

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