

Race Equity Advisory Council Meeting

Notes

Date: July 15, 2021

Time: 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Location: MS Teams

Council members present: Council members present: Amani Berry, Biiftuu Ibrahim Adam, Deran Cadotte, Johnathon McClellan, Larry Hiscock, Mahogany Ellis Crutchfield, Sheila Webb, Tekia Jefferson

Council members not present: Alexis Murillo, Debjyoti Dwivedy, Miamon Queeglay, Mukul Nautiyal

County Staff: Alisa Salewski, Chela Guzman-Wiegert, Mercy Das, Pat Zagaros, Randy Larson, Steve Voeller

Guests: Commissioner Irene Fernando, Akhi Menawat

Meeting was broadcast on MS Teams live for public viewing.

- 1) July meeting agenda approved.
Deran Cadotte moved to approve, Mahogany Ellis Crutchfield seconded. 7 Ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain.
- 2) June meeting notes approved.
Deran Cadotte moved to approve, Mahogany Ellis Crutchfield seconded. 7 Ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain
- 3) Commissioner Irene Fernando met with the REAC
Vision and hope for the REAC
 - Achieve your vision and hopes. Commissioner will support in whatever way possible.
 - Can help deconstruct language of government. Can translate community needs into systems
 - REAC can be a place where residents and communities can participate and gain the skills of governing;
 - REAC and commissioners are both advocates for residents residing in systems that are difficult. Wish for world where it's not hard to advocate for dignity and humanity.

How can REAC communicate with Commissioner

Very open to communications from REAC.

- E-mail
- Send notes to board
- At community events

Board declaration of racism as a public health crisis

Steps County leadership has taken since this declaration to address this crisis

- When the declaration as passed, several clauses were voted separately. There is gradient in a decision there are many ways staff and communities feel that charge: declare it was important, put some actionable aspects to it,

- Not have race be a separate area of the county but infused and reported on. This is a measure of progress as to how the board used to be.
- Hired a chief equity officer for Hennepin Health, incorporated that into Hennepin Health.
- Climate change included in the public health arena. It's not complete, but a lot of doors have been opened.

Are there some key data points that you are going to be looking to see progress over an extended period of time?

- Don't want a dashboard, rather talk about housing, income, wages, food access, etc; at all meetings
- Want to bring a more holistic understanding of the life of a family to the board.
- Trying to express that these numbers are actual neighbors of ours, to be as aggressive as possible that these peoples' stories cannot wait 5 years, reminding ourselves what is at stake.

Neighborhoods where there is a high population of color, you can tell when you enter and exit that community. What has the county's role been and current role in allowing this? Who is responsible for allowing so many liquor stores, unhealthy restaurants?

- Municipal leaders have responsibility for this.
- County and cities have responsibility for land use. County has doubled funding for housing/
- County has to make changes ourselves at first then expand it later; the city level makes those decisions.

There has been a lot of gun violence in the county and children have been deeply affected. Children will be returning to school in the fall after an unusual 18 months. What preparations are being made to address the mental health of children and racial inequity in the mental health system.

- Work is increasing on child mental health and the county is working on plans. Can have county staff provide this information
- Think about young people up to 26 years of age, bet on our young people,
- Treat youth as individuals, not the same as another individual, humanize who we are referring to as young people,
- Find ways to help them be vibrant member of our community,
- We should be serving young people where they are presenting. Increase out contracts to those organizations closest to our youth.
- Gun violence is a very broad topic and unfortunately it has become so pronounced there is no one action, we need comprehensive action: food as violence prevention, jobs as violence prevention,
- Board has increased funding for gun violence prevention and added FTEs. Feeling heartened in this tragic time that the county is able to allocate more funds.

Does that include gun violence caused by police?

- Want to contribute to future plans to hold those accountable for violence.

4) Draft Board Action to amend bylaws: to have Co-Chairs, in case of tie

- Need to look at what the position entails to add it to the bylaws.
- Looking at what other advisory councils have done—will provide update as information is available

- Currently bylaws specify a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. The Chair has authority to appoint committees and to delegate authority.
- Will look into what the process for breaking a tie is (this happened during elections)

5) Annual Report outline and updates from committee chairs

Report Outline

- 15 minute presentation to the commissioners in committee in November.
- Use the outline posted in Basecamp.
- In addition to committee reports, there will be an executive summary, overall community engagement, and diversity in personnel sections.

Report timeline

- Report is due to the county on September 24th.
- All reports should be complete by the end of July.
- August—leadership will spend reviewing and editing report
- September meeting—report will be approved by the Council and sent to County Administration

Child Protection: Mahogany Ellis-Crutchfield

Bit behind. Reviewing materials received from County. Will meet to finish report in the next few days.

Civic Engagement: Sheila Webb

First draft of report is ready. Need to add some more language; look at data to ensure it is aligned with report and is clear to others who read the report

Housing: Larry Hiscock

Still need to add: Section addressing concerns of BIPOC businesses and how all stakeholders can provide input; also a section looking at ways to engage with BIPOC, investors and their impact on housing, benefits of patient capital, innovative housing options

Everyone invited to provide feedback to all sections on Basecamp.

Public Safety/Justice: Johnathon McLellan

Have a structure and overall outline; working on fleshing it out.

6) Community engagement: what values does the REAC want to communicate; suggestions for county.

- Transparency
- Timely response
- Get input from community experts
- Incorporate all the ways that different REAC committees have engaged with the community in one large section. List groups and people that REAC has met with
- Have suggestions on how the county can engage with the community more.
- Mercy post all the community engagement ideas from different committees on basecamp.

7) Discuss HR data provided by county

- There's a lot of demographic information
- No salary information was provided
- Hennepin County has the largest budget outside of the state budget and hiring decisions have impact on equity and opportunity
- HR reports didn't add a lot of detail to intent of the information requests
- Important to have more information on the workforce and racial equity, departmental breakdown, and wage breakdown

8) Announcements and discussions

- No decision when this council can meet in person
- REAC has 15 minutes to present annual recommendations to board
- Post agenda items for August meeting in Basecamp
- New leadership starts in August

9) Reflections

- Schedule reports so it is written in the winter months. Scheduling is very difficult in the summer.
- Now that all commissioners have been introduced, future meetings can have more discussions.
- Meet in person: discuss how this can be done.
- Put information that was not provided by county into report.

10) Adjourned on motion by Deran Cadotte, seconded by Mahogany 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 abstain