

TOWN COUNCIL
Town of Trumbull
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TOWN HALL
Trumbull

TELEPHONE
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RULES & RESEARCH COMMITTEE
MINUTES
July 7, 2020.

Call to Order: The Chair called the virtual zoom meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The clerk called the roll and recorded it as follows:

Present: Bruce Elstein, Chairman, Eric Paulson, Vice Chairman, Joanne Glasser Orenstein, Steve Lemoine, Joe Gerics, Alternate

Absent: Bill Mecca, Donna Siedell and Carl Massaro

Also

Present: Town Council Members Tony Scinto, Ashley Gaudiano, Lori Rosasco-Schwartz, Jason Marsh, Kevin Shively, Joy Colon, Michael Miller, Labor Relations Thomas McCarthy, Director of Finance Maria Pires, BOF Member Board of Finance Vincent DeGenarro, Town Attorney Daniel Schopick, Chief Administrative Officer Cynthia Katske, Al Cameron of the BOE, First Selectman Vicki A. Tesoro

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1. RESOLUTION TC28-85: Moved by Lemoine, seconded by Glasser-Orenstein
BE IT RESOLVED, That Kathleen Champion of 39 Undercliff Road, be and the same is hereby appointed to the Western Regional Tourism District Board for a term extending to July 9, 2023.

Kathleen Champion of 39 Undercliff Road was present and indicated her party affiliation as democrat. Ms. Champion has been a communications professional for 20 years, her experience includes corporate communications through broadcast news for ABC News, she has volunteered for over ten years for various nonprofit boards, and most recently has volunteered her skills to the Town in the first selectman's office, the Parks and Rec Department, and the Economic Community Development Department. She looks forward to serving the Town even further and use her communication and economic development

skills to bring it all together. Ms. Champion explained the state is divided into three districts, western, central and eastern. There are many towns in the western district, Fairfield County and Litchfield County is included. The Board existed years ago, the funding disappeared but has since been resurrected by Governor Lamont. Their role is to bring tourism to our area. The Governor has allocated \$2 million to this, their goal will be to bring as many dollars as they can to the town of Trumbull.

The clerk called the roll call vote and recorded it as follows:

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Bruce Elstein	X		
Eric Paulson	X		
Joanne Glasser Orenstein	X		
Steve Lemoine	X		
Joe Gerics	X		

VOTE: Motion CARRIED unanimously.

- RESOLUTION TC28-86: Moved by Paulson, seconded by Glasser-Orenstein
BE IT RESOLVED, That the Building Committee Rules as adopted by the Town Council on November 10, 1981 be and the same are hereby amended by repeal of the last 2 sentences of Section 15.

Attorney Schopick explained the need for a bound copy of all the “doings of the building committee” has become outdated. The current building committees as they wrap up asked if they needed to do this because there are reams and reams of documents posted on the website. To not create an unnecessary task is the reason for the amendment. The building committee rules need further revisions, but this was the immediate problem. Attorney Schopick confirmed what the last two sentences of the section were. Other committees other than building committees do not abide by this rule and confirmed the Aquatics committee is a building committee.

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Bruce Elstein	X		
Eric Paulson	X		
Joanne Glasser Orenstein	X		
Steve Lemoine	X		
Joe Gerics	X		

VOTE: Motion CARRIED unanimously.

- RESOLUTION TC28-87: Moved by Lemoine, seconded by Glasser-Orenstein
BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council of the Town of Trumbull hereby establishes a Task Force to be known as the **EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION TASK FORCE**. The purpose of this task force shall be to strengthen Trumbull’s identity as a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community. The Task Force shall identify programmatic, community, and legislative practices with regard to racial, social, sexual,

and gender equity and diversity. The Task Force shall consist of eight (8) members who shall be appointed by the Town Council. The Council shall first appoint four (4) members whose terms will run until the first Monday in December 2022 and four (4) members whose terms will run until the first Monday in December 2024. Thereafter all appointments shall be for a term of four (4) years each. The Task Force shall report to the Town Council at least quarterly and shall otherwise make recommendations for action as frequently as it deems appropriate.

Ms. Colon explained the idea is being equitable is something that is important as we move forward in the Town and our community and we begin to have representation that reflects the community at large. It is her hope that this is a very active and productive community that moves us forward with this idea of positive conversation that leads to positive action in Trumbull affecting all citizens of Trumbull.

Ms. Gaudiano stated Ms. Colon, herself and others think this Task Force provides its members and the community at large with the opportunity to take stock of the policies and practices already in place and for the policies, practices and community programming they would like to see put into place in the future. There is a lot of eagerness and willingness by community members that are engaged in this type of conversation and it's her hope to find new individuals to sit on the committee in the next month or two as they appoint members. It is important to note that this is not a Task Force that is just about racial equity, it is aimed at racial, social, sexual and gender equity and diversity, because we need to look across the board of how we can continue to ensure Trumbull is a welcoming community for everyone.

The Chair noted this is a very important initiative for the Town and is sure the residents will be rewarded with the results of the positive communications this will bring.

Mr. Lemoine stated he was surprised to see the need for a Task Force noting the Police Department does a great job. The community has been positive and caring where everyone is included. The word Task Force brings to mind a problem and was taken back by that. He doesn't think Trumbull has any problems in the areas outlined in the resolution and questioned why a statement on the website isn't enough to go on record to the community with the expectations we have as a community for the fair treatment of everyone who lives in it. The language included in the resolution contains the word "shall", noting that indicates they are being tasked to look for something that is wrong. The word shall is a strong word. He spoke to the membership of the Task Force and the irony how a democratic majority appoints the 8 members to enforce diversity and equality. Unless they could ensure that the Task Force is representative of all people in town you will end up with a Task Force that is biased and will defeat the purpose.

Ms. Colon spoke to how she loves her country and her service and her family members' service. Ensuring equity for all citizens should be something you like and think is important. Mr. Lemoine stated he feels we have that and this sounds like people think we don't. We have a great town with great people who respect and include each other. Ms. Colon stated if there is no problem than the Task Force shouldn't be a problem. Mr.

Lemoine stated this would be comprised of the majority party outweighing the minority, you don't have diversity with that kind of a make-up. Ms. Colon suggesting getting involved to fix that if that is seen as an issue.

Mr. Lemoine moved to amend the resolution as follows:

In the resolution, Insert after < “terms for (4) years each>..... The TC will take (4) recommended inputs from the Democratic Town Committee, (4) recommended inputs from the Republican Town Committee, and (4) recommended inputs from unaffiliated parties of the community. In the case of more than 4 submittals from the unaffiliated, 2 members of the republican and 2 members of the democratic town council, will choose the (4) to represent the unaffiliated segment of our community. From this slate of 12, the TC will vote on 8 people, from these 12, to serve on the task force.

Hearing no second the amendment fails.

Ms. Glasser Orenstein has lived here for almost thirty years and noted it is a lovely town, it's a town of 4% of people of color. She is a representative of the majority in town. She has not experienced hardship because she is a white woman however does think to say it doesn't exist in this town is naïve. There are all kinds of people in town that are not always welcoming to people who are different than they are. The recent protest in Town was peaceful and successful and very informative it highlighted a lot of the problems that do exist in town that we try to pretend aren't here. As people of privilege we don't experience those things. There are things people of color experience in town that the other 96% of town don't experience and to say it is insignificant would be incorrect. She understands being uncomfortable with the word Task Force and shall perhaps the wording can be amended. She spoke in favor of a Task Force because it is a problem, as it is across the country.

Ms. Gaudiano stated the purpose of this was not create a list of problems, all you have to do is go on social media and you will see there are problems in town. The point of putting this together was to look at all the ways the town operates was to aim to be better. It's isn't a committee that will point blame, it's to look forward and to continue to be a better place. Police is one piece of the town, it's her hope to look at education, police, the make-up of boards and commissions, the library to be stocked of diverse books and programs, and doing everything we can in terms of economic development to encourage different races, identities, genders, sexual preferences to own businesses in town. There is a plethora of areas to look at. Ms. Colon is the first person of color to be elected to the council. We should be striving that are elected represent every scope of diversity. Having the Task Force is just one piece of this.

It was noted there had not been a budget for a clerk to date.

The Chair agreed the town is a good town, but has learned over the past few years that there is an undercurrent that we have to be more sensitive to. We can do good by the town by enacting a task force that promotes equality in a way that brings this more to light and spoke in favor of the task force.

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Bruce Elstein	X		
Eric Paulson	X		
Joanne Glasser Orenstein	X		
Steve Lemoine		X	
Joe Gerics	X		

VOTE: Motion CARRIED 4-1 (AGAINST: Lemoine)

4. RESOLUTION TC28-88: Moved by Glasser-Orenstein, seconded by Lemoine
 BE IT RESOLVED, That a special election shall be held on November 3, 2020 in the
 Town of Trumbull to fill the vacant Board of Education seat created by the resignation of
 Kathleen Fearon, for the remainder of the term ending the first Monday in December,
 2021. The Town Clerk and the Registrars of Voters are directed to establish the ballots,
 polling places and dates for party endorsement and a primary election, if necessary,
 pursuant to law.

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Bruce Elstein	X		
Eric Paulson	X		
Joanne Glasser Orenstein	X		
Steve Lemoine	X		
Joe Gerics	X		

VOTE: Motion CARRIED unanimously.

Attorney Schopick explained the primary dates will be scheduled between now and
 November in accordance with the number of days required for noticing. Notice will go
 out to the parties to nominate and for people to primary or petition to get on the ballot as
 a non-party affiliate. The dates were worked out so it will fall within the prescribed
 number of days and the election can be held on the same day as the national election in
 November. The primary date is set among the registrar, the state and the clerk.

There being no further business to discuss and upon motion made by Glasser-Orenstein,
 seconded by Paulson the R&R Committee adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret D. Mastroni, Town Council Clerk