

Letter of Support

Rutland Young Professionals



The Rutland Young Professionals (RYP) Board of Directors is proud to support the Declaration of Inclusion created by Rutland County residents Al Wakefield, Bob Harnish, and several others.

Rutland Young Professionals is an all-inclusive organization focused on creating a vibrant Rutland Region. We engage with our community, create social and professional networking opportunities, and work to build a region that attracts and retains young professionals – young professionals of different races, ethnicities, genders, religions, sexual orientations, political affiliations, and more. Rutland Young Professionals is committed to making the Rutland Region a great place to work, live, learn, and play. We are also committed to doing our part to ensure that everyone – especially our diverse friends, colleagues, and members – feels comfortable and safe in our community.

We believe that diversity – in backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences – make us stronger as both a community and an organization. Our differences should be valued and embraced.

We know that there are many benefits to adopting the Declaration of Inclusion, but it is especially important for the demographic we serve, and Vermont as a whole. More young professionals are leaving the state every year. Vermont must continue to grow both culturally and economically in order to attract and retain young professionals. Vermont is home to the third oldest population in this country, so awareness and support of activities that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of its forms are critical to ensure that we continue welcoming young professionals in the Rutland Region and beyond. Our hope is that these individuals will choose to make their home in the Rutland Region, raise families here, start businesses, and become engaged in their respective communities.

For these and many other reasons, we strongly support the adoption of the Declaration of Inclusion – or an alternative version if deemed more appropriate – by all 27 towns and cities in the Rutland Region.

The Rutland Young Professionals Board of Directors

We Are One Rutland

Chamber & Economic Development of the Rutland Region



Saying it was disturbed by national and local events related to racism, Rutland County's leading economic development organization on Tuesday took a stand on behalf of inclusion, diversity and community.

The Board of the Chamber and Economic Development of the Rutland Region approved a resolution denouncing bias and discrimination and creating a new committee to ensure the organization does its part going forward.

"We have a social and moral obligation to lead," CEDRR said in a statement. "We can no longer remain silent and must in fact speak out to condemn discrimination of all kinds and embrace diversity in our communities. It makes economic sense, but far more important, it's the right thing to do."

The board unanimously approved the resolution, and directed the Executive Director Lyle Jepson to establish a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee that will be charged with, but not limited to, the development of a DEI Strategic Plan. The resolution requires the plan to include education, projects and activities to address bias, racism and discrimination as well as increase diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the CEDRR organization and the entire Rutland Region.

The resolution also directs the executive director to develop strategies that increase the understanding of systemic racism, equity, access to opportunity, diversity and inclusion among CEDRR staff, board members, committees, and members. It further encourages all members to support CEDRR and Jepson in this important and essential journey.

"We are alarmed, disturbed and concerned by national and local events and discourse relating to racism and intolerance of diversity," Jepson said. "Remaining silent is no longer an option -- and we know words are not enough, so we are poised to examine our own implicit biases and root out barriers to opportunity for everyone within our membership and our community."

CEDRR Board Chair John Casella II said the resolution is critical for the community.

“This is a long overdue and needed period of transformation, and CEDRR believes that with a spirit of openness, humility, and respect, we can not only learn from one another, but we can create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community where all can feel safe and where all can feel they belong and can thrive,” Casella said.

“We are one Rutland,” Jepson said. “We are actively listening with our minds, our hearts, and with open arms. We are prepared for the ‘essential journey’ to an inclusive community and country.”

Statement of Equity & Racial Justice

Middlebury, Vermont Selectboard

Human diversity can be defined as differences in race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical and/or mental capabilities, and religious beliefs, among other differences; and all of these vast diversities exist among and between the residents of The Town of Middlebury.

The Middlebury Selectboard stands with our community and commits to being more visible, vocal, and supportive in our efforts to ensure equity and racial justice and to directly address systemic and overt racism and implicit bias. We are ready to assist and, with Town staff, will do our best to make a difference.

As leaders, the Middlebury Selectboard commits to strengthen the trust in our community by employing Town staff team members who reflect the values of integrity, compassion, and respect for the diversity of all individuals, and demonstrate these high moral values every day.

What follows are concrete ways that we are addressing these issues. We will continue to add to this list throughout the coming months. We welcome your input.

COMMITTEE. The Selectboard has formed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Workgroup composed of three Selectboard members – Farhad Khan, Dan Brown, and Lindsey Fuentes-George - tasked with vetting our options for moving forward with our DEI work. The Selectboard is also considering converting the DEI Workgroup to a full Committee, which would potentially include staff members as well as members of the general public.

PARTNERSHIPS. The Selectboard commits to broadening our partnerships in ways that will amplify all of our efforts and help effect real change around these critical issues.

REPRESENTATION. The Selectboard encourages diverse candidates to apply for staff and board positions. We will work to implement new ways to broaden and enhance this outreach.

EDUCATION. The Selectboard commits to investing in additional staff and board training around topics related to implicit bias, racism, and equity at the municipal level. We will also share these resources with the public.

RESOURCES. The Selectboard will work to identify and partner with experts, affected communities and organizations to provide a digital toolkit of resources, including reporting mechanisms, and information available to members, partners, and staff.

REPORTING. The Selectboard will publicize avenues for community members and staff to report racist or discriminatory incidents.

COMMUNICATIONS. The Selectboard commits to including diverse voices, perspectives, and imagery in our messaging and publications.

Brian R. Carpenter, Chair

Heather Seeley, Vice Chair

Nick Artim

Declaration of Inclusion

South Burlington City Council

The South Burlington City Council recognizes that our community is strongest, most connected, and best served when trust is held between city government and the community; when all feel they can participate in policy making and municipal programming; when all have equitable access to city services; and when all believe that their leaders are actively working to breakdown hundreds of years of systematic racism. More civic engagement, community connection, and mutual trust is critical as we rise to the challenges South Burlington, Vermont, our nation, and the world face today.

To that end, the South Burlington City Council condemns racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, religious intolerance, and homophobia, in all its forms. We welcome all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or physical and/or mental capabilities, to participate in governance, and we will make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming community for all.

The South Burlington City Council stands with our community and commits to being more visible, vocal, and supportive in our efforts to ensure equity and racial justice, and to directly address systemic and overt racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, religious intolerance, homophobia, and implicit bias. We will work together with the City Manager and City staff, to ensure all of our actions, policies, and operation procedures reflect this commitment.

As leaders, the South Burlington City Council commits to strengthen the trust in our community by employing City staff team members who reflect the community we serve as well as bring values of integrity, compassion and respect for all individuals, and demonstrate these values every day.

The City Council recognizes that a Declaration of Inclusion is only the first step towards addressing the impacts from centuries of historic systems that have marginalized many members of our community. This work will take dedicated anti-racist initiatives that we bring into our everyday decision making. What follows are concrete ways that we are addressing these issues in the coming months and years. We will continue to add to this list in the future.

DEDICATED STAFF. The City Manager has formed a cross-departmental working group of city staff members who will provide input, vet initiatives, and provide recommendations to both the City Manager and City Council.

PARTNERSHIPS. The Council commits to forming new partnerships that will amplify all of our efforts and help effect real change.

REPRESENTATION. The Council strongly encourages all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or physical and/or mental

capabilities, to apply for staff, committee, and elected positions. We will work to implement new ways to broaden and enhance our recruitment.

EDUCATION. The Council commits to investing in additional staff and Council/committee training around topics related to implicit bias, racism, classism, ableism, ageism, religious intolerance, homophobia, and implicit bias at the municipal level. We will share these resources with the public as available.

COMMUNICATIONS. The Council commits to including all voices, perspectives, languages, and imagery in our messaging and publications.

Dated this 18th day of July, 2022.

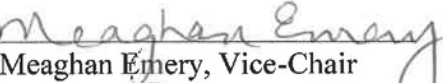
SOUTH BURLINGTON CITY COUNCIL



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Tom Chittenden



Meaghan Emery, Vice-Chair



Matt Cota



Tim Barritt, Clerk