

**Meeting Minutes of the Special Meeting of Hanover Board of Selectmen held in a hybrid format via teleconference as well as in person in the First Floor Hearing Room of Hanover Town Hall on Monday, June 16, 2021 @ 7:00 PM.**

---

Present at Town Hall, Chairman David Delaney, Selectman John Tuzik, Selectwoman Vanessa O'Connor and Selectman Steve Louko. Vice Chair Rhonda Nyman was unable to attend.

Also present, Town Manager (TM) Joseph Colangelo.

**Call meeting to order**

At 7:00 pm the Chair called the meeting to order.

The Chair informed those listening that Vice Chair Rhonda Nyman had a prior commitment, and asked the Chair to let people know she was unable to make tonight due to the short notice. The Chair went on to state that per the advice of Town Counsel, the Board is not able to entertain or discuss any specific incidences that have happened.

The Chair then read the following Reaffirmation of the Statement of Community Inclusiveness into the record:

Hanover's Board of Selectmen are aware that a PRIDE flag hung in Hanover High School in support of PRIDE Month was regrettably torn down and discarded last Friday. With that in mind, we recognize that we have an opportunity to turn a hurtful incident into a unique moment for reflection leading to growth. As such, we reaffirm our September 14, 2020 Statement on Inclusivity, specifically our commitment to the Hanover community, especially those who identify as LGBTQ+, to treat everyone with respect, dignity, and kindness.

PRIDE is about visibility and solidarity. These are concepts that now, more than ever, communities of all genders, orientations, races, ethnicities, and abilities must continue to work towards. Hanover High School's choice to display the PRIDE flag, and to continue doing so, is a visible reminder of our commitment as a Town to the recognition and inclusion of our LGBTQ+ community members. We all have a role to play in fostering that recognition and inclusion, be it through self-reflection, education or other means that work for us as individuals. In furtherance of creating spaces to identify our own roles, and in recognition and support of our LGBTQ+ community, we would like to propose a partnership with community organizations like Hanover PRIDE and the Hanover Unity Counsel to host an annual PRIDE celebration and commemoration starting this year.

Dated: June 16, 2021

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

*David R. Delaney, Chairman*

*Rhonda L. Nyman, Vice Chair*

*John C. Tuzik*

*Vanessa A. O'Connor*

*Steve Louko*

Approved  
6/21/2021

The Chair thanked Selectwoman O'Connor for working with the Chair and TM in putting the statement together.

The Chair welcomed Darcie Edwards to speak about the First Annual Pride Celebration. An event which will be reoccurring each June.

Darcie encouraged those listening to work together to unite the Town of Hanover, and proposed a response team to help the community work together as Hanover becomes a more diverse Community. Darcie then announced that the "Don't Hide the Pride Event" will be taking place next Thursday, June 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at Forge Pond Park, and welcomed people to come enjoy food from the food trucks, music, show support for each other, get to know one another and celebrate our community.

The Chair informed those listening that the Board received emails over the weekend looking for the Board to make a statement, and this is reason for tonight's meeting. He further stated that procedurally, as a Board, they cannot make a statement without a meeting, and under Open Meeting Law the Board is not allowed to hold a meeting without first posting a 48 Hour notice for members of the public, so that they can attend if they wish. Therefore, this is the soonest the Board could meet to make their statement according to the schedule and the 48 Hour Notice requirements.

Selectwoman O'Connor thanked Hanover PRIDE and the Hanover Unity Council for the work they have done and for their effort in becoming a more visible presence in Town and providing a support network and resources for all the at-risk communities in Town.

TM informed those listening that he and Darcie were able to get together today, on short notice, and work on planning the event. He expressed that he is looking forward to it, it should be a lot of fun and he hopes a lot of people show up.

The Chair reiterated that the Don't Hide the Pride Event will be a week from tomorrow, beginning at 6:00pm at Forge Pond Park. There will be a musician there as well as food trucks, and the Chair will be bringing his DJ gear. The Chair mentioned that he will be accepting requests, either emailed to him ahead of time or brought up to the mic that night.

The Chair thanked those in attendance for participating.

Selectman Louko thanked those who had emailed him and expressed that it was good to hear from people and learn from people's experiences in town. He further stated that we all deserve to be respected and treated equally no matter what.

The meeting ended and adjourned at 7:12 pm