



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
Race and Equity Committee Meeting
January 9, 2024
7:00 PM

Lucy Neely, Chair
Andrew Browne, Member
Adnan Iftekhar, Member
Cole Kawaja, Student Liaison
Andrew Pierce, Member
Jon Silver, Member
Johnathan Clark, Student Liaison

REGULAR MEETING

HISTORIC SCHOOLHOUSE – 765 PORTOLA RD. – PORTOLA VALLEY, CA

REMOTE MEETING ADVISORY: On March 1, 2023, all committees in Portola Valley will return to conducting in-person meetings. A Zoom link will be provided for members of the public to participate remotely; however, the Town cannot guarantee there will be no technical issues with the software during the meeting. For best public participation results, attending the meeting in-person is advised.

ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Town Clerk at (650) 851-1700 or by email at towncenter@portolavalley.net. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Town to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION VIA ZOOM

To access the meeting by computer:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89532548977?pwd=ihMsFjMGgurmGQb0YpGNkbH9pHMga2.1>

Webinar ID: 895 3254 8977

Passcode: 822462

To access the meeting by phone:

1-669-900-6833 or 1-888-788-0099 (toll-free)

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

- 1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**
- 2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**
Speakers' time is limited to two minutes.
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - a. NA
- 4. NEW BUSINESS:**
 - a. Discuss communications with the public around MLK Jr Day
 - b. Discuss any organizing for Black History Month
 - c. Discuss cosponsoring an event to commemorate the life and work of MLK on 4/7
- 5. OLD BUSINESS:**
 - a. Discuss cosponsoring a concert by the Black Brothers Band
 - b. Report on working with the Town's Historical Archives Committee to preserve, restore, and commemorate the Chilean Woodchoppers' House.
 - c. Report on efforts to work with the Portola Valley Library and Friends of the Library to have an educational display area for the Racial Justice and Equity Committee in our Library.
 - d. Discuss recruiting new members
- 6. ADJOURNMENT**
 The next regularly scheduled meeting date is Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Land Acknowledgement:

The Town of Portola Valley acknowledges the colonial history of this land we dwell upon—the unceded territory of the Ramaytush (rah-my-toosh) Ohlone, Tamien Nation, and Muwekma (mah-WEK-mah) Ohlone, who endured a human and cultural genocide that included removal from their lands and their sacred relationship to the land. Portola Valley recognizes that we profit from the commodification of land seized from indigenous peoples and now bear the ecological consequences. We seek to understand the impact of these legacies on all beings and to find ways to make repair.

From Jon Silver, regarding agenda items for 1/9/24 meeting

1) Cosponsor a concert and program to commemorate Martin Luther King's life's work, and his sacrifice for a better world on the Sunday (April 7) following the anniversary of his assassination on April 4, 1968.

This event could emphasize that the murder of Martin Luther King's body did not mean the killing of his life's work, which lives on (or *should* live on) in all of us; it is our obligation to pick up the torch of freedom, equality, justice, and peace from his fallen hand.

I have received commitments (or potential commitments) from five topnotch musicians to perform, one of whom has sung at Carnegie Hall. At this point they are Ronny Crawford, Bundy Browne, John Stein, Ammalisa Cohen and Livia Sohn. I have also reached out to Steve Goodman, who is an amazing singer.

In addition, I have contacted filmmaker Jon Else (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jon_H._Else). I hope that he will be able to show some film clips from *Eyes on the Prize*, which he helped produce, and speak about his work in Mississippi Freedom Summer in 1964, and the following year when he dropped out of Yale to work fulltime for SNCC (the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Core), which at that time was led by the young John Lewis.

I hope to bring on local organizations and institutions as cosponsors. These potential cosponsors include the schools, churches, scouting troops and so forth.

As a follow-on, the Racial Justice Committee could also plan ahead to cosponsor a concert and program to celebrate Martin Luther King Day at our Town Center in January of 2025.

2) Cosponsor concert at our Town Center in March of 2024 or 2025 by the Black Brothers Band. This concert could be dedicated to songs of peace and brother/sisterhood, and the ongoing struggle against hate, bigotry, and oppression.

The Black Brothers, Shay and Michael, who live in the Bay Area, are internationally acclaimed. (Along with their two sisters, Mary and Francis, and their brother, Martin, who all live in Ireland, all five siblings are noted musicians. Their little sister, Francis, is a member of the Irish Senate, and their eldest sister, Mary, sang at the 1998 celebration of the signing of the Good Friday Peace Accords in the presence of President Bill Clinton, the Irish Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, Tony Blair, and many others. Mary Black sang this song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UAWWhJTH4UBo>)

Links to some of the Black Brothers performances:

<https://www.black-brothers.com/video.php?id=69>

<https://www.black-brothers.com/song.php?id=1147>

