

Not In Our Town Bowling Green
Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.
City of Bowling Green Municipal Building, 304 North Church Street

Present: Ana Brown (BGSU), Ron Campbell (Community), Emily Dunipace (Community Co-Chair), Karla Davis-McGowan (Community), Bill Herald (City Council), Jennifer McCary (BGSU), Heather Sayler (Community), Gary Saunders (Community), and Mary Jane Saunders (Human Relations Commission), and Dawn Shiness (BGSU Co-Chair).

Action items bolded

I. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Emily Dunipace called the meeting to order and asked for each person in attendance to introduce themselves. A special congratulations was given to Karla for recently being awarded the Honor Roll Award by the Human Relations Commission.
- b. Emily asked for approval of the meeting minutes for the November 7, 2019 meeting, which were approved. There was not a meeting held in December.
- c. Emily stated NIOT is in need of a new secretary if anyone is able to help.
- d. Emily provided copies of the 2020 NIOT monthly meeting schedule.

II. Discussion

a. Open Dialogue on Current Landscape - national/regional/state/local/campus

- Gary said there clearly has been an increase in anti-semitic violence, most recently in the New York City area. He said there is hope with the marches with 25,000 supporters, but these are national stories and we need to reach out to our friends local who are Jewish. This is a reality to them to live in fear. Dawn also said we should think about making sure to involve the Jewish community at the Interfaith Breakfast. Heather discussed how it is sad that really no place, even a place people choose to worship at, is not safe (referencing there was also a shooting at a church in Texas).
- Jennifer said U.S. President Donald Trump and Vice President Michael Pence are in Toledo today and with the conflicts with Iran, BGSU is looking for ways to support international students. She said they are thinking of having a list of resources and times students can talk and be around others. She said they will likely be contacting students by letter and emails. She said she will talk to the Director of Welcome BG (Moja) and Marcia (Director of International Partnerships and Programs) to help identify potential students from Iran and Iraq they may need support. Dawn said NIOT could be supportive by a letter to the editor and being present, also, for students to feel safe and that there are friendly faces in our community. **Dawn said she will draft a letter and share with the Steering Committee for review.**
- Emily and Gary discussed the value of these meetings to hear about what is going on locally. Gary said Bowling Green is such a unique community with having a university with a talented and diverse staff able to share resources and student

experiences in a town that does not have these types of resource. This led to the idea of how do we share these resources with the community that can often live in a “bubble” and be surprised to hear what students can experience on a daily basis. Gary asked if Jennifer and Ana could share with NIOT the experiences of students who feel discriminated against. Jennifer said she does file a monthly report that is a public record. Jennifer said words do matter, not just actions, and she shared a recent experience of a student who is gay and his roommate made several inappropriate comments. At the end of the semester, the student moved out of the dorm and reported his experiences with his roommate. Jennifer met with both students and the work she did to try to get the student who made inappropriate comments to realize how he made his roommate feel (he got to the point of writing an apology letter). She said she talked about intent vs. impact and how the various experiences all add up (ie: negative experiences with housing, negative experiences within the classroom, negative experiences in the community, etc.), which can cause students to leave BGSU and the community. This led to an idea that these experiences should be shared to awaken the community that tends to think everything is fine and with those do not share these same life experiences through social media and local media such as with a monthly letter to the editor or column. **Dawn offered to contact the BG Independent Media and The Sentinel Tribune to see if this is possible.** The group felt this is a good idea that all could contribute to and leave the community with some tools and thoughts to improve upon being a welcoming and inclusive community. Some months could be as simple as “did you know it’s anti-bullying month?” and the column could be called “Words Matter.”

- Emily asked if anyone heard about the high school student, with down syndrome and is a cheerleader, that was made fun of at a basketball game. Emily said the opposing team was being unkind and the team stopped playing on the cheerleader’s behalf.
- Heather said there was an article in the Toledo Blade today that described an individual with special needs at a movie theatre at Fallen Timbers that was asked to leave after being reported for making noises and being too loud. It was a children’s movie with families and it appears it could have been a teachable moment, rather than how it was handled.

III. Reports

- a. Steering Committee – Emily said there is no report.
- b. Programming Working Group – Gary said there will be a report later on the agenda regarding the Interfaith Breakfast.
- c. Outreach Working Group – No report.
- d. Finances/Inventory – Dawn said the account is healthy at a balance of \$5,146.73, which will be very helpful with upcoming Interfaith Breakfast associated costs.
- e. Partners (HRC, BGSU Police, etc) – Human Relations Commission (HRC): Mary Jane encouraged everyone to attend the MLK celebration event on Friday, January 17 at 1:30 p.m. at the Wood County District Public Library. The Mayor Emeritus will be received the Drum Major for Peace Award and they are excited to have Jolie Sheffer as the speaker. NIOT will also have a few

minutes to present. Emily said it will be important to recognize Mayor Edwards hand in the creation and support of NIOT. Mary Jane also said HRC will have a theme of “civil discourse” this year and will be discussing ways to initiate this within the community. Emily suggested looking into Ohio Civility and there were a couple of similar events held on-campus that may have helpful resources.

La Conexion: Ana spoke on behalf of La Conexion, since she participated in the Bystander Intervention event that was held at the Wood County District Public Library on December 2, 2019. She said the event was packed and she felt it was very well-received. She said other communities heard about the event and are looking for ways to model the event. Bill said he was there and agreed it went well. He thought it was well-structured, yet not too rigid.

IV. Old Business

- a. Peace March and Holiday Parade – The group discussed the 4th Annual Peace March that was just held on November 6, 2019 at 11:30 a.m., which started at the Wooster Green and ended at BGSU at the Union Oval. It was discussed at the meeting on November 7, 2019, but Emily wanted to mention there were around 70 people there and Gary said he liked the visibility being outside on the Oval. He said he would like to see music in the future. Emily said it was fun marching in the Holiday Parade with We Are One Team and the BGSU cheerleaders.

V. New Business

- a. Interfaith Breakfast – The date of the 6th Annual Interfaith Breakfast is Tuesday, April 21, 2020 and it will be located at the new Veterans Building at City Park. Matt Every is the Chair of the planning group. The theme this year will be Peace: Love Within Division. We will again include involvement from students from the BG City Schools for art and music and also students from BGSU. The format for the program is not yet finalized but it is shaping up to be to show a clip from a compelling video and to have two local clergy provide their responses. Funding is available for food and the menu is being selected.
- b. NIOT 7th Anniversary Event—Our anniversary is in April and we will need to recruit a planning committee to create an event. We will send an announcement through the listserv to ask for interested people to help.
- c. Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month - Emily shared that this is in March and asked if NIOT would like to partner with the Wood County Board of DD with any or all of our events planned for the month. She specifically highlighted an event that is similar to our COMMUNITY Conversations called “Lead To Include”. Gary said that NIOT would be happy to support all of the events.
- d. Planning for Winter 2020 – items from NIOT Survey, not yet discussed.

VI. Good of the Order/Announcements

- a. Karla presented Human Trafficking Workshop on January 24, from 1-4:30 pm to be held at WC Job and Family Services, 1928 E. Gypsy Lane Rd., Bowling Green, OH
- b. Ana presented Beyond the Dream events include the MLK Day of Service on Monday, January 20 with a “Can”vas effort to collect canned goods for the Brown Bag Project to be held at Grounds For Thought.

- c. Dawn share a workshop on the Opioid Crisis on March 26. On April 9, Beth Macey, the author of “Dope Sick” will be presenting at BGSU.
- d. Emily shared an event offered by the Perrysburg Coalition of Inclusion and Social Justice called “Just Mercy: Injustice and Us”. Participants are asked to watch the movie “Just Mercy” and then invited to attend a panel discussion on Wednesday, January 15 from 7:00-9:00 pm at Hull Prairie Intermediate School.

VII. Next Meeting

- a. **Thursday, February 6 at 3:00pm at the Bowling Green State University, Bowen-Thompson Student Union, Room 310. Free parking passes available.**

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by Heather Saylor 1/10/2020