

TOWN OF BARRINGTON, RI

Ordinance 2020- 27

Flag Policy

ADD NEW CHAPTER 104: Flag Policy

Sec. 104-1. Findings.

Municipal flagpoles and flag-raising are forms of government speech. Accordingly, the Town, through the Town Council, has absolute and sole discretion to decide the content of any flag that is raised on a Town-owned flagpole, in order for the message conveyed to appropriately reflect the values of the Town.

Sec. 104-2. Declaration of Policy.

It is the standing practice of the Town of Barrington to raise the official Flag of the United States of America on the Town Hall flagpole and other flagpoles on municipal property. It is the policy of the Town to raise the POW/MIA flag beneath the United States Flag on the Town Hall flagpole. The method for establishing or ceasing additional flag-raising shall be set forth in this ordinance.

Sec. 104-3. Additional flag-raising.

Additional flags may be raised beneath the POW/MIA flag on the Town Hall flagpole, or on any other flagpole on Town property, conforming to the US Flag Code (Title 4, Chapter 1 of the US Code), during select periods of time.

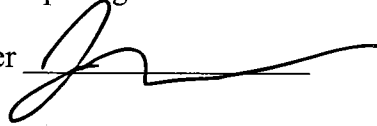
The methods by which additional flags may be raised shall be as follows:

- Council Resolution: Members of the Council or the Town Manager may submit Resolutions for honorary/alternate flag-raising to be voted on by the Council. Any Resolutions regarding flag-raising that predate the enactment of this Chapter shall remain in effect.
 - Resolutions shall demonstrate a purpose for why a specific flag is being raised at a specific time.
 - An individual or group requesting a flag-raising shall work with a member or members of the Council, or the Town Manager, who must sponsor the proposal and submit the Resolution to the Council.
- Manager Discretion: The Town Manager may raise a flag for a single day, provided that:
 - Notice has been provided to the Council in writing, at least three business days in advance, of the flag and its purpose.
 - Within two business days after written notice has been provided to the Council, no member of the Council individually objects to it being raised.

* * *

This ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

Council Member: Jacob N. S. Brier

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Brier', written over a horizontal line.

Filed: Nov 30, 2020

Introduced: January 11, 2021

Amended:

Adopted:

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MINUTES REGARDING FLAG POLICY

***May 4, 2020 Town Council Meeting Minutes**

DISCUSS AND ACT ON RESOLUTION(S):

- [Supporting](#) PRIDE Month

Discussion ensued regarding that all Council members will sign the resolution and that the resolution was corrected to state "Now therefore ..." third paragraph from the bottom. Mr. Brier indicated there would be a Flag Raising Ceremony (see Resolution paragraphs 11 and 12) designating the month of June, annually, as Barrington Pride Month. (Town Council directs the Town Manager to accommodate a Flag Raising Ceremony organized by or in collaboration with volunteers from the community.) Discussion ensued regarding the Governor's order on social distancing (due to COVID-19) and if it would be possible to hold such an event. Mr. Brier asked if the ceremony could be televised.

Motion by Mr. Brier and seconded by Mrs. Weymouth to adopt the resolution supporting PRIDE month in the Town of Barrington, as presented and that a copy of this resolution be provided to local and state representatives and the Governor. **The motion passed unanimously 5-0-0-0; in favor, Mr. Carroll, Mrs. Weymouth, Mr. Boyajian, Mr. Brier and Mrs. Hearn.**

***June 8, 2020 Town Council Meeting Minutes**

DISCUSS AND ACT ON PRIDE MONTH CEREMONY AGENDA:

TM Comment: Councilor Brier has proposed a PRIDE Month Ceremony for Monday, June 15th.

Mr. Carroll stated that at the last meeting of the Town Council a resolution supporting PRIDE month passed unanimously. He said that within the resolution that there would be a flag-raising ceremony that has been scheduled for June 15th. He said that due to the COVID-19 crisis, attendance at the flag-raising ceremony is at a minimum. Mr. Carroll has proposed a statement that can be read at the ceremony. Mr. Carroll said that if members of the Town Council were not present it may send the wrong message. He said that he wanted to show that we support the group and proposed the following statement:

"The Barrington Town Council was thrilled to declare June Pride Month in our Town and we are pleased to invite members of Barrington Pride to conduct a flag raising ceremony at our Town Hall. We want to express to people within the LGBTQIA+ community and all others, to our residents and to those outside of our Town, that Barrington is a welcoming and inclusive community."

Mrs. Weymouth said that she is comfortable with the simplicity and straightforward statement. Mr. Brier said that he lacks comfort with an additional statement. We passed a resolution last month stating that June is Barrington Pride month. He said that the volunteer group does not need us to be further involved unless we are invited to attend.

Mr. Carroll said because we did pass the resolution, we wanted to show that this is an important issue. He said that we need to send a message, not to just this group but to

everyone with a statement using plain language. Mr. Carroll said that they do not need to read it but would like to post it.

Mr. Brier said that he would like to change some words, (2nd line) from ~~our~~ town hall to Barrington Town Hall – it is not the Council's town hall, it is the town's Town Hall; then, in the first line, change ~~our~~ to Barrington Town.

Mr. Carroll said stylistically there are too many "Barrington's". Discussion ensued.

Mr. Carroll said that he amends the statement to read as follows:

"The Barrington Town Council was thrilled to declare June as Pride Month in ~~our~~ ~~Town~~ Barrington and we are pleased to invite members of Barrington Pride to conduct a flag raising ceremony at our Town Hall. We want to express to people within the LGBTQIA+ community and all others, to our residents and to those outside of our Town, that Barrington is a welcoming and inclusive community."

Mr. Carroll asked if anyone from the public would like to be heard:

Sara Jordeno said that this is my town. She said that I live in Barrington and I am a new resident (2 years). She said that we didn't feel that this is our town because there was a lack of Pride. She said that I got to know Councilman Brier and met with other LGBTQIA+ individuals in this town. She said that he told her of his initiative (for Barrington to celebrate June as Pride month). She said that he has done significant, critical work. It is enormous, that we are recognized as a rainbow family and that we are equally part of the town in every possible way than anyone else who lives here. Ms. Jordeno said that she is grateful that the vote was unanimous – it was an amazing feeling. She said that she was worried that it was brought up on the agenda, again.

We are used to having our rights taken away. She said she realizes that that is not your intention. We chose to work with Jacob and Carl Kustell and others; to make sure that the wording was right. She said she would love for this to be a specific day but the time to speak is very short. She said she would be delighted if more people would talk and do social media in the town. But this specific day, Pride, has made a choice to limit the day with solidarity with Black Lives Matter. Ms. Jordeno said that you have already done this amazing thing last month when you unanimously voted on the resolution. She said that Jacob, who brought us together, is representing the Town Council. She said because we have very little time, we need to have those that have the experience in our community and those that have worked hard for months and years and who have become allies to us, have the opportunity to speak.

Motion by Mr. Carroll and seconded by Mrs. Weymouth (Mrs. Weymouth said, (with emphasis) if there is time to have the statement read; but, it is okay if they do not read it. It is important that we are included in the celebration.) to adopt and amend the statement by the Barrington Town Council. Mr. Brier said, I will abstain from the vote since I am speaking at the event. He said, I feel a little odd since I am not reading this statement at the event. **The motion passed in favor, 4-0-0-1; in favor, Mr. Carroll, Mrs. Weymouth, Mr. Boyajian, and Mrs. Hearn.** Mrs. Hearn said that the acknowledgement of support is important, and it should be placed on our website.; **no one opposed, no recusals and one (1) abstention, Mr. Brier.** Mr. Carroll said that the statement is important. He wanted it understood that the Town Council just didn't bother to go.

July 27, 2020 Town Council Meeting Minutes

DISCUSS AND ACT ON THE TOWN OF BARRINGTON'S FLAG POLICY

Town Manager Comment from his memo dated July 27, 2020: The raising of the Pride flag in June has prompted some concern from the Barrington Veterans Council and neighboring communities has led to requests for additional flag raisings. The attached draft policy would codify the requirements for requesting Town Council approval for the raising of commemorative flags.

Mr. Carroll stated that the flag policy will give the Town Council the ability to decide which flags to raise on town property. Discussion ensued regarding the proposed flag policy that has been submitted by Councilman Brier with the help from our solicitors.

Mr. Brier said presently, we fly the United States flag and during the month of June we raise the Pride flag beneath the POW/MIA flag. On April 24th, the Armenian flag is flown in observance of Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day.

Mr. Brier discussed the proposed changes. Mr. Brier said that the words third parties will be changed to individuals or groups within Barrington; a change from a petition to request signed or digitally endorsed from 100 to 50 qualified residents (the word electors to be removed); change the word may to should regarding the size of the flag; a change from 24 hours to retrieve to 2 days; include the dimensions and to include not only the date but the time period and that this request must be delivered to the Town Clerk no less than one week prior to the Town Council's meeting that precedes the requested date for the flag to be flown. Mr. Brier continued his discussion with his proposed changes to include what not to fly by including, "The determination of whether a flag meets these criterias will be the sole discretion of the Town Council." The last change is, that participants and guests must adhere to Town policy not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, or any other class protected by law.

Mrs. Weymouth said that she does not have a problem with any of the proposed changes. Town Solicitor Mike Ursillo said that he has reviewed all the changes and there are no legal issues regarding the changes.

Mrs. Hearn said that most of the proposed changes she has no problem but said flying a flag can be a big deal and would like that the number to endorse remain at 100. She said that she would like to see a more defined time-period for flying a flag. Mr. Brier discussed that if we can include the request to fly a flag digitally, he would have the number of endorsements remain at 100. Discussion ensued regarding the time-period, but it was pointed out that "generally the flag shall be flown for a single 24-hour period" unless the Council so chooses to make exceptions. Mr. Boyajian suggested that we should not adopt a policy. He said that the policy could serve as a statement and council members not knowing which flags to allow or not allow. Mr. Boyajian said that we usually do not make it a practice to adopt policy, but we do adopt ordinances. He said by setting a threshold of 50 or 100 people to sign a request to fly a flag, may have people thinking that the council would take it more seriously. He said that I would not want to encourage those to go out and get 100 people to sign and stirrup controversy. Mr. Boyajian said that he does not want people flying their flag at town hall hi-

lighting their cause. Discussion ensued. Mr. Boyajian said that as long as we sit as members of the Town Council, we will decide what flag to fly. He said that if people disagree, they could vote us out of office, protest or write a letter to us. He said we would do what we always do, listen to them and then we would decide if it is a good idea or a bad idea, using our best judgement. He suggested that if we adopt the policy it could lead to those that would want to fly their flag to promote their cause. Discussion ensued. Mr. Boyajian said that we could elect to have a framework but there is no binding effect. Mr. Ursillo stated that if the Town Council elected to adopt this policy that this is non-binding with the next town council. However, the next town council could leave it in place or choose to change it; it does not automatically expire.

Mr. Brier said that he agrees with Mr. Boyajian, that the policy does not change how the decision is ultimately made and it does encourage requests, if they haven't been coming in already. He said that it may encourage more requests which may send the wrong message. Mrs. Hearn asked Mr. Brier that he is confirming that a policy does not need to exist, agreeing with Mr. Boyajian. Mr. Brier agreed. Mrs. Hearn stated that having parameters are helpful to sort through the requests. Mr. Brier suggested having an application at the Town Clerk's office. Mrs. Weymouth said that she sees Mr. Boyajian's point, that creating a policy could be a solution in search of a problem. **NO ACTION TAKEN.**

***SEPTEMBER 14, 2020 TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES**

DISCUSS AND ACT ON FLYING THE

a) Black Lives Matter Flag

Libby Gildea: She said she reviewed many letters on-line and reviewed the material where they are asking that the BLM flag be taken down and to raise the Back the Blue flag. She said that she was very disappointed with the rhetoric within the letters and it seems that there was a lot of vitriol along with various misspellings. She said that these letters are not addressing the heart of the issue and that is we want Barrington to be a welcoming and diverse place. She said that she wants people to feel safe in our community. She said taking down the BLM flag would send a very bad message and raising Back the Blue flag would send even a stronger message.

Trinki Bruekner: She said that she was happy that the BLM is flying and applaud the courage of Jim Cunha to fly the flag because it sends a powerful message.

Kelvin Misiurski: He thanked Mr. Cunha for taking leadership for the health and well-being of our community.

Pamela Poniatowski: She said she is so impressed when Barrington put the flag up.

Adrian Burke: She said that these discussions and conversations may be heated but we must trust in our government. She said that there are other flags that can fly too. We must support diverse minority groups and we are a mix group of people and we can be together making the effort to work through this.

Mr. Brier said that raising the BLM flag is more than aligning with an organization. He said that it is more than just a movement, that black lives matter equally. He discussed that in some of the letters opposing the flying of the BLM flag that they described the group as a Marxist organization. Mr. Brier described how these remarks are not true and how we as a town can state our values and

commit to local policies is among the things that we can do. The Town Manager made the statement on behalf of the town and although he would have preferred that it was done through a different process, I can't imagine ending that statement before taking some action toward it. He said that some in town think that the town have no business making a statement by flying this flag. He would like to see that Barrington continue to fly the flag to ensure that the town has done a good job by sending the message, that Black Lives Matter, to all residents and visitors. **Motion** by Mr. Brier for the BLM flag fly until the end of February 2021, and at which time replaced with the Pan-African flag for recognition of Black history month. Mr. Carroll asked for a second to the motion, there was none. Mr. Carroll said that he supports flying the BLM flag and that the Town Manager has taken a lot of heat. He said that these discussions are useful so that we can make Barrington a more diverse and welcoming place and to allow those to see different positions that may not be obvious to them. **Motion** by Mr. Carroll and seconded by Mrs. Weymouth to continue to fly the BLM flag through November 2020. Mr. Boyajian said that he was thrilled that the Town Manager put the (BLM) flag up. He said that it shows that Barrington has picked a side in this matter. He said the question is when to take it down. He said that right now he sees that the existing government does not have any hesitation as what our values are now. Mr. Boyajian said that three (3) of the council will not be here after November and he does not think he should make that decision to keep the flag past his term. Mr. Brier said that taking the BLM flag down and being replaced by the Pan-African flag was chosen because he said that he views it as a more educational tool for those to learn what it is. He said that the new flag has an intended purpose which is Black history month. Mr. Brier is on board with keeping the BLM flag up until the Council decides to take it down. Mrs. Weymouth agrees with Mr. Brier but disagreed with flying the Pan-African flag in February because black history month is about African Americans and it is their history not Ethiopians/Ghana history. She said that they have added to our culture with literature, activism, music, science and more. She feels that she would leave the BLM flag up until the next council makes a decision to take it down. Mrs. Hearn said that she appreciates that the BLM flag is flying but has a problem in how it went up without a Council vote. She said that it saddens her that the American flag is not seen as inclusive. She said that she agrees that we should leave it up until the next council takes the flag down. **Motion** by Mrs. Weymouth and seconded by Mrs. Hearn to keep the BLM flag flying until the next Town Council votes to take it down.

Lisa Daft: She said that she sent a letter to fly Back the Blue flag. She questioned how other flags will be flown, if you vote to keep the BLM flying. She said she is concerned that there is no policy in place to fly a flag.

TR Rimoshytus: He said that you are taking a vote to fly a flag without a policy. He read a statement into the record. He said that he was disappointed that the Town Manager decided to fly the BLM. He said that he requested that the 911 flag be flown. He said that the only flags that should be flown are the US, State and POW. He said that he would like to see the Barrington Town Council create a policy like the towns of Warren and Bristol. He proposed just to fly the three flags, American, State of RI and the POW/MIA and the second proposal, if the first proposal did not pass, then fly the three (3) flags but add two (2) more flag poles –

the highest pole would fly the American flag and the POW/MIA, on one flag pole fly the state flag and the other flag pole fly a flag for an organization for one (1) week only one (1) time a year.

Marianna Silva-Buck: She wanted to make a correction to Mrs. Weymouth's comment on the Pan-African flag. She said that the Pan-African flag is not a reflection on the African continent, but it is a reflection on African Americans representing those in the US. She said that we support BLM because we support a human rights standpoint (We are not taking a piece from the pie because all lives matter; but BLM too.). She said that the Town Council should have the discretion on the validity of the merits of a flag and/or purpose.

Kelvin Misiurski: He said that the more appropriate flag for first responders is not the 911 flag but the firefighter flag.

Trinki Bruekner: She spoke about Mr. Rimoshytus' comment that BLM is against police and firefighters. She said that BLM is against police brutality. She said that we may not want a policy where we must fly a flag from all sorts of groups and have them fly their flag for one (1) week.

Lisa Lowenstein: She said that it can be very dangerous making a policy which the Town Council puts time into considering a request to fly a flag. She does not support a policy to fly a flag.

TR Rimoshytus: He said no policy just fly the three (3) flags American, State and POW/MIA. He said have a protest or fly a flag at your own home.

Mr. Boyajian discussed that the Armenian flag has flown for years and there was never a peep.

Mr. Carroll asked for a roll call to vote on the motion made by Mrs. Weymouth and seconded by Mrs. Hearn (earlier in the discussion) to have the BLM flag fly until the next Town Council decides to stop flying it. **The motion passed unanimously 5-0-0-0; in favor, Mr. Carroll, Mrs. Weymouth, Mr. Boyajian, Mr. Brier and Mrs. Hearn.**

b) Back the Blue Flag

Town Manager Comment from his memo dated September 14, 2020: The raising of the of the Black Lives Matter flag has drawn a strong reaction from some residents (see attached e-mails). A Flag Policy was discussed at the July 27, 2020 meeting and the Council decided that a flag policy was not necessary. The Black Lives Matter Flag has been flying since Friday, August 28th.

There is now a request to fly the Back the Blue Flag (see attached e-mails). In accordance with the US Flag Code §8. Respect for flag. G. The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature. This would make the flying of the Back the Blue flag, as depicted in the attachment, inconsistent with the U.S. Flag Code."

There is no penalty if a flag is flown in contravention of the U.S. Flag Code by local city or town, so the U.S. Flag Code would not technically prohibit flying the Back the Blue Flag. Instead, the Flag Code is appropriately respected as a matter of decorum, so inconsistency with the Flag Code is enough reason for the Town to choose not to fly a certain flag.

Mr. Carroll said that we received a letter to fly the Back the Blue flag on September 11th. Mr. Carroll said that he believes that if it is a flag with the blue line in the middle of the American

flag that it may be a violation of the flag code: 4USC Sec 8. Mr. Carroll spoke of examples of how the American flag can be flown. Mr. Carroll said he would not fly this flag because of the potential violation, and he thought that to fly this flag would be a reaction of flying the BLM flag. He discussed that another flag may be flown to support first responders on 911.

Mr. Cunha said that those that were lost on 911 all flags in Barrington were flown at 1/2 mast.

Chace Kazounis: She said that she felt that Mr. Brier asked for a public invite. She said that she placed a request to honor those on 911. She spoke of Mr. Brier's comments in the newspaper.

Paul Dulchinos: He said that there is an alternate first responder's flag.

Kelvin Misuirski: He said he was confused by the choice of flag regarding honoring those on 911.

Libby Gildea: She said that she feels that Back the Blue Flag is a strange choice and is questionable in honoring 911.

Trinki Bruekner: Asked for further clarification regarding first responders.

Paul Dulchinos: He explained that the first responders is a shared group, police, fire EMT's.

Mr. Cunha said that we cannot fly any American flag that has been altered (i.e, back the blue, back the red etc.) He said that he is confident that we will be able to find an appropriate flag to fly on the 20th anniversary of 911.

NO ACTION TAKEN

DISCUSS AND ACT ON THE TOWN OF BARRINGTON'S FLAG POLICY

Town Manager Comment from his memo dated September 14, 2020: The raising of the Pride flag in June and the BLM flag over the past two weeks has prompted support and concern from many citizens. It has also prompted numerous requests to raise the Back the Blue flag. The attached draft policy would codify the requirements for requesting Town Council approval for the raising of commemorative flags. At the July 27th meeting the Council decided not to adopt a policy but to review each request on its own merits.

Mr. Brier said that the proposed Flag Policy will establish that the only way a flag can be flown is from the vote of the Council. He said if there is a group from the public who would like to fly a flag that they would reach out to a member or multiple members of the Council or the Town Manager, discuss it with them and having their support ("sponsor") will prevent a long debate with one flag request after another.

Mr. Carroll said that our Solicitor has done extensive research and said that just because the Council decided to fly a flag from one particular group does not give the right for another group to fly their flag. Mr. Carroll said that we (Town Council) have the sole and absolute discretion of any content of any flag to be raised.

Mrs. Weymouth said that within this flag policy it states that during the month of February to raise the Pan-African Flag and that she would oppose this policy.

Mr. Boyajian said that if we turn the flagpole into a public forum that would mean that anyone could fly any flag. He said the way to solve the problem is to make clear that it is not a public forum. He said that he is not in favor of setting a policy that states next June xyz gets done. He suggested to propose an ordinance that makes clear that no resident does not have

the right to fly a flag on the flagpole. He said that the Town Council or the Town Manager, since he is the CEO of the Town, can make this decision.

Mrs. Hearn said that she likes the policy that Bristol and Warren have put in place, requiring over 200 signatures and a council member as a sponsor.

Mr. Brier said that he would agree to amend the policy by removing that the Pan-African flag does not fly in the month of February but to let a future council decide. He said that a resolution was signed by the Council to fly the Pride flag as an annual event in June. Discussion ensued.

Paul Dulchinos: He said that the United Veterans' Council believe that All Black Lives Matter" to include but not limited to:

- Victims of police brutality
- Victims of gang violence and crime
- The lives of law enforcement and first responders
- The lives of members of the military.

We do not support organizations that:

- Support lawlessness and rioting
- Excuse looting and other personal or property crimes
- Engage in violence to intimidate and silence dissenting opinions
- Advocate for revolution based on extreme left wing or right-wing ideologies

Overall, the UVC wants to protect the dignity of our Veterans Memorial ensuring no private and political flags and banners are flown under the American Flag at its location.

Mr. Dulchinos listed the Barrington Veterans who have died serving our country and their bodies were draped with an American Flag and that flag was presented to their families. He said that we just would like to keep it clean and simple and it is this one flag that represents all of us and is inclusive and that we pledge our allegiance to, the American Flag. He said that the flag poles located in front of Town Hall and those located on any municipally owned property shall only fly the United States Flag, the flag of the State of RI, the POW/MIA flag and the flag of the Town of Barrington. Mr. Dulchinos said that he feels that we do have a diversity problem in town, but he does not think we have a systemic racism problem. He said that we all came to this town for the same reasons, we are all proud of this town and we do not need groups coming into our town dividing us – "A nation divided will fall". He suggested that the town may want to erect another pole in another location for other banners to be placed. He spoke for the group, saying that they do not believe that these other flags should share the space with US Flag, State Flag and POW/MIA Flag. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Brier thanked Mr. Dulchinos for his services. He said that the flag speaks to me and represents me. But it does not do it for everyone. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Brier said that he is fine without making a motion but would like to see a flag ordinance for the next meeting in October.

Paul Dulchinos: He said that he would hope that the people could support the Veterans and keep political statements out of the Veterans Memorial. He said that he suggested to adopt a flag neutral policy.

Jim Cunha (as a citizen): He said that he is a Veteran. He said that the conversation tonight that flying the BLM Flag is the right thing to do. He said that the US Flag will always fly above any other flag. He said that the BLM flag is not in opposition but in support of.

Katherine Quinn: She said that she has a lot of respect that Mr. Cunha decided to fly the BLM flag.

NO ACTION TAKEN

October 5, 2020 Town Council Minutes

PUBLIC COMMENT (two-minute statement) –

To the public: This agenda item is for members of the public to speak regarding a topic that is not already on the agenda.

TR Rimoshytus: commented on flag etiquette and asked that you follow all the rules and not just pick what you want.

John Conti: said as a non-partisan opinion he is asking that the Council renege on their recent decision of flying the BLM flag and that no flags should be flown other than the American, State and the POW/MIA. He said that he is in favor of a policy.

Kevin Brennan said that he is a long- time resident, that he attended the rally earlier today and that his name is on the honor roll. He “seconds” Mr. Conti’s request and is in favor of a flag policy.

Sandy Stamoulis said that she has sent letters to the members of the Council and has a strong preference for the town to have a flag policy.

Frank Douglas said that he supports a continued dialogue because that there is diversity in the veteran community because they do not speak for all veterans. He said that there is diversity of understanding for those who have worn the flag into battle and that we can all honor the flag and have a difference of opinion and honor the right of free speech that goes on beneath the flag pole. It will retain its honor on top of the flagpole, and he said that it does not need personal guardians or safeguards from free speech because the flag is strong.

Trinki Bruechner said that she does not see the BLM flag as political or partisan, but it is a statement that Black lives matter. She supports the BLM flag flying.

Paul Dulchinos said that the merits of the flag or the organizations that they are to represent is not our position. He said that the flagpole is not the place to make your 1st amendment speech because there is no way to be inclusive. He said that this month is Latino American month and why are we alienating that community. This is just “opening up a can of worms”. He said if we should have a policy so that we do not support one group over another.

Hermينو Augustin said that he supports Mr. Dulchinos’ stance to remain neutral, no other flags except the American flag.

Katherine Quinn said that there is nothing controversial with the BLM flag. She said that when you live in a town of over 90% white people that the lives of black people are valued and that they matter since they are not fully represented.