

**From:** [Alma Vasquez](#)  
**To:** [Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment for County Commission  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 10, 2021 1:57:51 AM

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August 9th, 2021

Dear Leelanau County Board of Commission,

This letter is for Public Comment. I write this letter as this month marks a year since you passed the Anti-Racism Resolution in response to the Road Commission Racist comment making national news headlines. In your approved signed Leelanau County Resolution #2020-014, Resolution to Condemn Racism in Leelanau County you stated you would be taking action including that you are committing your full attention to advocating for equality, equity, and improving the quality and racial equity is a core element in all organizational practices. You also state that you will promote, support, and participate in the necessary professional development programming to support the purposes of this resolution for all employees, Commissioners and elected officials.

In the last two years Leelanau County and Grand Traverse County continue to make national news headlines and it isn't for its beauty and vacation destination, Pure Michigan. Sadly and heartbreaking our area continues to make national news due to the racist comments and actions made by people in our communities including elected officials. Our area has made those negative headlines several times since the Road Commission Eckerle comments even after your anti-racism resolution was passed.

I ask you what have you done since passing this resolution to uphold and take action on the items you stated including the two I mentioned above? Passing the anti-racism resolution was the first step in the right direction, it was a first step. It is a start but it can not end there. You must put into action what you agreed to do otherwise it was not a step at all. What have you done to keep moving forward and keep your word to what you agreed and signed to do? A meeting or two, a training or two in a year is not enough. Leelanau County deserves and needs more action to ensure you are helping and advocating for equality, equity, and improving the quality and racial equity is a core element in all organizational practices. Leelanau County needs it's leaders to lead and help make Leelanau County a better and safer place for all people including BIPOC.

I have been a resident of Leelanau County for 30 years. My husband and I have raised our children here, now young adults. We are all active community members. We help our community, our schools, neighbors, strangers, family and friends. I have seen and experienced racism since arriving in Leelanau County 30 years ago. My husband has seen and experienced it too. I wish I could tell you that our community had changed over time and that we were able to spare our children from having to see or experience racism. It breaks my heart to know that the place we call home even in the 21st century, 22 years later, my children have witnessed and experienced racism too. I am appalled that any of us have had to experience any racism as have our family and friends, BIPOC, have endured too. This is the only home our children have ever known. We are all law abiding citizens. My husband and I are both long time employees of the government. People say, just be good people, just follow the law, to comply, have a good job etc., these things would not happen. They are wrong! You can be a good person, law abiding, employed, educated, compassionate, etc., if you are a BIPOC, you can still experience racism. You can be born

here and still endure racism in your own yard even if you are not doing anything wrong. While we don't experience this on a daily basis. We should not have to endure it at all!

I write this letter because I know there is critical work for all of us if we truly want to see positive change for a safer and better community for all people including BIPOC. It takes a village! It takes our leaders and community members to work together. We need you to keep your word and put your words into action. You can add mandatory training on diversity and inclusion. You can look at ways to add more diversity to the workplace. You can create and support a Leelanau County Anti-Racism Coalition or task force with members of the Board of Commissioners working with other interested stakeholders and citizens. The Coalition's work would keep the Board of Commissions apprised of active work toward the goals they set, a year ago. This action step would keep these goals front and center.

We know that there are a lot of positive things about our community. We know there are good, loving and compassionate people. Unfortunately, this does not dismiss the people who are racist and need to be held accountable.

Please do not wait another moment. Please do not wait for us to make another negative National News Headline or for it to be someone's life taken too soon on the Washington Post or the New York Times. The time is NOW!

Sincerely,

Alma Rosa Vasquez (Rosie)

Sent from my iPhone