



REPORT TO RED BANK MAYOR & COUNCIL

Results of Committee, Board and Commission Diversity Survey

June 2024

Introduction

The Red Bank Community Engagement & Equity Committee (CEEC) has prepared this report so that we can better understand the demographic makeup of our volunteer committee, board and commission members in 2024 and plan to implementing the changes that are needed to have our volunteer members better reflect our diverse community.

The CEEC initiated this survey to support an action item for Sustainable Jersey 2024 certification. The Community Equity & Diversity Profile Action is a priority item for all certification levels and awards variable points.

This action also counts toward Gold Star in Health and is one of seven certification actions that relate to our borough's overall health issues identifying specific actions and levels of performance to measure how we have incorporated health in municipal decision-making and addressed certain social and environmental determinants of health within Red Bank. The Gold Star in Health is a new item in 2024 and was not available during the 2021 certification cycle.

As the Mayor, Council and many residents already know that certification in Sustainable Jersey supports and showcases the borough's commitment to a more sustainable community and offers additional opportunities for grants. We are confident that Red Bank will certify at Silver Status again in 2024 - this will be the third consecutive Silver Status certification following two certifications at the bronze level since 2014. It is important to note that this is truly a team endeavor with contributions from municipal government, borough employees and several of the volunteer committees.

Objective of Survey

The Borough of Red Bank is a diverse and multicultural community. In order to adequately reflect that diversity in government and its decision making, it is critical that the membership of our committees, boards and commissions reflect that diversity.

The Survey: Results and Review

The content of the survey used was an updated version of the template provided by Sustainable Jersey and was reviewed by Pat Pinto, Chair of CEEC, Councilwoman, Nancy Facey-Blackwood, and Business Manager, Jim Gant. The survey was then sent to all members of committees, boards and commissions by the Borough Clerk - a total of 103 individuals. Participation was anonymous and voluntary. (The only question that identified an individual was when asked if member would like to participate in live discussion - 10 or 57 members volunteered to participate)

We received responses from 57 members which is approximately a 55% response rate. While the return rate was a less than expected, it was more than 30% higher than the last survey we conducted in 2021. There was full participation by two committees and all other committees had a minimum of 3 responses.

Responses were automatically compiled in a survey response format by Microsoft Forms. The results of the survey were then compared to data from the 2020 United States Census based on population of 12,936 as of April 1, 2020.

[https://data.census.gov/profile/Red Bank borough, New Jersey?
g=160XX00US3462430](https://data.census.gov/profile/Red%20Bank%20borough,%20New%20Jersey?g=160XX00US3462430)

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/redbankboroughnewjersey>

The tables on the following pages focussed on age, gender identification, race & ethnicity and have been selected as the areas to prioritize. As you read through the survey results, you will see that there were additional items included the survey (for example: religious practice, marital status, education and languages spoken at home).

In addition we provided an overview of information we deemed important as we move forward with our recommendations. These response are more opinion based on perceptions rather exact responses. Members were asked to rate topics from one to 5 or 6 (6 being the highest). Highlights include:

- * Ability to participate w/o regard to identifying diversity characteristics: 5.19 out of 6
- * Committee colleagues treat each other with respect: 4.74 out of 5
- * Municipal leader respond effectively when it comes to diversity: 4.09 out of 5
- * Diversity is well represented on committee I serve: 3.95 out of 5
- * Red Bank actively recruits diverse candidates to serve: 3.93 out of 5

AGE			
	CENSUS % (#)	SURVEY % (#)	DIFFERENCE %
15-29*	8.09% (1004)	5.26% (3)	-2.83%
30-39	18.79% (2329)	22.8% (13)	4.01%
40-49	11.9% (1476)	10.5% (6)	-1.4%
50-59	10.8% (1263)	17.54% (10)	6.74%
60 plus	29.1% (3617)	43.85% (25)	14.75%

* Note: The census broke down age 15-19, 20-24, and 24-29. Since all our members are over 18 years of age, our point of view is fairly accurate in comparisons

GENDER			
	CENSUS	SURVEY	DIFFERENCE %
MALE	49.9%	36.8% (21)	-13.1%
FEMALE	51.1%	63.15% 36	12.05%
NON-BINARY	N/A	—	—
OTHER-PREFER NOT TO SAY	N/A	—	—

Note: The census did not break out non-binary or Other/Prefer not to Say

RACE & ETHNICITY			
	CENSUS	SURVERY % (#)	DIFFERENCE %
WHITE (Non-hispanic)	63.8%	77.19% (44)	13.39%
BLACK- AFRICAN AMERICAN	8.6%	5.3% (3)	-3.3%
HISPANIC (Non-white)	23.6%	7.01% (4)	-16.59%
ASIAN	1.7%	1.8% (1)	0.1%
MIXED RACE	7.7%	7.01% (4)	-0.69%
OTHER	0.6%	1.8% (1)	1.2%

CENSUS NOTE: The percentages on census do not add up to 100% due to multiple persons in household but this is the best information we have. BTW - the other category is American Indian mostly with some identifying as Pacific Islander.

SURVEY NOTE: Our survey asked for Race and Ethnicity as per Sustainable Jersey Template. For our purposes here, items combined and averaged.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In the last few years, Red Bank has reviewed and improved processes for recruiting candidates/members for its committees, boards and commissions. In 2023, the borough implemented an application process for residents interested in serving. Applications were reviewed and appointments were made based on personal interest, past service and experience.

While this is a positive step forward in the appointment of members, it is our opinion that there are areas in need of improvement and additional recruiting activities are necessary. That said, since this survey was totally voluntary, we recognize that the numbers in all segments are not fully accurate but it is what we have to work with now.

If the composition of our committees truly reflect the diversity of our community, we recommend the municipality looks at these top 3 areas

AGE: With 62% of our members over the age of 50, there is a definite need to recruit younger members.

GENDER: Need to close the gap between men and women

RACE & ETHNICITY: Perhaps the most critical - at the very least, our Black/African American and Hispanic members combined should reflect close to 33%. Presently combined we are at about 19%. Individually, the census shows that Black/African Americans are 8.6% of our population for committee members is at 5.7%. And the census shows our Hispanic population is 23.6% and members are at 7.01% which is quite lower than where it needs to be.

Recommended Actions

As we have all heard in the past, it takes a village and that is true for our recommended action to move us forward.

A brainstorming session is recommended to facilitate a list of actions in order to reach a more diverse audience. This group should include council representatives, members of the CEEC and those members who volunteered to meet to discuss this topic further.

Closing

This report is being introduced at the Council Meeting on Thursday, July 11. The report will be available on the CEEC borough web page as well as the CEEC Facebook page.

<http://www.redbanknj.org/229/Community-Engagement-Equity-Advisory-Com>

<https://www.facebook.com/RedBankCEEC/>

If anyone in the community has questions, please contact Pat Pinto, Chair CEEC, who prepared this report via email at RBCEEC@redbanknj.org or post a question/comment on their Facebook page.

