



Inclusion Through Diversity

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6/3/2020
2 PAGES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Highlights of the **June 2nd, 2020** meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

Legislature Passes Resolution Condemning Institutional Racism and the Killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN

Tompkins County Legislators reflected on racial injustices before unanimously passing (14-0) a resolution condemning the killing of George Floyd and institutional racism. Legislator Anne Koreman (D-Ulysses) submitted the resolution from the floor, seconded unanimously. While raising the resolution, Koreman said “I believe this is just one small thing that we can do, and a necessary first step to bearing witness to injustice.”

It was resolved that the Tompkins County Legislature pledges to continue to promote awareness, understanding, constructive dialog and education regarding inequity, and to adhere to zero tolerance for expressions of discrimination, bias, harassment, or negative stereotyping towards any person or group.

Legislator Shawna Black (D-Ithaca) stated “Discrimination is the greatest threat to a community built on belonging and acceptance.” Black announced that members of the Human Rights Commission and Director of the Office of Human Rights Rev. Kenneth Clarke, will be working on creating spaces for upcoming community dialogues. Rev Clarke added, “This resolution reflects the reality that we want to shape as a county,” and shared that the Office of Human Rights will be hosting community programming in response over the next several months.

Legislature Chairwoman Leslyn McBean-Clairborne (D-Ithaca) asked the community to reflect on the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and called on “citizens to not be innocent bystanders to injustice.” McBean-Clairborne continued, “we’re expected to carry on like everything is ok, but it’s not ok for me and it should not be ok for you.”

Tompkins County Sheriff Derek Osborne joined the meeting, stating “in police culture it starts at the top, this is an example of failed leadership, and I haven’t talked to one officer that feels any differently than I do.” Osborne shared that the Sheriff’s office has recently updated a [Duty to Intervene](#) policy that protects its members who act on their duty to intervene to prevent or minimize misconduct by another officer.

Contact, Anne Koreman, Chair, Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee, 607-319-3355

Among other business

Legislature Chairwoman Leslyn McBean-Clairborne read a proclamation acknowledging LGBTQ+ Pride Month and directing LGBTQ+ rainbow Pride flags to be flown at County flagpoles during the month of June. Kathy Jett from the Finger Lakes PULSE organization joined the meeting to accept the resolution, sharing, “As a representative of Finger Lakes PULSE, I am grateful for Tompkins County’s continued recognition of the LGBTQ+ community. Thank you for flying the rainbow Pride flags on all of the County Buildings and continuing to work diligently to support inclusivity and equity for all members of Tompkins County. May we come together in support of all those oppressed and may Tompkins County continue to be a beacon.” *Contact, Leslyn McBean-Clairborne 607-277-5104*

County Administrator Jason Molino and Public Health Director Frank Kruppa shared an update on Tompkins County's response to COVID-19. The update included data on the source of exposure to COVID-19 over time, showing a slight shift toward more community spread of the disease, though total case numbers are still low and broad implications cannot yet be drawn. During the update, Molino clarified that any move into future reopening phases may not happen on 14-day timelines, as the State has shared that there will be further reviews of the metrics in-between phases. Molino also shared that the County budget process is ongoing and that he is working with departments to assess impacts and to plan for moving forward. *Contact, Jason Molino 607-274-5551, Frank Kruppa, Public Health Director and Commissioner of Mental Health, 607-274-6674*

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