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## The Stoneham Select Board Statement on Racial Justice

The Stoneham Select Board recognizes the important moment our nation is in and acknowledges our country's long struggle with discrimination. The recent inhumane and unnecessary killing of George Floyd, as well as many other people, because of the color of their skin, has made evident the need to openly and outwardly reject racism in our community. The Stoneham Select Board has a currently adopted human rights statement, which states, "to ensure equal treatment and opportunity to all individuals regardless of race, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, ideology, socio-economic status, health, sexual orientation, age, military status or disability." As a Board, we have zero tolerance for discrimination or harassment of any individual for such reasons identified.

The Stoneham Select Board has a responsibility to maintain dialogue with and between residents, to keep the communication open and honest, and to promote equality in all we do. Stoneham's newly formed Human Rights Commission was a step in the right direction toward meeting this goal, but we still have further to go. The Board encourages residents to act on our recent experiences by building upon this foundation, to seek and ensure inclusivity, civility and respect for all. This can only be done by continued conversation and by ensuring all residents feel safe when addressing these issues. We must make a commitment, individually and collectively as a community, to ensure that we address systemic inequities.

We have borne witness to the public outcry across the nation and cannot stand by in silence. We must review current policies and procedures and create new programs with the intention of eliminating disparity and further strengthening the bonds between us all.

Shelly MacNeill, Chair

Raymie Parker, Vice Chair

George Seibold, Clerk

Heidi Bilbo