

Minutes – Social Justice Action Committee Meeting

April 21, 2014, North Chapel Library

In attendance: Anne Marinello, Jackie Fischer, Akankha Perkins, Peter Rousmaniere, and Richard Schramm

The minutes of the March meeting were approved.

Report from the Board – Anne Marinello

At its latest meetings the Board discussed how to make our work at the North Chapel more joyful, how to focus more on building and enjoying our community and less on “collapsing back,” and how to reduce any “drudgery” felt in committee work. Anne shared that the board has proposed that all the committees that are able meet monthly on the same evening for an hour - and the board will fix dinner! The suggested start date was Tuesday June 3rd. Peter added that there be a unifying theme that all the committees discuss at the same time - and then share their thoughts - perhaps four times per year.

Anne also reported that she had raised with the Board our proposal for more web presence of North Chapel alliances and partnerships. The idea was received favorably and a more detailed proposal requested.

Action Item: Anne and Richard to meet in next two weeks to fashion a more detailed proposal to bring back to the SJA Committee and then submit to the Board.

Reports/Updates

The 3/15 three-hour workshop on Class and Privilege, facilitated by Rita Hardiman, attracted 15-20 people for a thoughtful and engaging conversation. The 4/17 showing of “Inequality for All” film featuring Robert Reich, arranged by Jackie, Richard and Ron Miller, brought out 30 people for an informative evening. Both events were sponsored by the SJA Committee.

In reviewing these and other activities, Jackie spoke to the importance of *intersectionality*, the interconnectedness of the topics of many social justice concerns (forms of oppression) and of the actions taken to address these concerns. While some of these overlaps have come up in discussions at these events, we agreed to be more intentional and explicit in bringing up these connections. We also agreed to reach out to other social justice groups to broaden the discussion of these concerns and strengthen our response through collaboration.

Youth Summit

Jackie Fischer reported on the 3/22 Youth Summit at Farm and Wilderness. Twenty-two students (including 6 eighth graders along with high schoolers) and twenty adults attended, with numerous intergenerational conversations taking place as the group discussed the results of the “Asset Survey” completed earlier. Groups formed around jobs/internships, the Arts, and school “advisories,” with all producing action plans to guide

future activities. The intent now is to hold a Youth Summit every year with the support of the Ottauquechee Community Partnership.

New Business

Peter shared with the Committee his efforts to stop the annual Easter-time lighting of a Christian Cross on top of Mount Tom and asked for the Committee's support. The Committee agreed to support his actions to promote and protect religious freedom but also felt that the Christmas-time star lighting should not be displayed as well.

May Meeting

Since Richard is stepping down in June, Peter generously offered to take over as Committee Chair. While all present seemed supportive, even delighted, we should probably discuss this further at the May meeting in case others might want to serve as co-chairs.

At the May meeting, we will also review a proposal to the Board about a greater web presence for alliances and partnerships (see above) and the discuss our accomplishments since January 2013 and plans for next Fall. Richard proposed that we not meet during the summer but this wasn't discussed fully.

RAS 4/22/14