

Not In Our Town Bowling Green
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 6, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via WebEx

Present: Ana Brown (BGSU, Office of Multicultural Affairs), Emily Dunipace (Co-Chair, Community), Bill Herald (City Council), Taylor Jefferson (BGSU Athletics), Neocles Leontis (City Council), Karla Davis-McGowan (Community, Toledo Human Trafficking Coalition, Lucas County Children Services), Jan Larson-McLaughlin (BG Independent Media), Heather Saylor (NIOT Secretary and community member), Dawn Shinew (Co-Chair, BGSU), Adam Skaff (BG Police), and John Zanfardino (City Council). Other people were listed via WebEx that did not introduce themselves.

Action items bolded

- I. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. Emily called the meeting to order and asked for each person in attendance to introduce themselves.
 - b. Emily said anyone who is interested in being secretary should let her know.
 - c. Emily said the last meeting was on July 2, 2020, but there are no meeting minutes to approve yet.

- II. Discussion
 - a. Open Dialogue on Current Landscape - national/regional/state/local/campus
 - Adam wanted to introduce himself as the new liaison from Bowling Green Police Division (BGPLD) to the communities of color. He said he volunteered for the new role, the mission of the BGPLD is important, and he is here to listen. He has been with the City as an officer for 18 years. He said there is always room to improve upon the services they provide and he would like suggestions for groups to meet with. He said he will formulate ideas and a plan for outreach, but is also looking for ideas from NIOT and others. He said he will be sharing ideas with the Mayor and Police Chief, but at this point he is listening to any and all concerns. Adam has already heard from Athletes and will continue to reach out to student groups. Karla asked who to contact for issues. He provided his email (askaff@bgohio.org) and his phone number (419) 352-1131.
 - Dawn thanked City Council members, John and Bill, for attending the meeting. She said it means a lot for them to be in attendance and listening.

- III. Reports
 - a. Steering Committee – Emily said there is no report. She said the committee still needs to review the NIOT structure as listed in the bylaws. However, the Steering Committee is still at work with a small crew.
 - b. Outreach/Programming Working Group –No report.
 - c. Finances/Inventory –No report.
 - d. Partners (HRC, BGSU Police, etc) – Emily said the City’s Human Relations Commission has not met since June, but they are meeting tomorrow morning. Adam said he already

gave the report from the Police with his liaison announcement. Taylor said there is not much to report from Athletics due to COVID-19 and announcements regarding the future of sports.

IV. Old Business

- a. National NIOT Office – Emily said NIOT BG has been in regular communication with the national NIOT office. Emily said she and Heather had a conference call with national NIOT just last week to discuss what NIOT BG has been recently doing and what challenges the group has faced. She also said national NIOT regularly has referred communities wishing to start a NIOT chapter or those who may be struggling to talk with NIOT BG. For example, recently Emily and Heather had a conference call with Daniel Island, South Carolina who is interested in starting their own NIOT organization. Heather also said national NIOT held a community conversation yesterday evening with the families of victims of hate crimes that was very powerful. One of them being Heather Heyer’s mother (her daughter was killed during a protest) and the son of one of the victim’s of a Sikh Temple shooting in Wisconsin. The families discussed the impacts these hate crimes have had in their lives and shared their passion for turning their pain into advocacy. Since less than 1% of hate crimes are reported and these hate crimes in particular were not counted as hate crimes, these families have fought at the federal level to help pass the Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act, which seeks to promote better hate crimes data collection as well as a more informed approach to hate crime prevention at the federal, state, and local levels. Emily also said that the national office sent an email with a list of ideas of what other NIOT groups are doing.

V. New Business

- a. Reflection – Racism Scale - From the list of resources the national NIOT office emailed, Emily found that Princeton NIOT is a very active group and has several even ideas and tools. They also hold regular conversations about racism each month with their local library. After looking at their website, she found a helpful tool called a Racism Scale which she felt helps with self-reflection and was something she felt NIOT BG could share (racismscale.weebly.com). Bill said he felt people may fall on the scale differently at various times and situations, so it would be hard to say where the BG community would fall. However, it could be used for individual self-awareness and a good communication device, but likely not accurate. Ana agreed it can be used for identity development, but it will always fluctuate back and forth depending on where someone is at, whether it be at work, school, etc. Dawn said it was a good conversation started when they used it in her college with students, thus it could be a useful tool to begin dialogues. Karla agreed that anything to promote these discussions is needed to promote listening and understanding in a safe space. She said her church, Dayspring, is having a weekly discussion that anyone is welcome to that is based on the book “Be the Bridge.” She said all ages are welcome and she encouraged anyone to read this book. She said it has been very healing, with good information and conversations shared. Emily said each of us has a role in change and we need to push out of our comfort levels. She sees NIOT as helping to create that environment to move forward, including creating the safe spaces for these critical conversations regarding racism.

- b. Community Input – Recommendations – Emily said NIOT would like to continue the Community Conversation series and needs input on topics. Adam suggested talking with athletes about their experiences in BG, which he also plans to do. Ana said BGSU has planned a lot of programming for the summer and into fall. She also recommended looking at the Diversity and Belonging website. Heather said a series regarding racist language and symbols would be helpful.

VI. Good of the Order/Announcements

- a. Karla said on August 16 the church she attends, Dayspring, will be heading to Maurer Trailer Park on Brim Road to help families with improvements like painting and landscaping. She said there is also a confederate flag displayed there at a home and she plans to have a conversation with the resident. Emily said confederate flags have also been a recent discussion. A community member, Carol Kinsey, had written to the Fair Board and Wood County Commissioners requesting the sale of confederate flags be banned from the Wood County Fair. She did not receive a response from the Fair Board, but the Wood County Commissioners wrote her back agreeing with the opinion to not allow the flags, however, they are not tied to the fair. There was also a discussion regarding confederate flags at the Tractor Pulls and someone asked about the incident where a confederate flag was displayed at Nascar garage that a driver that is Black used, but it was found to be on display for a long time and not a hate crime. Someone also thought this incident was fake. Ana said this a good example of the importance of checking sources. She said she has a table that shows where different media sources fall that she will share. It can then be posted to Facebook.

VII. Next Meeting

- a. **Thursday, September 3, 2020 at 3:00pm via WebEx.**

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by Heather Sayler 9/1/2020