



**Town of Portola Valley  
Equity Committee  
Tuesday, August 10, 2021 – 7:00 PM**

**Special Videoconference Meeting via Zoom**

---

**VIDEOCONFERENCE MEETING AGENDA**

Remote Meeting Covid-19 Advisory: On March 17, 2020, the Governor of California issued Executive Order N-29-20, suspending certain provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act in order to allow for local legislative bodies to conduct their meetings telephonically or by other electronic means. Pursuant to the statewide Shelter-In-Place Order issued by the Governor in Executive Order N-33-20 on March 19, 2020, and the CDC's social distancing guidelines which discourage large public gatherings, Portola Valley Town Council meetings are being conducted electronically. The meeting is not available for in-person attendance.

Members of the public may attend the meeting by video or phone linked in this agenda.

**Join Zoom Video Meeting:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87882333100?pwd=Zmg0MTEwblZKejdRYXVXN0JaOFZyUT09>

**Phone into Zoom Meeting:**

1-669-900-6833

1-877-853-5247 (toll-free)

*Mute/Unmute – Press \*6 / Raise Hand – Press \*9*

**Meeting ID:** 878 8233 3100

**Password:** 265867

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call –  
**Committee members:** Ali Aalaei, Kim Marinucci (Acker), Patt Baenen, Johnathan Clark, Judith Murphy, Lucy Neely, Andrew Pierce, Gwendolyn Stritter, and Karen Vahtra  
**Council Liaisons:** Maryann Derwin and John Richards
3. Oral Communications for Items not on the agenda
4. Approve Meeting Minutes for July 13, 2021
5. Old Business
  - a. Building and effective committee team:
    - i. How do I want to feel as a member of this team?
    - ii. What patterns of white culture are at play in our work?
    - iii. Special meeting: In-person, outside comfort
    - iv. Length of monthly meeting
  - b. Charter v.1.5:
    - i. Big picture feedback, each member:

1. Appreciations: What do I like?
  2. Concerns: What concerns do I have?
  3. Missing elements: What do I see missing that I'd like included?
  4. Proposals I have are...
- ii. Detailed feedback: Subcommittee's review process
  - iii. Next steps

6. New Business

- a. PV Live Revive/Town picnic Oct 9: Sponsor a table for Equity Committee?
- b. Budget development & decision making
  1. Donating to United Against Hate Week
- c. Form subcommittee to review Town's laws & bylaws for inequities

7. Adjournment

Town of Portola Valley  
Equity Committee  
Tuesday, July 13, 2021 – 7:00 PM  
Meeting via Zoom

**Call to Order:** 7:00 pm

**Roll Call** – Committee members: Kim Acker, Lucy Neely, Andrew Pierce, Gwen Stritter, and Karen Vahtra. (*Johnathan Clark and Judith Murphy arrived after roll call*)  
Council Liaisons: Maryann Derwin

**Oral Communications:** none

**Presentation by Town Attorney** – Introduction to the Brown Act: Executive order alters terms on Brown Act for now because of pandemic. BA is state law, promotes public transparency. Applies to elected legislative bodies (Town Council in PV); applies to any committee created by the legislative body. All meetings must be open and public, posted 72 hrs prior, allow times for public comment, report individual votes on all actions. Anytime a majority of members is together, that is a meeting. Meeting with someone who is not-member is not a meeting. Less than majority of members is not a meeting. Regular, standing committees are Brown Act Bodies. AdHoc or Subcommittees are not Brown Act Bodies. Some pitfalls: daisy chain, hub and spoke, email and social media, social gatherings. There are currently COVID provisions in place. Gwen clarified about educational 'conferences'. Karen asked for clarification around emails — if you need to email majority of members to distribute information, email via a staff member. Cannot survey membership. Kim asked about if majority of members are on a ListServ, is that problematic? Dynamic discussion ensues around overlap between this committee and PVFair listserv/Sunday street corner gathering. Cara and Kim will communicate further to clarify. Caroline Vertongen (public guest) notes that CA has lots of equity laws and would like to know under which laws this committee operates. Pierce notes that we are limited to being an advisory committee and Town Council decides.

**Approve Meeting Minutes** for June 29, 2021: Andrew says "joined at the hip" not tied at the hip and makes a motion to approve minutes. Gwen seconds. Unanimous vote.

### **Old Business**

*a. Review and continue Subcommittee's work on the Committee's Charter: Mission, Duties, and Functions:* Karen was major drafter, synthesized brainstorm comments from last meeting to create draft, reviewed with subcommittee, refined to go higher level and out of specifics. Andrew motions to approve charter as is. Lucy says she thinks it needs improvement. Gwen is supportive of charter as is. Discussion of the language of 'educated' vs 'inform' vs '??' Discussion of whether to revise charter or not and process to do so. Kim mentions acknowledging concept of whiteness. Andrew comments that if we incorporate buzz words the document will sound dated. Discussion of whether we should acknowledge our privilege as part

of the charter. Group is supportive of adding an acknowledgement/background section. Lucy Neely added to subcommittee. Discussion of mission statement. Johnny asks 'when has my culture been welcome?' Gwen asks do we want to mention/acknowledge the historical context of PV? Next meeting members are asked to come with specific language change suggestions if they want to see changes. Johnny prefers educate vs inform. People are distinguishing between quality and methodology of education. Are we doing things more proactively or reactively? What level of planning do we want in charter? Annual planning? Annual goals?

### **New Business**

*a. Name of Committee:* Race & Equity or Equity: Andrew votes for just 'equity', thinks it's more inclusive of different inequities. Judith votes for Race and Equity, race is what brought us here. Discussion ensues. Group decides to defer decision until next meeting when absent members can also contribute to conversation.

*b. Housing Element Committee:* Representative from Committee: Lucy gives context. Andrew says he is familiar and would volunteer for committee. Lucy describes why she thinks Karen would be a good representative and suggests forming a Housing Element Subcommittee to support her as representative. Andrew suggests that we form a subcommittee to look at Housing beyond just the Housing Element. Lucy makes a motion for Karen Vahtra to be the EC representative to Housing Element Committee. Committee forms Housing Subcommittee to work on the issue. Lucy, Andrew, Kim, and Karen on Housing Subcommittee. Maryann mentions various housing projects in the works in town and that it could be helpful for this committee to be supportive of those projects.

*c. Facility Rental* – Currently there is a resident Requirement. Subcommittee to research? Karen added it to the agenda and explains that PV is unusual in requiring renters to be residents. Maryann thought this wouldn't be successful with Town Council and that a major donor may have made this a condition. Group discusses whether anyone wants to work on this right now, or whether we want to make more of a plan and charter before we begin working on projects. Group decides not to take it up yet.

*d. Support for AB118:* Karen introduces: about funding mental health response teams in mental health emergencies where someone is disturbing the peace. Karen wonders in general about how the committee will relate to topics/legislation like this. Maryann explains the process of how the committee recommends to the town council/mayor to recommend. Could be a subcommittee to research legislation? Judy mentions that this could be mentioned in oral communications section. Gwen asks about general process of how committee interacts with Council. Maryann mentions that Sherriff is up for election. Group unanimously votes that EC recommend council support AB118

**Adjournment** approximately 9 pm



# Charter Draft Study Session

Version 1.5 of Charter  
The 6th version

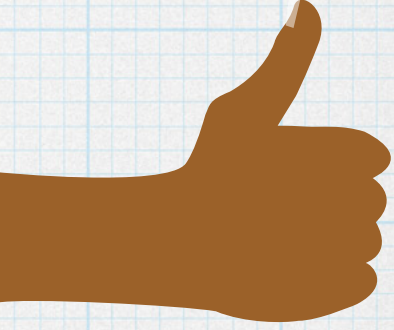
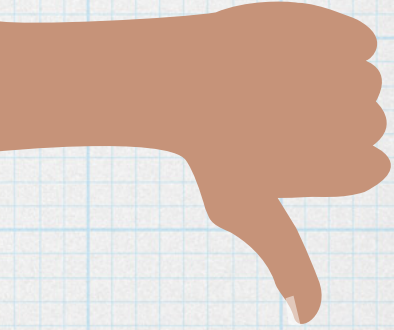


# Structural and Terminology

- \* Our subcommittee identified 3 structural areas open for discussion
- \* We also identified 4 terminology areas open for discussion
- \* This document serves as guideline for discussion on the sixth version of the charter (v1.5)








# Study Session Process - Part I

- \* I will introduce each area of discussion
- \* Each committee member is strongly encouraged to voice their thoughts about the item 
- \* If you have no particular thoughts, that's cool to. You can voice that on zoom with the thumbs up or down reactions on zoom. 
- \* We will weigh the thoughts of under represented groups higher than those with more privilege - particularly for any sensitive item
- \* Members of the public will be allowed to comment on each item



# Study Session Process - Part II

For each item we will decide a direction before continuing, the direction of the item can take a variety of forms:

-  \* Unanimous consensus! Yay!
-  \* Strong consensus for option "B" and those supporting "A" think "B" is fine
-  \* VERY minor on-line in-meeting wordsmithing may occur prior to approval
-  \* Item is generally very good, but subcommittee should wordsmith a bit more.
-  \* Item needs further exploration and more options before approval. Send back to subcommittee.



# Race and Equity vs Equity

- \* What should the name of our committee be?

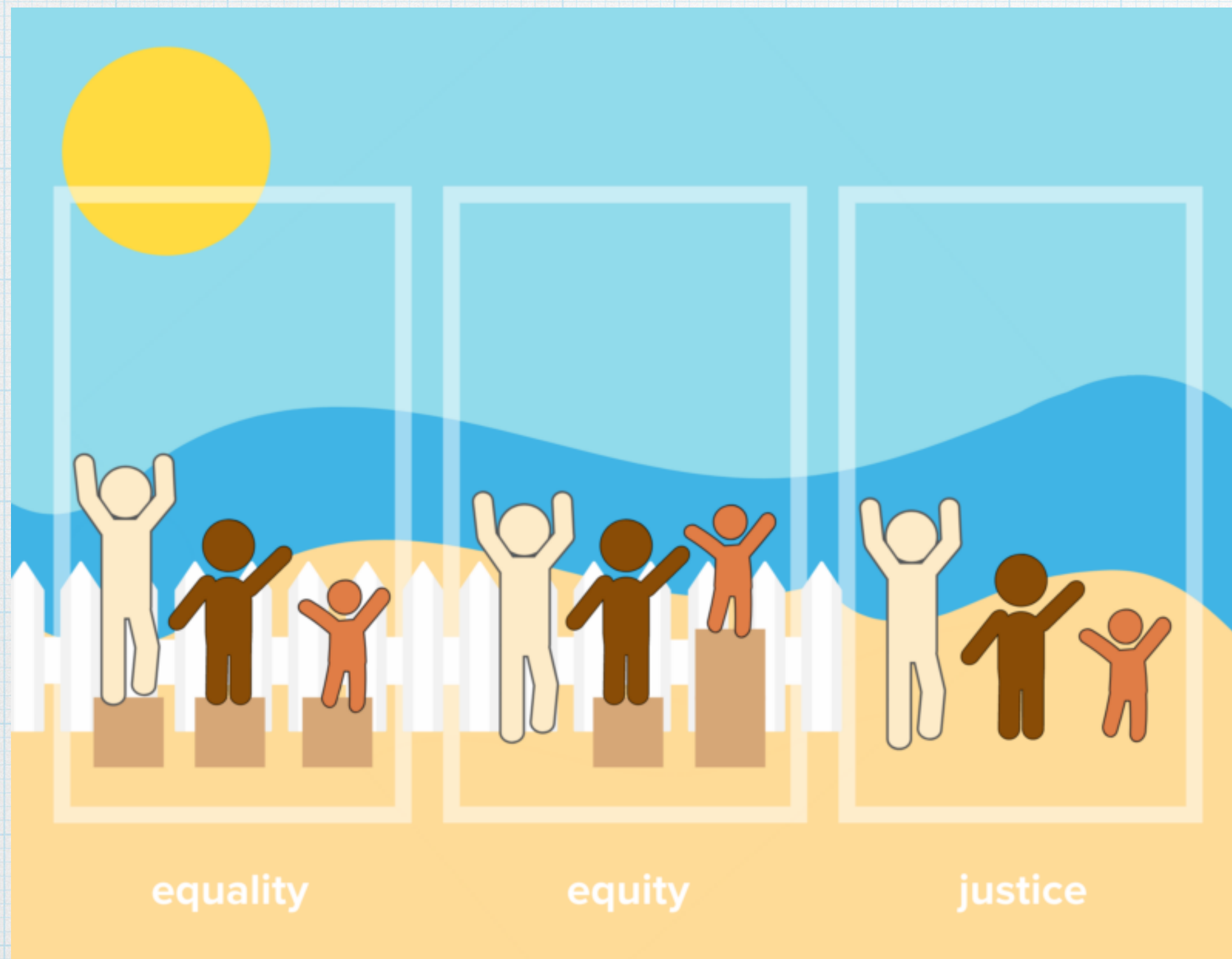
## Race and Equity Vs Equity

### Questions:

- \* Should we emphasize race and bring it forward in our title?
- \* Does equity imply 'financial equity' too strongly to stand alone?
- \* Does the general public know what the word equity means in this conversation?
- \* What about justice? Other terms?



# More on Justice



- \* Does ignoring justice leave out reforming the criminal justice system and other systemic issues?
- \* Does emphasizing equity focus too much on perceived financial barriers?



# Background Statement

Portola Valley occupies the ancestral land of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples and historically allowed racist covenants in property deeds. Portola Valley is one of the richest towns in our nation with little racial or socio-economic diversity.

Or no background or acknowledgement statement in charter



# Stand alone Mission Statement **or more**

## Mission

The committee's mission is to examine and take action around issues of race and equity in our community in order to create a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable community... **for people of any race, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, age, socioeconomic status, or any other individual identity regardless of whether they are a resident, a person who works in town, or a visitor.**

## Vision

- Options - A - Mission with Vision  
B - Mission and Vision separated  
C - No Vision statement at all

Note: The other committees  
Do not have vision statements



# Text in Version 1.5

## Mission

The committee's mission is to examine and take action around issues of race and equity in our community.

## Vision

Working together we can create a more diverse, inclusive, just, and equitable community for people of any race, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, age, socioeconomic status, or any other individual identity regardless of whether they are a resident, a person who works in town, or a visitor.



# Education vs Inform

- \* The term educate can come across as condescending to some people.
- \* The term inform can come across as soft

## How about both?

- \* Develop race and equity programs that educate, inform, inspire dialogue, and sometimes challenge residents

## How about neither?

- \* Create opportunities for residents, staff, workers, and visitors to engage in conversation and learning experiences around issues of race and equity in our community and beyond



# Barriers to Inclusion vs Systemic...

- \* barriers to inclusion

Vs

- \* systemic racism

- \* imbalanced systems

- \* Something else....



# Whiteness vs. other terms

\* Should we ever use DiAngelo's 2018 term 'whiteness'

Vs

\* Incorporating the sentiment in the charter with phrases such as

"Sometimes challenge residents"

"Learning experiences"



# Specific vs Non-Specific Duties and Functions

- \* The question at hand is how specific should the language be in the charter.

Evaluate the Sheriff's contract... General Plan... etc...

Vs

Examine and evaluate existing policies



# Specific vs Non-Specific #1

- \* Review the town government's existing and proposed policies, regulations, and practices in order to identify barriers to inclusion, racism, injustices, and/or inequities.
  - \* Draft a town equity statement
  - \* Examine and evaluate existing policies and make recommendations for changes in and/or implementation of these policies including but not limited to updates to the General Plan, Housing, and Safety elements.
  - \* Evaluate the Sheriff's contract before renewals and recommend changes



# Specific vs Non-Specific #2

- \* Support the Town Council by recommending changes to town policies and proposing actions related to race and equity focused on but not restricted to activities within the town.
  - \* Suggest resolutions of support for groups under attack when the instances occur.
  - \* Monitor state legislation and make recommendations to the Council for bills to support or oppose.
  - \* Propose solutions to the Town Council that address historic wrongs that could include but not limited to locating historic artifacts, installing public visual art, or financial support.



# Specific vs Non-Specific #3

- \* Create opportunities for residents, staff, workers, and visitors to engage in conversation and learning experiences around relevant topics in our community and beyond.
- \* Developing programs, community, and cultural events that educate residents on race and equity.
- \* Develop a dialogue with residents on challenging topics such as white privilege, implicit bias, residential segregation, reconciliation, and reparations.



# Specific vs Non-Specific #4

- \* Proactively collaborate with the Town Council, town committees and commissions, staff, residents, people who work in town, and visitors as well as other municipalities and outside organizations.
  - \* Coordinate regional planning of equity among other local municipalities and other outside organizations.
  - \* Proactively engage the other town committees and commissions on race and equity and support their work.
  - \* Support civil rights demonstrations in town or nearby areas.








# OTHER CONCERNS?

— no this is not the last slide....



# Subcommittee Work

Create Version 2.0 of the Charter using the comments from the meeting:

-  \* Unanimous consensus! Yay!
-  \* Strong consensus for option "B" and those supporting "A" think "B" is fine
-  \* VERY minor on-line in-meeting wordsmithing may occur prior to approval
-  \* Item is generally very good, but subcommittee should wordsmith a bit more.
-  \* Item needs further exploration and more options before approval. Send back to subcommittee.



# **Equity Committee Charter Version 1.5**

## **BACKGROUND**

Portola Valley occupies the ancestral land of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples and historically allowed racist covenants in property deeds. We are one of the richest towns in our nation with little racial or socio-economic diversity.

## **MISSION**

The committee's mission is to examine and take action around issues of race and equity in our community.

## **VISION**

Working together we can create a more diverse, inclusive, just, and equitable community for people of any race, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, age, socioeconomic status, or any other individual identity regardless of whether they are a resident, a person who works in town, or a visitor.

## **DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS**

1. Review the town government's existing and proposed policies, regulations, and practices in order to identify barriers to inclusion, racism, injustices, and/or inequities.
2. Support the Town Council by recommending changes to town policies and proposing actions related to race and equity focused on but not restricted to activities within the town.
3. Create opportunities for residents, staff, workers, and visitors to engage in conversation and learning experiences around relevant topics in our community and beyond.
4. Proactively collaborate with the Town Council, town committees and commissions, staff, residents, people who work in town, and visitors as well as other local municipalities and outside organizations.

## **RESPONSIBLE TO:**

The Town Council

## **COORDINATION**

Town Council Liaison(s)



## MEMBERSHIP

No more than nine members, each appointed for one-year terms by the Mayor with Town Council concurrence. Rotating Chair and Vice Chair selected by Committee.

## MEETINGS

Regular meetings are to be held the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm.





# TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY

## Colleagues Memo

---

**TO:** Equity Committee  
**FROM:** Mayor Maryann Derwin  
**DATE:** August 10, 2021  
**RE:** Request to Consider a Donation to United Against Hate Week

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Portola Valley Town Council requests that the Equity Committee recommend that we donate (or not donate) to United Against Hate Week in November, and if in the affirmative, in what amount up to \$1000.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Town of Portola Valley was invited by Jasmine Kamalnathan and Ryan Liu from Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguín's office to participate in this year's [United Against Hate Week](#), November 14-20, to send a message that hate has no place in our local communities.

This annual event arose from a "United Against Hate" poster campaign created by Bay Area cities in response to white supremacist rallies in Berkeley and San Francisco in 2017. Convened by Not In Our Town, a national anti-hate organization, Bay Area cities committed to an annual week of action and awareness.

While Portola Valley has not participated in the past, Jasmine and Ryan hoped we would get involved this year, especially after the recent rise in hate crimes against the AAPI community in the Bay Area and last summer's Black Lives Matter protests, to demonstrate how the Town is already committed to standing against hate and fostering inclusive communities.

At the July 14, 2021 Portola Valley Town Council meeting, the Council voted to join the many Bay Area cities supporting United Against Hate Week this November.

Rather than discussing whether to make a monetary donation, we decided to forward this question to the experts, the Equity Committee.

### **DISCUSSION**

As a supporter, the Town is encouraged to issue a proclamation and take a number of other actions which you can read about on the United Against Hate website.



<https://unitedagainsthateweek.org>. One of those actions is to financially support United Against Hate Week.

We ask the Equity Committee to discuss whether this is a good idea, and if it is, to recommend an amount of money to donate.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Up to \$1000.

For more information: Recorded meeting minutes from United Hate Week 2021 planning meetings, can be found [here](#).