



Civic Engagement Board

SUNY BROOME

Minutes

SUNY Broome Civic Engagement Board

Tuesday, April 13, 2021 3:00pm (via Zoom)

Members present: Linda Biemer, Jesse Boring, Chris Burger, Greg Deemie, Sharon Exley, Doug Garnar, Penny Haynes, Ben Lainhardt, Carla Michalak, Ricky Oundo, Alison Twang, Mike Woodward

1) **Approval of Minutes of March 16, 2021** – Approved without changes

Old Business

2) **Approval of Nominee – Vice Chair for Students**

- Michael Woodward: Doug Garnar moved and Greg Deemie seconded for Mike's nomination for Vice Chair of Students. A unanimous vote ensued. Congratulations Mike!

3) **Continued Updating of Membership List**

- Approval of New Members

- **Jackie Stapleton:** Director of Education at WSKG

- **Ricky Oundo:** Currently serving as the Student VP for Administrative Affairs, he is a Clinical Lab Tech student and formerly served as a Student Senator. He runs the Food for Thought Committee.

- **Alison Handy Twang:** Associate director for Binghamton University's Civic Engagement Center, responsible for the co-curricular program, student volunteers and the student voting program, which is nationally recognized.

Doug Garnar moved to accept these new members, and Chris Burger seconded. All were unanimously endorsed. Congratulations!

- Recommended New Members

- Logan Blakeslee (VP BU College Republicans): Alison Twang offered to contact

- Michael Vasquez: Michael Woodward will contact

- incoming High School Seniors (PIG class)



4) Review of Most Recent Correspondence from NIFI - Jesse New Business

Jesse reviewed for the new members our interaction with NIFI regarding an issue guide dedicated to systemic racism.

Jesse asked, should we address this issue in a public way? Does not believe that the Racial Injustice questions are sufficient nor address the root causes of racism. Should we embed these questions in the policing advisory guide or re-develop Scott's issue guide?

Doug pointed out that race is addressed/infused in other issue guides. He believes that NIFI is not going to develop an independent issue guide.

Chris asked if NIFI is in the process of developing an issue book dedicated to racial justice? We are not necessarily pleased with this issue being embedded in other guides. Chris thinks there might be a guide that is developed dedicated to the issue of racism.

Doug: Not sure if they will redevelop? That is what Scott was working on. Doug then asked, how will the racial injustice guide/questions be used? Could the CEB practice with this tool and see what we think?

Jesse: It is necessary but not sufficient to embed racism issues in the other issue guides. He wants a dedicated issue guide. Racial justice continues to be delayed as people focus on other issues. Why is NIFI dragging their feet?

Carla: Do we need to wait for NIFI? Why not conduct a deliberation on her own, lead by example. Carla will check the Civic Engagement Office to see if there is a copy of Scott's revision of the racial justice guide.

Chris: We can continue to press NIFI to embrace this issue.

Jesse: Wants NIFI's national platform to support this issue. In agreement to do something local.

Doug: Suggested reading Common Purpose and other organizations' websites such as Public Agenda and New England Clearing House for Civic Engagement.



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Subcommittee: Chris Burger, Jesse Boring, Doug Garnar, Sharon Exley and Mike Woodward

The subcommittee was formed to research and develop materials for the committee's use so that we can move forward with this issue and hopefully conduct deliberations locally.

Mike Woodward shared a friend's experience who experienced racial inequities.

5) 2021 Election Cycle/Voter Engagement (VEC) Update - Linda

Linda first described the role of the VEC for our new members. It is a subcommittee of the CEB and its charge is to engage and educate voters, promote elections and coordinate debates.

We met on April 6th. The Deputy Commissioners from the Board of Elections spoke with us for a hour detailing the function of the BOE and sharing with us the processes for absentee balloting, how they educate voters, etc. We also discussed the approaching elections for Broome County Family Court, Broome County Clerk, Binghamton City Mayor and the NYS Supreme Court 6th District.

The committee will be discussing whether any of the elections are "debate worthy".

6) Any Other Business/Announcements

- Kettering Foundation 2020 Connections "The Work of Democratic Citizenship". 10 hard copies for distribution. Contact Sharon if you would like a copy. Chris Burger indicated interest in a copy.

Doug shared an article of interest in the Christian Science Monitor, "Assembly Required: Can America Make Democracy Work Better?" Ben will try to find the article electronically and share the link with the committee.

7) Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

We adjourned at 4:10pm. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, May 25th at 3pm.