
Memo

DATE: November 17, 2020

TO: Williston Selectboard

FROM: Erik Wells, Town Manager

RE: COMMUNITY COALITION FOCUSED ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

Over the past month I have worked with a number of community organizations to form a coalition of stakeholders focused on facilitating dialogue and educational opportunities on the important topic of racial equity and social justice in Williston. The following organizations have joined the coalition to date:

- Town of Williston
- Champlain Valley School District
- Williston/Richmond Rotary Club
- Williston Community Justice Center
- Dorothy Alling Memorial Library
- Williston Federated Church
- Vermont Interfaith Action

The intent is to grow the organizations represented in this coalition in the coming months to encompass a far-reaching cross section of the community. The idea to form this coalition came from the work many organizations have undertaken to create spaces for conversation about racial equity and social justice this year. Instead of working in separate spheres to advance this conversation in the community, it is the intent of the coalition to use a collective effort in this work and leverage the resources and energy from many different voices and groups.

The coalition is still in the forming stage, and its next step will be offering listening opportunities for community members to share their voices in order to provide input as the coalition further develops its focus, and ultimately engagement opportunities for Williston. A \$3,000 grant has been received from the Vermont Community Foundation to assist in this work, and it will support a stipend for an individual to lead the coalition's work. I will keep the Selectboard updated as the work of the coalition continues to take shape over the winter months.