

Minutes from Diversity committee Meeting
Newton Cultural Council

March 12, 2021

Committee Members in Attendance: Kathy Hassinger, Lakshmi Narayan, Amelia LeClair, Grey Held and Jen Kaplan

We began the meeting by discussing the importance and reason for bringing in more diversity within the Newton Cultural Council, which is mostly comprised of Caucasians.

The committee members introduced themselves first

Then the potential new members introduced themselves:

Chali' Inaru Smiles-Dones - (from Amelia) She is new to Newton, moved here in Sept. 2020. She is part of the United Conf. of Taino People and co-founder of the Indigenous People's Day in Newton. She is an artist who makes jewelry and native headdresses.

Nathan Persampieri was introduced by Lakshmi. He is a college student, community activist and artist. He talked about how art and activism can intersect for people with disabilities. He used to do photography. He indicated that he was good at social media and promoting different events in the community.

Ally & Amani are a couple who was introduced by Kathy. Ally is a former dancer, big lover of the arts, speaks 5 languages. She is very interested in cultural awareness and exchange and is half Thai. Amani is a photographer and professor of Mass. Art. He is bi-racial.

The committee answered questions the new people had and referred them to the Newton City site if they wanted to apply to serve on the Newton Cultural Council. It seems that they were all interested, but Nathan didn't know if his college schedule would allow for him to serve on the Council.