



**Not In Our Town Bowling Green
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via WebEx**

Present: Ana Brown (BGSU, Office of Multicultural Affairs), Mike Campbell (BGSU, Police), Courtney Chambers (BGSU, Center for Women and Gender Equity), Chris Doerner (People First), Emily Dunipace (Co-Chair, Community), Bill Herald (City of Bowling Green, City Council), Tom Klein (Community), Neocles Leontis (City of Bowling Green, City Council), Megan McDonnell (BGSU, Center for Women and Gender Equity), Karla Davis-McGowan (Community, Toledo Human Trafficking Coalition, Lucas County Children Services), Jennifer McCary (BGSU, Diversity and Inclusion), , Gary Saunders (Community, Steering Committee), Heather Saylor (NIOT Secretary), Dawn Shinew (Co-Chair, BGSU), Adam Skaff (City of Bowling Green, Police Liaison), Jamie Wlozowicz (BGSU, Center for Women and Gender Equity), and Marilyn Yakumithis (BGSU Hillel).

Action items bolded

I. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Emily called the meeting to order and asked if anyone was opposed to the meetings being recorded. Ana Brown said they cannot be recorded, since the person that set-up the meetings is not present.
- b. Emily acknowledged the Steering Committee members that were present (Gary Saunders, Ana Brown and Heather Saylor).
- c. Emily asked for approval of the September 3, 2020 meeting minutes, which were approved by voice vote.

II. Discussion

- a. Open Dialogue on Current Landscape - national/regional/state/local/campus
 - Emily recognized Gary's Letter to the Editor that was recently in the local newspaper regarding voting. He said he was contemplating writing it for a long time and decided it was a good time.
 - Gary said the recent presidential debate brought up white supremacy and the basic notion of having a respectful debate. He wondered what others thoughts were on the debate. Courtney said the debate was unsettling to her, especially the President's command to the Proud Boys (US intelligence has described the group as a dangerous white supremacy group) to "stand by". As a student, she feels very troubled by the upcoming election. Karla said it is surprising white supremacy was not denounced by the President, but she is going to continue to do the work she is doing. She said she still sees 3 confederate flags in town and she continues to see the fear. She said CNN just reported African Americans are buying guns at record highs, so they are going to protect themselves and not feel like a prisoner. Emily

said we need to keep the strong bond and work together to fight white supremacy. In regards to the debate, Ana said the tone from both sides is concerning and embarrassing. There was no civility, it was immature, and there was nothing discussed without name calling.

- Neocles said the history of white supremacy is critical to understand moving forward. He said this is all about the suppressing the right to vote, especially for women and Blacks. He said voter intimidation is a looming crisis and the nature of the threat is fear. The group discussed ways to make sure people feel safe and how NIOT could help. Emily reminded people how critical it is to exercise their right to vote and that in-person voting starts October 6, with voter registration ending on October 5. Karla asked if anyone was aware of groups that may try to prevent Blacks from voting and if the Bowling Green Police Division has a plan on election day. Adam said he is not aware of any intelligence that has caused the city any concern, but he will look into it. She also asked the laws on having guns at polling places or if groups can congregate. No one was sure of the laws, unless the polling place is a school or church then guns would not be allowed.
- Jennifer said the concept of fear is very real and she is hearing it from students every day. She said the fear is there for either election outcome and what may happen. She would like to see what NIOT can do to promote civility and basic voter rights. Emily said NIOT would like the next conversation to be about civil discourse because the environment we are living in is full of intimidation and bullying. Adam said, good or bad, free speech is protected. He said anything they can do to help they will. Megan referenced a comment made about people that are red, blue, etc. and said it is passive racism. She said seeing race does matter and saying random colors trivializes the issue.
- Gary said he would like to steer the group back to the issue of fear at the polls. He feels this is very serious and we need to address this as a community matter, thus this would be a legitimate NIOT matter. He suggested discussing this issue with the two political parties on a local level and see if they are both willing to make a cooperative and bipartisan statement. The statement would focus on welcoming people to vote and that intimidation in Bowling Green will not happen. Bill offered talk to the Republican chair and Neocles offered to talk with the Democrat party. Karla said Governor Dewine's press conference today reassured Ohioans that voting is safe, essentially the same type of statement discussed.
- Emily said she just received information about an incident at BGSU where the spirit rock was painted with targeted and offensive language against a fraternity or sorority. Jennifer said the matter is being looked into.

III. Reports

- a. Steering Committee – No report.
- b. Outreach/Programming Working Group –No report.
- c. Finances/Inventory – No report.
- d. Partners:

Human Relations Commission – Emily said the Community Reads project is moving along and with launch in November, with assistance from BGSU. The community is encouraged to read the book “So You Want To Talk About Race” by Ijeoma Oluo. There will be 3 sessions spread at different times to accommodate various schedules as an opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue about racism.

City of BG Police – Adam said he has been meeting with various community groups and he most recently has met with BRAVE. He talked to Anthony King before the most recent demonstration downtown, which had good attendance and no issues. He also had a great conversation with Ana and has learned a lot. He has listened to several groups on and off-campus and will continue to do so, formulating recommendations from there.

BGSU Police – Mike said they have a crisis intervention course next week jointly with NAMI and ADAMAS Board. They have been meeting with USG.

BGSU Hillel – Marilyn said they are preparing for the Jewish New Year and Yom Kippur. For example, they have shipped holiday boxes to students and are having a painting night where the process will be donated to Give Kids the World Village. She said there is a NWO Jewish Book Festival coming up soon.

IV. On-Going (Old) Business

- a. Debrief of NIOT Community Conversation series – Emily asked for feedback regarding the Community Conversation Series: Free Speech vs. Hate Speech that occurred virtually on Monday, September 28 at 6:30 p.m. Gary said he thought it was terrific and that there were several key new thoughts that he appreciated. Emily said it was interesting to her the thin line between hate speech and free speech, along with the realization that they can look the same.
- b. “Imagining a Safe and Inclusive BG” – “Advocacy and Allyship” president by Courtney Chambers (she/hers/her), BSW Intern for the Center for Women and Gender Equity. Courtney introduced the “Do’s and Don’ts of Allyship”, which she said she had decided to do over the summer and it went well. She discussed the meaning of allyship and the correct way to be an ally for people of color.

To be an ally is to:

Take on the struggle as your own.

Transfer the benefits of your privilege to those who lack it.

Amplify voices of the oppressed before your own.

Acknowledge that even though you feel pain, the conversation is not about you.

Stand up, even when you feel scared.

Own your mistakes and de-center yourself.

Understand that your education is up to you and no one else.

She said the work of allyship is hard and requires education. She went over the list of Do’s and Don’ts:

THE DOS

- Do be open to listening (any form of communication)
- Do be aware of your implicit biases (take a test - <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>)

- Do your research to learn more about the history of the struggle in which you are participating (Ex: know what BLM is)
- Do the inner work to figure out a way to acknowledge how you participate in oppressive systems (Ex: help take someone to vote)
- Do the outer work and figure out how to change the oppressive systems (Ex: write a letter to your representative)
- Do use your privilege to amplify (digitally and in-person) historically suppressed voices
- Do learn how to listen and accept criticism with grace, even if it's uncomfortable
- Do the work every day to learn how to be a better ally

THE DON'TS

- Do not expect to be taught or shown. Take it upon yourself to use the tools around you to learn and answer your questions
- Do not participate for the gold medal in the "Oppression Olympics" (you don't need to compare how your struggle is "just as bad as" a marginalized person's)
- Do not behave as though you know best
- Do not take credit for the labor of those who are marginalized and did the work before you stepped into the picture
- Do not assume that every member of an underinvested community feels oppressed

Courtney said the full Guide to Allyship can be viewed here <https://guidetoallyship.com/> and Emily thanked Courtney for her presentation and work on this critical topic of allyship.

V. New Business

a. Upcoming Community Events for Fall –

- *Community Reads* – Emily said the book will be "So You Want To Talk About Race", which as she mentioned before will be a collaborative effort with the HRC with more details to come soon as the Human Relations Commission meets on Friday this week.

b. NIOT Conversation Series: Civil Discourse – Emily said given the upcoming election, she would like the next community conversation to be about civil discourse around the end of October.

c. "Race Against Racism" – Emily said she was hoping someone from BGSU Athletics may be present at the meeting and may consider helping with this. However, it is getting cooler out and may be more of a spring event.

d. Words Matter – More of "on-going business". Heather said this new NIOT column just premiered in the Sentinel-Tribune and BG Independent Media with President Rogers and Mayor Aspacher as authors. This will be done monthly by the Steering Committee.

VI. Good of the Order/Announcements

- a. Courtney said Domestic Violence Awareness Month is happening in October with upcoming events, such as a table display of information at The Oaks and remembering those lost to domestic violence.
- b. Jennifer said the Day of Dialogue was held virtually on September 18 starting at 9:00 a.m. and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. She said it was recorded and can still be viewed here: <https://www.bgsu.edu/news/2020/09/bgsu-to-host-day-of-dialogue-on-friday-sept-18.html> or directly at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9kRYnfvGXk&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR1BCfRN0OHqxEmSbcgBqaVJjxBMggORwiqtNIPTQvF13DaJRPmJ_hdLUb4
- c. Ana said Latina/o/x Heritage Month starts mid-September to mid-October. She said there will be events starting tonight. She also said LGBTQ+ History Month is celebrated in October and there will be several events. Heather asked where to find events for those that are community members that do not know about them and she said at the website: <https://events.bgsu.edu/>.

The following links were shared by attendees in the chat box during the meeting:

<http://ohioqunlawyer.com/concealed-carry-in-polling-places/>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/rnc-engage-voter-intimidation-because-1982-consent-decree-ended-2020-9>

<https://giffords.org/lawcenter/report/preventing-armed-voter-intimidation-a-state-by-state-analysis/>

<https://www.freepress.net/sites/default/files/2020-09/Guns-at-the-Polls-8-14.pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQSW5SFBsOg&feature=youtu.be>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9kRYnfvGXk&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR1BCfRN0OHqxEmSbcgBqaVJjxBMggORwiqtNIPTQvF13DaJRPmJ_hdLUb4

VII. Next Meeting

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

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by Heather Saylor 11/3/2020