

## SHARON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Thursday, November 9, 2023 — 7:00 p.m.

(Times below are approximate.)

### 1. 7:03 p.m. Attendance

Present: Toben Asklar; Alison Kellom; Bill Kondrath; Lajos Kamocsay; Marjorie Mitlin; Shelley Keimach; CP Pototsky; Chandu Krishnan; Kim Hokanson; Weinxiao Tiano (School Committee liaison).

### 2. 7:04 p.m. Email Correspondence presented by Marjorie Mitlin, Correspondence Clerk

Nov. 8, 2023. Alison Kellom sent out the minutes from 4/23-7/2023

Nov. 6, 2023. Toben Asklar sent the minutes from 10/12/23 written up by Bill

Nov. 2, 2023. SPS DEI Director announcement:

Dr. Botelho's letter about the new DEI director for the Sharon Public Schools. Her name is Ms. Trivedi. She is a Mass-licensed attorney with over 15 years of experience in professional development training, internal investigations, and DEI consulting.

Nov. 2, 2023. Sara Ting from the World Unity Inc. on the subject of: Value Your Leadership

The concept is to raise community awareness through the Sun Poem and empowering and inspiring individuals through the arts, education, and innovative ideas. They have Ted Talks, books, public service announcements and a program using singing to plant seeds of equality in the next generation.

Nov. 2, 2023. Email from: Eileen Spielman who made a suggestion to do a virtual program involving the whole town including a panel of religious leaders from Sharon to discuss Respect, and to quote the title of a book by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks: The Dignity of Difference.

Oct. 30, 2023. Email from Debra Roberts, Chair of the Stoughton Selectboard and Stoughton Equal Opportunity Commission: Can we partner for a MLK event? Please contact Debra at 781-710-8837

Oct. 30, 2023. Email from Barbara Nelkin-Rose from the UU church, asking the DEIC to remove the Nov. 5th event from our calendar.

Oct. 20, 2023. Email from Julie Rowe asking us to Save the date for the SHS Financial Reality Fair

Oct. 17, 2023. Forwarded email from Shelley Keimach: information about the Chi Weekend of Scholarship which is October 19-22. This was weekend programs honoring Rabbi Meszler's 18th year at Temple Sinai.

Oct. 13, 2023. The Sharon DEIC posted upcoming DEI observances and Events from October through December. See the DEIC website.

Oct. 12, 2023. Email from Toben Asklar: Letting people know that there is a Sharon Community Rally to stand with Israel. Oct. 11th at 5:15 at the Veterans Memorial Park Beach Bandstand sponsored by Temple Israel Temple Sinai, and Young Israel.

October 9 th, 2023. Email forwarded from the Superintendent of the Sharon Public Schools: Letter of support to members of the community following the horrific attacks in Israel. The essence of his statement was to offer support and friendship to members of our community impacted by what is going on in Israel, and for us to continue to pull together with kindness,

support and sensitivity to those impacted, and to demonstrate to our children what embracing our fellow citizens of Sharon and the world is all about.

Oct. 6, 2023. Letter from the DEIC written by Toben Asklar: Support statement Regarding Valuing the Diversity of the Students in Sharon. Toben thanked people for opening the community forum and reading the SPS Nondiscrimination Policy. This policy sets norms for our community discourse and helps to create mutual understanding and a safer atmosphere for civilized communication. The letter was written in response to the LGBTQ+ vitriol, alarmism, misinformation and hateful tone of several public comments made in past meetings.

Oct. 6, 2023. Rev. Jolie, from the UU church was looking for someone to be the Zoom host at Monday's Darius Coombs event.

October 4, 2023. Toben's email asking people to edit some mistakes in a first flyer inviting people to participate in the Indigenous People's Day event at the UU Church. Darius Coombs from the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe was coming to be part of the Town Proclamation by the Sharon Select Board at the town Offices at 10:30 a.m.

Oct. 3, 2023. Email from Toben thanking everyone for making Sharon Day such a success: both Fun and Educational. Shout out to Shelley and Alison for getting and making some great swag.

Sept. 30, 2023. Email from Toben: Toben was happy to report that SREA was partnering with the DEIC for the Indigenous People's Day events.

Sept 28, 2023. Toben sent out a draft letter to the school committee in regards to the anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric during School Committee Open Forum.

Sept. 27, 2023. Email sent from Shelley Keimach urging people to sign up for Sharon Day open slots.

3. 7:10 p.m. Approval of minutes from 10/12/2023, DEIC meeting

Shelley Keimach motioned and Chandu Krishnan seconded that the minutes of October 12, 2023 be approved. The minutes were unanimously approved.

4. 7:14 p.m. DEI training modules for Town Committees status and launch date

Toben spoke to Melissa Imbaro who said that the contract with SunShower Learning is in progress, and should be done soon. Toben hopes that the DEIC will be among the first to take the training.

5. 7:20 p.m. Sharon's newest residents: Update by Shelley Keimach

Shelley reported that there are 13 families from Haiti and one family from Venezuela at the Econo Lodge. The state provides lunch and dinner each day. The state will provide transportation for legal and medical appointments. Shelley is working with people from Stoughton to provide English as a second language. The Chinese Church in Sharon may be the location. Financial Donations can be given through the Public Safety Building. Meg Dusseault and Lisa Eloi are excellent leaders.

Kim Hokanson mentioned that people need to work through the Thursday group rather than individually approach people at the Econo Lodge.

Subgroups are being formed around: fundraising, physical and mental health, and language.

CP Potosky has done translating in Spanish at the high school for one of the students.

6. 7:35 p.m. Support for community members amid rising antisemitism and Islamophobia in the U.S.

Toben shared statements about the increase of antisemitism and Islamophobia. Jews make up 2.4% of the US population and 60 % of faith-based hate crimes are toward Jews. The anti-defamation league has noted a 400% increase in anti-Semitic incidents since October 7, 2023. An NBC report noted a rise of 182% jump of anti-Muslim activities in the 15-day period October 7-22, 2023. Toben asked if there are any ideas or actions to support Jewish and Muslim neighbors. Margie said that there are people who want the DEIC to speak to this issue. Chandu Krishnan suggested that we might want to be a voice for peace and moderation, expressing empathy. You can make statements every day, so there is a virtue in being selective. It is not the role of the committee to take sides. Toben mentioned that it is not a policy of the town to make political statements about global issues. Alison clarified that Toben's statement about anti-LGBTQ rhetoric was about what was happening in Sharon. Bill suggested that if we were to write statement saying that we share the pain of people affected by violence that we send those statements to specific religious communities (to Sharon Temples and to Sharon Mosques) and not simply post a statement of website. He emphasized building individual relationships with those from whom we are different. Bill stated that he was very glad that many members of DEIC were involved with the new residents, which is "in our lane," and making a difference. The committee discussed possible responses on many levels. Alison mentioned the danger of virtue signaling around statements. The chair took a comment from a community member who expressed disappointment that DEIC was not making a statement about antisemitism.

7. 8:19 p.m. Discussion of possible Stoughton/Sharon Martin Luther King holiday celebration Bettye Sabree, co-chair of Stoughton Equal Opportunity Committee, talked about Sharon partnering with Stoughton or attending Stoughton events for Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend. We will begin with a tour by the historical committee on January 11th (6:00 – 8:00 PM and 13<sup>th</sup> (2:00-4:00 PM).

January 15 there will be a free Martin Luther King Day celebration from 10 am to 4 pm January 15 at the new Stoughton Library (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rev-dr-martin-luther-king-jr-annual-celebration-pursuing-your-purpose-tickets-750458320037>). This will include speakers, vendors, performers, activities for children. There will also be a food pantry drive handled by the Y.

Theme: Pursuing Your Purpose. The main speaker will be talking about mental health and behavioral health needs. There will be teen dancing from the Dance Connection. There will be health care providers.

8. 8:38 p.m. Sharon Interfaith Thanksgiving, Sunday, November 19, 7 p.m.; 5:45 for spontaneous pick-up choir. Unitarian Church of Sharon, 4 North Main Street, Sharon.

9. 8:43 p.m. Strategic Plan status update

i. Juneteenth, Wednesday, June 19, 2024. No update.

ii. Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day – Day of Dialogue Tuesday, 11/14/2023 was listed on the school calendar.

11. 8:47 p.m. Announcements regarding upcoming events

A list of upcoming events (November, 2023 through January, 2024) can be found at:

[https://www.townofsharon.net/sites/g/files/vyhlf3801/f/pages/nov\\_to\\_jan\\_events\\_observances.pdf](https://www.townofsharon.net/sites/g/files/vyhlf3801/f/pages/nov_to_jan_events_observances.pdf)

12. 9:00 p.m. Topics not anticipated within 48 hours of meeting

No items were discussed.

13. 9:02 p.m. Appreciations, regrets, and learnings. Adjourn

Members expressed appreciations and regrets, particularly for Toben's response to a town member attending our meeting.

Kim moved that we adjourn and Margie seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Submitted by Bill Kondrath

# Sharon Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Upcoming DEI Observances & Events



# November is

**NATIONAL AMERICAN  
INDIAN HERITAGE  
MONTH**

**NATIONAL ADOPTION  
MONTH**

**NATIONAL HOMELESS  
YOUTH AWARENESS  
MONTH**

**TRANS AWARENESS  
MONTH**

**November 9-10: KRISTALLNACHT**

**November 11:** 2023 Town of Sharon Veterans' Day Program. Sharon Town Offices Parking Lot. Rain location for ceremony, Lobby of Town Offices at Noon. Displays from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 12 p.m. ceremony with guest speakers.

**November 11: VETERANS' DAY**

**November 12: BANDI-CHHOR DIWAS • Sikh**

**November 12: DIWALI • Hindu**

**November 12:** Sharon Pack 95 Food Drive. Sharon First Congregational Church. 2-4 p.m.

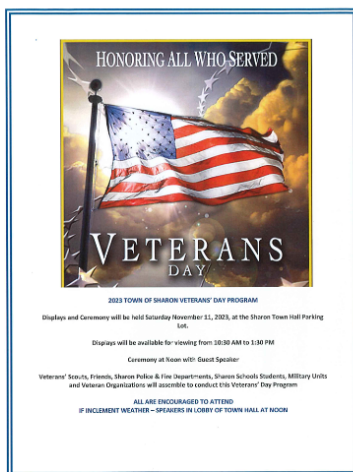
**November 13-17: AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK**

**November 13-19: TRANSGENDER AWARENESS WEEK**

**November 15:** Sharon Pride Virtual Book Club discussing *The Cleveland Heights LGBTQ Sci-Fi and Fantasy Role Playing Club*. 7-8:30 p.m.

**November 16: INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR TOLERANCE**

## November (cont.)



**November 17-19:** *Anastasia*, Sharon High School Theater Company. Sharon HS Auditorium. 7 p.m. (Fri.-Sat.), 2 p.m. (Sun.). Tickets at <https://sharon.booktix.net/>

**November 19:** Sharon Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service. Unitarian Church of Sharon, 4 North Main Street. Donations to the Ilse Marks Food Pantry. Potluck dessert will follow. 7 p.m.

**November 20: TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE**

**November 23: THANKSGIVING DAY**

**November 25:** Open house honoring Veterans. Speaker Colonel Joe Blansfield presents: "A Year in Iraq with a Combat Support Hospital. Sharon Historical Society, 16 High St., Sharon, 2-4 p.m.

**November 26: DAY OF THE COVENANT • Bahá'í**

**November 27: GURU NANAK DEV JI'S BIRTHDAY • Sikh**

**November 30:** Special Town Meeting. Sharon High School, doors at 6:30 p.m., meeting begins 7 p.m.

## November (cont.)

**PARENTS - NEIGHBORS - FRIENDS**

**Book Club**  
**Wed, Nov 15**  
 7-8:30 pm

A bittersweet story of love and friendship that tackles big subjects like homophobia, social anxiety, and coming out with a touch of magic  
 ~K. M. Soehnlein

**Register via this QR code**

**DOUG HENDERSON**

**CLEVELAND HEIGHTS LGBTQ+ SCI-FI + FANTASY ROLE PLAYING CLUB**

Sponsored by the Sharon Pride Steering Committee

## Town of Sharon Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service



**Sunday, November 19, 2023, 7 pm**

Unitarian Church of Sharon, 4 North Main Street, Sharon

(Want to sing in a spontaneous, pickup choir? Come early at 5:45 pm to learn a song)

**A potluck dessert will follow the service. Please bring a dessert to share.**

Please support our food pantries! Bring a non-perishable food item, cash, or you can donate through the Unitarian Church's donation webpage to purchase gift cards for the Ilse Marks Food Pantry:



Scan the QR code, scroll to the form at the bottom of the page, enter the amount you wish to give, and select "Give to Social Justice: Donation for Grocery Card Program" from the drop-down menu.

All are welcome! Sponsored by Sharon's clergy.

## SHARON HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE CO.

PRODUCTION OF

*Anastasia: The Musical*



BOOK BY TERRANCE McNALLY

MUSIC BY STEPHEN FLAHERTY

LYRICS BY LYNNE AKERENS

INSPIRED BY THE TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX MOTION PICTURES BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH BUENA VISTA THEATRICAL

FROM THE PLAY BY MARCELLE MAHERETTE AS ADAPTED BY GUY BOLTON

NOVEMBER 17 AND 18 AT 7:30 P.M.

NOVEMBER 19 AT 2:00 P.M.

TICKETS \$25 PREFERRED SEATING, \$20 GENERAL ADMISSION, \$12 STUDENTS AND SHS STAFF

TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED AT DOOR OR ONLINE AT SHARON.BOOKETIX.COM

ANASTASIA IS PRESENTED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH CONCORD THEATRICALS. WWW.CONCORDTHEATRICALS.COM

## SHARON HIGH SCHOOL

## FINANCIAL REALITY FAIR

NOVEMBER 17TH, 2023  
 8AM TO 12PM  
 SHS GYM



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

Approximately 60 community volunteers are needed. Please consider volunteering and/or promoting this great event within your organization.



To volunteer at the SHS Financial Reality Fair, scan the QR code or visit our webpage at [www.sharonschools.org/financialrealityfair](http://www.sharonschools.org/financialrealityfair)

Questions? Please email us at [shsfinancialfair@gmail.com](mailto:shsfinancialfair@gmail.com)

THIS SHARON HIGH SCHOOL AND SHS PTSD CO-SPONSORED EVENT IS MODELED AFTER "CREDIT FOR LIFE" FAIRS

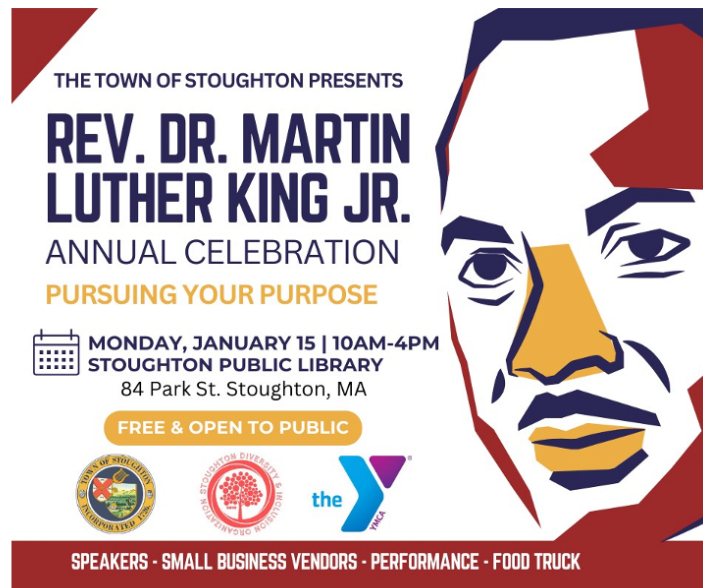
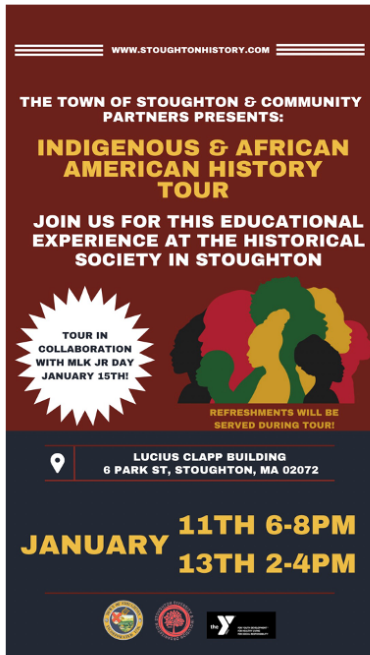
# December

**December 1:** WORLD AIDS DAY  
**December 3:** ADVENT • Western Christian  
**December 3:** INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
**December 8:** BODHI DAY • Buddhist  
**December 14:** Sharon DEIC meeting, remote.  
**December 8-15:** HANUKKAH • Jewish  
**December 10:** HUMAN RIGHTS DAY  
**December 12:** OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE • Christian  
**December 15:** BILL OF RIGHTS DAY  
**December 21:** WINTER SOLSTICE  
**December 24:** CHRISTMAS EVE • Christian  
**December 25:** CHRISTMAS • Western Christian  
**December 26, 2023-January 1, 2024:** KWANZAA

# January

**January 1:** NEW YEAR'S DAY  
**January 5:** GURU GOBIND SINGH JI'S BIRTHDAY • Sikh  
**January 6:** CHRISTMAS • Armenian Orthodox Christian  
**January 6:** EPIPHANY | THEOPHANY • Christian/Eastern Orthodox  
**January 7:** CHRISTMAS • Eastern Christian  
**January 11:** Sharon DEIC meeting, remote.  
January 11 & 13: Indigenous & African American History Tour. Stoughton MLK event. Lucius Clapp Building, 6 Park St., Stoughton. Jan. 11, 6-8 p.m.; Jan. 13: 2-4 p.m.  
**January 15:** MAKAR SANKRANTI • Hindu  
**January 15:** DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY (birthday) observed on the third Monday in January  
**January 15:** Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Annual Celebration. Free, all-ages event. Stoughton Public Library, 84 Park St., Stoughton, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rev-dr-martin-luther-king-jr-annual-celebration-pursuing-your-purpose-tickets-750458320037>.  
**January 15-19:** NO NAME-CALLING WEEK  
**January 25:** MAHAYANA NEW YEAR • Buddhist, *date varies from region to region*  
**January 25:** TU B'SHVAT • Jewish New Year's Day for Trees  
**January 27:** INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY





## Sources of Observances & Events

Individual community submissions, Sharon DEIC member announcements, and Sharon Public School's announcements

Anti-Defamation League (ADL) Calendar of Observances 2023:

<https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/calendar-observances>

GLSEN 2022-2023 School Year Calendar: [https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/GLSEN\\_School\\_Calendar\\_22-23.pdf](https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/GLSEN_School_Calendar_22-23.pdf)