

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 19, 2019

Committee Members Present: Nelima Sitati Munene, Edward Reynoso, Leah Goldstein Moses, Jennifer Munt, Aarica Coleman, David Ketroser, Tommy Sar, Sonya Lewis, Tie Oei, Samantha Pree-Stinson, Miah Ulysse, Leslie Redmond

Committee Members Excused: Shirley Cain, Mohamed Sheikh

Committee Members Absent: Harry Melander, Metric Giles

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Co-Chair Sitati Munene called the regular meeting of the Council's Equity Advisory Committee to order at 6:08 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda was moved by Pree-Stinson and seconded by Coleman.

The meeting minutes from January 15, 2019 were moved by Coleman and seconded by Pree-Stinson.

CONVERSATION WITH CHAIR SLAWIK

Committee Co-Chair Sitati Munene introduced Chair Norah Slawik. The Chair came to meet the EAC and learn more about the committee's priorities for 2019. The Chair shared her background and her priorities for her time at the Council; she emphasized that equity and community engagement are key priorities and expressed gratitude for the committee's partnership.

REGIONAL PARKS EQUITY GRANT PROGRAM

Emmett Mullin, Manager, Regional Parks Unit and Dan Marckel, Planning Analyst, Community Development discussed the development of the Council's new Regional Parks Equity Grant Program and engaged the committee in an activity to solicit input for the design and scope of the new program.

During the question activity, committee members generated the following questions for staff:

- How are we going to make sure that implementing agencies (IA's) do better?
- How can we hold IA's accountable to their equity commitments?
- The Council can only fund IA's because of state statute, what can we do to change the statute?
- Can we have a youth voice in any of these processes?
- Why can't cultural groups be asked how they would spend \$300,000 and award them and let them partner with the statutory organization?
- Who decided on the \$300,000 amount?
- Why couldn't cultural groups apply to the fund of \$300,000 and then award to separate park agencies?
- Why can't the \$300,000 in grants be given to non-profits interested in equity and then have to partner with parks agencies?
- \$300,000 is peanuts. How do we add interest earnings to the grants?
- How did the implementing agencies get picked?
- Where did the funds come from and why a low amount?
- What specific programs has the money supported in the past?
- Why focus on capital rather than engagement, outreach or programming?
- When we use the word diverse as it related to BIPOC-owned businesses, can we dig deeper to ensure employees are diverse as well?

- Can we require that the applying agencies have a partnership with an organization or body that works on/in that specific equity issue? They should provide details on the organization's involvement.
- Who are the people who make up the advisory committee boards for the implementing agencies?
- How will you ensure that the application process won't be a barrier?
- Can we require each grantee to have a community advisory committee?
- How are you going to let the full community know about the grant?
- Who will be on the panel?
- How many grants will there be?
- What are the goals to be implemented by the funding used?
- How can we target grants to the communities most in need of new capital improvements?
- How are we going to prioritize areas that are most in need?
- How can we ensure that the implementing agency is not favoring predominately white and affluent spaces?
- Does build include investments like greenhouses?
- How can we engage low-wealth residents and POCI so they plan for and benefit from the grants?
- Can we host a workshop to train park implementing agencies?
- How can we get more money added? \$300,000 for ten agencies inclusive of admin fees lends itself to very limited brick and mortar.
- Why is this funding stream so small?
- Can we suggest that marketing is done to encourage community cooperative development to build community wealth?
- Can we allow funds to be used on equity-focused partners?
- Is the limitation to fund only implementing agencies because of capital bonds?
- Is there a matching requirement for this grant?
- What are the goals for the 2019 grant cycle?
- How can we ensure that the RFP process is robust, inclusive and accessible?
- How do we frame the RFP to require them to dive deeply into the equity issue they are trying to remediate?
- Do you have a plan to assume curb ramps are provided from parking lots to trains and recreation facilities?
- Do you have a plan to ensure accessible parking is brought up to code in parks?
- Can we require that contracts for building go to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise participants (DBE's)?
- What best practices are already known that we can suggest grantees follow?
- What mistakes from the past can we correct?
- What is the history around the State statute re: implementing agencies getting the money?
- What will Met Council do if community awareness does not improve?
- Is there a certain amount that has to be spent on specific communities?
- How are we measuring community engagement?
- How is the Met Council ensuring it is not funding programs that will lead to further disparities?
- Is there a minimum or maximum amount of community engagement that has to be achieved?
- What is accountability?
- Where/what is the oversight for the implementing agencies?
- Are there grievance procedures?
- What and who is defining equity?
- How can we ensure engagement of underserved, marginalized, and kept out community?
- What voice does the community have?
- Will these grant proposals be made public?
- Who decides to approve the grants?
- Who reviews the proposals and is there a way to attract equity leaders/EAC to review?
- Is there an equity score card or tool that can be used a measurement?
- Is the scoring criteria vetted by groups to make sure they are equitable?

- Lay out the RFP in a way that acknowledges why this grant is necessary.

After the activity, staff and committee members identified the following themes around the questions:

- Community engagement, accountability, scoring process, historical context (where is the statute come from), access and ability, how to make the funds more accessible, transparency, peanuts (small amount of funding), decision-making (who makes the decisions), process, and priorities

Staff is conducting the activity with various stakeholders: MPOSC, EAC, IA's, and staff. By the end of June, they will develop a Fund Distribution Plan, where the policy decisions are made, that will be voted on by the new Council. From there, the RFP will be developed. Staff will come back and present to the EAC.

EQUITY FRAMEWORK UPDATE

Cyrenthia Jordan, Director, Office of Equal Opportunity; Mitzi Kennedy, Equity Manager, Office of Equal Opportunity provided an overview of the enterprise-wide Equity work taking place at the Council and provide an update on the development of the Equity Framework. Cyrenthia and Mitzi came to discuss with the EAC what would constitute meaningful engagement in the development of the Equity Framework. They can come back to have a more dedicated time to discuss the framework.

Throughout the presentation and discussion, Committee members had the following comments:

- The committee meets only once a month, so I think we can inform the development of the framework, but I don't think we can create it.
- What are the equity goals and vision? We need to work towards those goals as a region. A preliminary idea is to convene a Regional Congress that would engage POCs throughout the region and create a vision that then we could lay out and share back to the Met Council.
- Are we going to create another body? What are the relationship to the bodies? Sometimes groups like this compete with each other. What would be the reporting structure?
- The UN harvested ideas globally online and then did really intentional outreach to communities that would be left out of that strategy; the idea of a "congress" rubs me the wrong way.
- I want us to recognize that we don't need to recreate the wheel, there are a lot of documents that already exist, and we represent the communities and we have a lot of expertise here, and I don't want us to be here in the same place two years later.

Cyrenthia and Mitzi will come back to the committee at a later date to further discuss the development of the framework.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sitati Munene had several announcements for the committee:

- Our new E-Share site will be up and running soon! This site will be a resource for committee members – it will contain items such as EAC governance documents, past agendas and handouts, and contact information. In addition, members will be able to share information, articles, resources, etc. with each other. Yolanda will be sending instructions on how to access and use the site.
- Please fill out the post-meeting survey. It only takes a few minutes complete, and your feedback is really useful. Yolanda will send the survey link.
- The Standing Committee Meeting this week will be rescheduled, Yolanda will be sending the new date.
- Reynoso bid farewell to the committee and thanked the committee for giving him the honor of serving with them.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Yolanda Burckhardt
Recording Secretary