



Town of Concord
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission
Agenda

Feb 26, 2026, at 5:30pm
55 Church St & Zoom Conference

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://concordma.zoom.us/j/84136520065?pwd=wNblCh7bEpknwmcLDMRVCGIKqoz3DW.1>

Meeting ID: 841 3652 0065

Passcode: 769799

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of January 7, 2025 Meeting Minutes
3. Chairs Updates
 - Leadership and Membership Transitions
 - Concord United Update
4. Bias/Hate Incident Reporting Working Group Update
5. Black Historical Marker Update
6. Town-wide Dignity Workshop Series- Update and next steps
7. Strengthening cooperation between Commission and League of Women Voters Concord-Carlisle
8. 2026 DEIC Survey
9. DEIC Candidate Forum
10. Town Event Celebrations/ Discussions
 - Black History Month
 - Community Coffee – March 4
 - Dignity Workshop Series Dates
 - Holi
 - Concord-Carlisle Adult Community Education Classes
11. Public Comment
12. Next Meeting – March 26
13. Adjournment

CONCORD DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

Date: January 7, 2026

Time: 7:03 PM – 8:31 PM EST

Location: Zoom virtual meeting (fully remote)

ATTENDANCE

Present (all participating remotely): Andrea Foncerrada (Co-Chair), Rose Cratsley (Co-Chair), Brian Farber, Joe Palumbo, Nancy Brown, Jimi Two Feathers, Agnes Lubega-Kalisa, Josh Lee

Also Present: Mark Howell (Select Board Chair/DEI Liaison), Mimi Graney (Town staff), Members of the public

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Commissioner Palumbo moved to approve the December 3, 2025, minutes.

Second: Commissioner Brian Farber

Roll Call Vote: All Commissioners voted Aye (8-0).

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

CO-CHAIR UPDATES

Co-Chair Rose Cratsley conveyed the Commission's commitment to collective care and safe communication. She noted discussions in collaboration with the Select Board Chair about ways to move forward constructively.

DEI CHARGE UPDATE

Co-Chair Foncerrada reported that the Commission transmitted its revised charge to the Select Board in December. The Select Board presented a new draft for the January 13th meeting. Foncerrada stated for the record her concern that the current draft does not include antisemitism or other forms of hate discrimination in the programmatic section, only in the background section. She strongly encouraged the Select Board to include these explicitly in the duties and responsibilities section.

Select Board Chair Howell explained the board is reorganizing the charge's duties and responsibilities into four general categories: documenting, education, design and recommending responses, and coordinating and collaborating. This will not be the final read, with further discussion expected in early February.

PRIDE ART INSTALLATION PROJECT

Mimi Graney presented plans for temporary Pride Progress flag crosswalk installations at two locations, with installation planned for June pending Historic District Commission approval.

Motion: Commissioner Palumbo moved to support the project.

Second: Commissioner Brian Farber

Roll Call Vote: All Commissioners voted Aye (8-0).

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

BLACK HERITAGE TRAIL MARKERS PROJECT

Commissioner Palumbo reported that the town received a grant for Black Heritage Trail markers based on Robbins House research. An advisory team is forming to determine approximately eight sites.

Motion: Co-Chair Foncerrada moved to support the project.

Second: Commissioner Nancy Brown

Roll Call Vote: All Commissioners voted Aye (8-0).

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

CONCORD UNITED TOWN-WIDE LEADERSHIP GROUP

Co-Chair Foncerrada provided an update on forming a coordination group to improve response when DEI-related incidents arise. Select Board Chair Howell and Co-Chair Cratsley confirmed this is a proactive collaborative and preparedness measure, not a replacement for incident reporting systems. Commissioner Palumbo emphasized ensuring the group reflects voices of affected communities.

DIGNITY PROJECT

Co-Chair Foncerrada reported on developing a six-session workshop series with Wright Tavern centered on Dr. Donna Hicks' Dignity Framework to build shared language and practical tools for navigating community conflict.

TOWN EVENT CELEBRATIONS

Motion: Commissioner Palumbo moved approval to request Pride and Juneteenth proclamations and flag raisings from the Select Board.

Second: Commissioner Brian Farber

Roll Call Vote: All Commissioners voted Aye (8-0).

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

LANTERN PARADE EVENT

Item postponed to future meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Concerns expressed included the impact of a Commissioner's December 3rd remarks, the need for clear definitions of antisemitism, the experiences of Muslim community members, ensuring diverse voices are heard equally, and taking an intersectional approach to addressing hate. Residents expressed support for the Commissioner's December 3rd remarks, and the Jewish community's concerns should not be dismissed.

A resident announced an event on January 15th at CCHS about the IHRA definition of antisemitism and free speech.

Specific Recommendation to Town of Concord: Ms. Bell recommended that the town track anti-American hate speech with the same vigor as other forms of hate speech.

COMMISSIONER RESPONSE

A Commissioner responded to public comments, clarified the intent of the December 3rd remarks, acknowledged full responsibility for what was said, and expressed hope for grace and less hostility in the community moving forward.

CLOSING REMARKS

Co-Chair Foncerrada encouraged channeling energy toward ensuring all forms of hate are included in the charge.

Select Board Chair Howell thanked everyone for showing up to this difficult work and encouraged continued engagement and dialogue, operating from an assumption of good intent.

Co-Chair thanked everyone for their courage and stated the Commission is committed to doing better together.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:31 PM.

DOCUMENTS REFERENCED

- December 3, 2025 draft meeting minutes (approved)
- Revised DEI charge draft from Select Board
- Select Board meeting materials from December 18, 2025

Minutes prepared in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 22.

Submitted by: Brian Farber, Commission Clerk

For Concord Diversity and Equity Commission

The Hate and Bias Committee has met about 8 times since Nov 6.

Members: Paul Boehm, Sandeep Pisharody, Agnes Lubega-Kalisa, Daniel Hart, Deborah Dorfman, and Kerry Lafleur.

Guests who have attended and Provided Technical Guidance/Advice:

Carlos Hoyt: The general discussion centered on reframing the incident reporting system and deliberated on whether reporting should be the primary focus.

Court Booth and Rob Morrison from Concord- Carlisle Human Rights Council: They discussed efforts to address hate and bias, noting that many challenges persist despite sustained work.

District Attorney, Maria Ryan: Presented on the Middlesex County's anonymous anti-hate/anti-violence system created 5 years ago. She described that the system users are mainly those who may be reluctant to contact the police. Reports include harmful non-criminal behavior and help identify patterns over time to guide prevention, training, and outreach. She also gave an update on the number of incidents from Concord.

Lt Tim Landers: Presented to the group on how the police department handles, investigates and triages with bias and hate incidents.

Mina Makarios (Town counsel): He discussed the importance of understanding the context in which a town operates when addressing complaints and the challenges of balancing confidentiality and the complexities of handling complaints, including potential criminal investigations, and the difficulties in promising anonymity or follow-up actions.

The Hate and Bias Incident Reporting WG is researching various Bias and Hate incident reporting platforms in towns/cities, institutions of learning, and the Massachusetts government.

Community Focus Groups (4) Two of these have already taken place

Information gathering and review of existing reporting systems e.g. DEI

Commission, other towns, CPS/CCHS, and law enforcement (i.e. the District Attorney's office and Concord Police Department).

2. Will identify mechanism(s) for reporting.
3. Will identify barriers that would prevent incidents from being reported safely and securely.
4. Recommend ways to verify the authenticity of reports.
5. Advise how data should be collected, analyzed, and shared to inform prevention and Policy development.
6. Consider if and how data from other reporting systems
7. Recommend the structure, management, and community uses of a reporting system, consisting of existing and new elements; one that is simple, safe