

Race Equity Advisory Council Meeting
Notes

Date: June 17, 2021
Time: 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Location: MS Teams

Council members present: Council members present: Alexis Murillo, Amani Berry, Deran Cadotte, Johnathon McClellan, Larry Hiscock, Mahogany Ellis Crutchfield, Miamon Queeglay, Sheila Webb, Tekia Jefferson

Council members not present: Biiftuu Ibrahim Adam, Debjyoti Dwivedy

County Staff: Chela Guzman-Wiegert, Mercy Das, Pat Zagaros, Randy Larson, Robert Gruba,

Guests: Commissioner Greene, Commissioner Conley, Elie Farat, Bintah Kanteh

Meeting was broadcast on MS Teams live for public viewing.

- 1) June meeting agenda approved.
Deran Cadotte moved to approve, Mahogany Ellis Crutchfield seconded. 10 Ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain.
- 2) May meeting notes approved.
Deran Cadotte moved to approve, Mahogany Ellis Crutchfield seconded. 10 Ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain
- 3) Board Chair Commissioner Marion Greene and Commissioner Angela Conley provided information and clarifications.
 - I. Foundational vision for REAC:
 - Wanted voice of community members who cared about racial equity, reducing disparities.
 - Wanted advice from community on the unmet needs of communities of color and what the county should be investing in to move the needle towards equitable outcomes.
 - II. How to change policies more rapidly; how to focus on changing systems rather than people.

- There is a healthy tension between the board and county staff that leads to innovation. Eg: Wanted electric fleet. County staff took time to evaluate if the county even needed a fleet, could it share its fleet etc.
 - Rapid policy change can happen and commissioners do bring forth ideas and request to see what it would take to make change.
- III. Communicating with the board
- Appreciate and value memos from REAC; current structural set up doesn't allow back and forth communication.
 - Members are invited to meet with Commissioners in their office in a roundtable.
 - REAC chair can send information to the Board chair.
 - Commissioner Greene checks in twice a year with direct appointees to advisory boards. Commissioner Conley asks appointees for updates.
 - Commissioners are in the community interacting with residents, REAC is one more avenue to understand community needs.
- IV. Vision for financial inclusion
- There is disparity in access to capital, ability to borrow money, ability to use different venues to save and borrow money based on race. Want to address these inequities. There are requirements to have bank accounts to access money, save, borrow and some people don't have bank accounts. Need to look at rationale for requirements and the barriers they present.
 - Fees are a big barrier. Find ways to reduce fees.
 - There are policy and legal barriers. St Paul wanted to establish children's savings accounts but state law requires a father's signature which cuts out households with only mothers. This is an example of needing to take time to set up programs.
- V. Vision for health equity; especially maternal mortality among black and brown people. How can CARES and ARP money be used to support birthing centers?
- Health and Human Services is doing some work around infant mortality, culture specific birthing support.
 - Looking into opportunities to invest in and expand mental health services and trauma support for culturally diverse communities.
- VI. How can REAC memorialize memos and correspondence with commissioners so the community knows?
- Include it in the annual report.
 - County does not publish this work.

4) REAC communications

- Commissioners said they find value in memos from REAC.
 - Create a process to determine what circumstances will trigger a memo to commissioners.
 - Develop a process for REAC members to confirm that all commissioners have received memos from REAC.
- Important for county residents to know what REAC is doing. Discuss ways to bring this to their attention in future meetings.

- Chela referenced that REAC bylaws has duties of officers. Chair represents the Council to the board and can distribute communications to the Board Chair and CC other commissioners.

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

Highlight current DEI and DR issues within CP, document will be posted in Basecamp review

Civic Engagement: Sheila Webb

Highlight who has access to voter processes, work being done in community to support DR policies, document will be posted in Basecamp for review

Housing: Larry Hiscock

Posted outline on Basecamp for people to review for more information

Public Safety/Justice: Johnathon McLellan

Document will be posted on Basecamp for review

County staff: Ask if REAC can have more than 15 minutes to present report.

6) Announcements and discussions

- July meeting: Commissioner Fernando meet and greet.
- Commissioners Greene, LaTondresse and Lunde haven't made appointments yet.
- With only 12 members, need everyone to attend meetings and help to write report.
- Starting in July, current and newly elected REAC leaders will work together for a smooth transition.
- Sheila made a presentation to the Mental Health Advisory Council. They would like to partner with the REAC.

7) Motion to amend the bylaws to have co-chairs for REAC.

Mahogany Ellis Crutchfield moved to approve, Miamon Queeglay seconded. 9 Ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain.

Process:

- Members provide rationale and advantages of having co-chairs on basecamp
- Alisa Salewski, Director of the Center of Innovation and Excellence will create a Board Action Request (BAR)
- This could take a few weeks since it has to go through committee and full board vote.

8) Adjourned on motion by Deran Cadotte, seconded by Johnathon McClellan 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 abstain