer-focused bio and shared a potential June teaching opportunity in NYC.
- Committee agreed to omit a long-inactive member from the presentation.
- Reviewed slides on committee history, survey findings, and strategic goals.
- Current priorities include the belonging survey and potential collaboration with BCCR.
- Ashley will revise the presentation and send it to Josh for distribution.

b) Context & Guidance from BCCR (Sam)

- Sam provided background on Pride and Juneteenth flag-raising history, past conflicts, and upcoming resolutions.
- Noted anticipated pushback from several councilors who oppose DEI initiatives.
- Recommended presenting after April elections when the new council is seated.
- Emphasized preparing clear definitions of DEI and being ready to counter arguments against DEI work.

c) Committee Discussion Following Sam's Input

- Members discussed disparities, lived experiences, and the need to “speak truth to power.”
- Phil shared personal experiences with racial profiling in Bridgewater.
- Committee agreed that community stories—especially from youth—are powerful for public comment.
- Members reaffirmed the importance of the belonging survey as a more current measure of community climate.

d) Belonging Survey – Next Steps

- Discussion was tabled due to time and missing minutes from the prior meeting.

E. Additional Items for Discussion

No additional items were raised.

F. Adjournment of Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at **8:10 PM**.

Next Meeting: Tentatively scheduled for **April 14, 2026**, pending confirmation from Josh.