

Minutes of the Equity Advisory Committee

MEETING OF THE EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Equity Advisory Committee Meeting was held virtually, via Webex and livestreamed via the Metropolitan Council website. Committee Co-chair Sitati-Munene called the meeting of the Council's Equity Advisory Committee to order at 6:07 p.m.

ROLL CALL (verbal)

Committee Members Present: Nelima Sitati Munene, Leah Goldstein Moses, Michael Luseni, Edward McDonald, Tie Oei, Nicholas Jenkins, Sarah Rudolf, Francisco Gonzalez, Chai Lee, Phillip Sterner, Gabriela Olvera, Breanne Rothstein, Nichol Ellis-McGregor

Committee Members Excused: Desralynn Cole, Mohamed Sheikh

Committee Members Absent: Richard Paul, Andres Boland, Lanise Block, Anita Urvina Davis, Julia Miller

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES (verbal)

- Co-Chair Gonzalez motioned for approval of the April 2021 agenda. Motion moved by Oei, seconded by Jenkins. Agenda was unanimously carried via verbal roll call.
- Co-chair Gonzalez motioned for approval of the meeting minutes from February 16, 2021. Minutes were moved by Rudolf and seconded by Jenkins. Minutes were unanimously carried via verbal roll call.

PUBLIC INVITATION

- Co-chair Gonzalez called for any members of the public to come forward; however, there were no community members present.

NEW EAC MEMBER WELCOME

- Co-chair Gonzalez welcomed three new members to the Equity Advisory Committee: Nicol Ellis-McGregor, Gabriela Olvera and Breanne Rothstein. The new members introduced themselves and current committee members also introduced themselves.

STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATE

- Co-chair Gonzalez gave a short bit of background about the role of Council standing committees, their structure, processes and appointments. Each of the Councilmembers sitting on the EAC then went on to give a brief update on their respective Standing Committee:
 - CM Gonzalez (Management and Transportation): For Transportation: The Council is buying additional busses; however not electric, diesel instead, mainly because the technology isn't reliable enough. Issue at Transit lately.
 - Management: General fund allocation for Equity Staff projects. Presented as an Information Item at the Management Committee Meeting. Please let CM Gonzalez know if there are any questions, comments or ideas prior to voting for approval.
- CM Chai Lee gave an update on the Community Development Committee (the most current CDC meeting was canceled), however during the previous meeting there group had a robust discussion regarding the project based vouchers in the future. An Information Item for more discussion in the future.
- CM Phillip Sterner gave an update on the Environment Committee and Met Council Unclean Water Council. The Unclean Water Council is reviewing PFAS in our water to reduce.

EAC COUNCIL PRESENTATION REPORT BACK

- Co-chair Nelima Sitati Munene, Sarah Rudolf, Anita Urvina Davis
- Sarah Rudolf gave a brief update on how the EAC yearly recap presentation to the Council in March; including an overview of the EAC's four priority areas and subcommittees for 2021. Anita Urvina Davis went through the Workplan and subcommittees.
- The Councilmembers were very supportive of the EAC and committed to the work and advancing Equity at the Council and invited the EAC to other committees.
- Co-chair Sitati-Munene added that the Council felt that the EAC's workplan is in line with the Council's

EQUITY COUNCIL-WIDE OVERVIEW

- Cyrenthia Jordan, Director of Office of Equal Opportunity
- Cy Jordan presented a quick overview of the role of the OEO and the Council's Equity Initiatives; DWAC, TAAC and the Equity Change Teams, including a dashboard, virtual equity and communication and equity policy.
- Employee Resource Groups: Advancing Women in Transit, it's been informal, but now it's being formalized, with funding. A new LGBTQ ERG is being formed
- Equity Strategy and Framework: Workforce Equity, Community Engagement and Investment and Procurement
- Council Strategic Plan aligns with the EAC's Workplan
- Racial Equity Training plan for 2021 through 2022.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

- Ashanti Payne, Assistant Director of Office of Equal Opportunity presented a high-level update on the status of the Affirmative Action Plan 2020-2022. Plan goes to MMB and doesn't require Council approval but does require three signatures.
- Purpose is to assure that internally the executive civil service branch positions are equally accessible to all qualified persons and to address underutilization of qualified members of protected groups.
- Six key components to the plan:
 - Executive Summary
 - Area where there is under utilization
 - Our responsibility to communicate the plan
 - How we're communicating the plan internally and externally
 - Utilizations and availability analysis via American Community Survey and Census data.
- Hires, re-hires, promotions and separations
- Underutilization for women across the board and in skilled craft for each protected class.
- Need to come up with goals and develop strategies to address our underlying utilization.
- Plan posted and available to the public.
- Jordan added that each division needs to look at their Affirmative Action individually.
- McDonald had a question about underutilization and workforce data. Payne and McDonald briefly discussed it.
- Goldstein Moses asked about ERG's structure. Jordan answered that the ERG's have flexibility depending upon the relevance for the group. Goldstein Moses followed up that the ERG's could be creative sources of information about benefits/ structures/ barriers for why people are leaving the Council.

OEO LIAISON UPDATE

- Cyrenthia Jordan, Director of Office of Equal Opportunity offered that the OEO Liaison could shorten and move on the agenda, as more information from Standing Committees and Councilmembers are coming forth.
- Co-chair Sitati-Munene stated that the information has been helpful and going forward it would be helpful is knowing what are points of intersection for committee members, i.e. ECT, ERG's, Equity Policy, etc.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Co-Chair Gonzalez called for committee announcements before adjourning the meeting:

- The Standing Committee will continue meeting virtually via Webex. The next meeting is Tuesday, March 23, 2021 at 5:30 pm. Note, that participation in the Standing Committee is critical.
- Co-Chair Sitati-Munene is stepping back, but she is remaining with the EAC. A new co-chair search was launched, and Leah Goldstein Moses is being recommended to Chair Zelle for formal appointment to the March 24, 2021 Council meeting. Thank you to Nelima for her hard work and to Leah for stepping up.

ADJOURNMENT

- Co-chair Gonzalez called for meeting adjournment.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Erena Anderson
Recording Secretary