

**Lakeville Community Conversation on Race
Planning Workgroup Meeting
Meeting Notes
Wednesday, September 9, 2020
Via Zoom – 6:30 pm**

Members Present: Mayor Doug Anderson, Councilmember Joshua Lee, City Administrator Justin Miller, Maya Imoto, Darryl Sanders, Nkechi Gillman, Jeni Hartung, Venkat Kakula, Zipporah Bogonko, and Janet Collins, facilitator (Conflict Resolution Center).

Janet Collins opened the meeting by asking each member to describe what “community” means to them. Individuals talked about many aspects, such as support and being there for each other, sharing, belonging, tolerance, respect, and safety.

The discussion turned towards defining a purpose for the Community Conversations on Race in order to know how to plan for the dialogues. Janet outlined several types of purposes (which are not mutually exclusive), such as

1. Uncovering concerns so that they can be addressed
2. Education about what the experience is like for people of color in Lakeville
3. Community building to increase understanding and to build social capital
4. Action oriented discussions to result in recommendations for the city for implementation
5. Healing – when there have been harms done that need and deserve attention.

Outlining options brought up both hopeful and despairing experiences and ideas. There was discussion about how to help Lakeville residents find appreciation for each others’ differences. There were ideas generated on sharing food, music, and culture to humanize each other and create understanding and appreciation for different cultures. Several individuals also spoke of experiences with police and the fear the lack of safety that they experience with police, and there were ideas on how this could be changed. Several individuals spoke of cruel comments and treatment to people of color by fellow residents of the greater Lakeville area, and the need for white residents to step up to show that this is not acceptable.

There was generally wide agreement that Lakeville is a good place to live and that members of this work group want to take the long view, on behalf of their children, to create a welcoming and inclusive community.

The group began discussing how to structure the community conversations; locations, group sizes, pandemic accommodations, and intended audiences were all briefly addressed. To help move things forward before the next meeting, Janet agreed to send out an email to members prior to the next meeting to help each person identify their preferences for the dialogues and their top concerns.

The next meeting of the workgroup was scheduled for September 23, 2020 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm via Zoom. Meeting ended at 8:35 pm.