

Minutes of the

FOURTH ORIENTATION MEETING OF THE EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, August 2, 2016

Committee Members Present: Co-Chair; Acooa Ellis, Co-Chair; Edward Reynoso, Claudia Cody, Kadra Abdi, Ishmael Israel, Tie Oei, Rebecca Stratton, Deb Barber, Sindy Garcia Morales, Leon Rodrigues, Steven Chavez, Jennifer Munt, Metric Giles, David Ketrosor, Nelima Sitati Munene, Kimberly Carpenter, Leslie Redmond

Committee Members Absent: Vayong Moua, Shirley Cain, Elham Ashkar. Ruthie Johnson

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Co-Chair Ellis called the regular meeting of the Council's Equity Advisory Committee to order at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 2, 2016.

INFORMATION

1. External Communications

Communications Director Kate Brickman introduced the Council's Communications department and structure. Also outlined was the role of the Communications department and how they will support members of the EAC with regards to media relations and requests for data or information.

2. Metro Transit Overview

Brian Lamb, General Manager of Metro Transit, presented an overview of Metro Transit's fleet, facilities, services and finances. Metro Transit is also working to build a more diverse workforce through new outreach and recruitment strategies, a Metro Transit "Opportunity Bus," and the Metro Transit Technician (MTT) Program. 37% of current Metro Transit employees are people of color, but there is an effort to increase that percentage for managers at Metro Transit. Equity has also been integrated into Metro Transit through the Everyday Equity team that hopes to determine the strengths and weaknesses of Metro Transit in areas related to equity, establish methods to evaluate the organization and report on any progress.

A brief Q&A with Brian Lamb and members then ensued:

1. What is the status of accessible parking at Metro Transit Park-And-Rides? Park-and-Rides all have handicap accessible parking, but Brian Lamb mentioned that he would look into the specifics about numbers and requirements for accessible parking.

3. Metro Transit Police – Fare Enforcement

John Harrington, Chief of Metro Transit Police, presented an overview of the Metro Transit Police Department. The department has transformed in the last five years, with now over 30% of Metro Transit Police employees being People of Color. MTPD has made an effort for officers to spend more time on trains, buses and platforms where Metro Transit's customers are. There has also been an increase in calls over the past several years, from around 400 calls per month in 2012 to 1200 calls per month in 2016.

MTPD reviewed its policies and practices after the finding that black and Native American first time fare evaders were more likely to be cited, rather than warned, when compared to white adults. MTPD has since returned to the policy of warning, rather than citing, first time fare evaders that was in place in the ten months following the opening of the Metro Green Line. MTPD officers are also undergoing various trainings with topics ranging from cultural awareness to de-escalation techniques.

A Q&A between Chief Harrington and committee members followed:

- The first question was regarding training the MTPD force and specific targeting in their interactions with the public. Chief Harrington responded that there is an Internal Affairs team within MTPD that can investigate issues of specific targeting that are brought to MTPD's attention. This number can be reached through the Metro Transit customer contact

information that is posted on Metro Transit Vehicles. Metro Transit is also in the process of creating a method for customers to contact Transit Police via text message.

- Also discussed was the regional nature of the MTPD force. MTPD officers have to work in all seven counties of the Metropolitan area, and follow the laws and practices of each jurisdiction. Chief Harrington shared a few examples of how policing practices differ between cities, and how MTPD officers work through those different practices while on the job.
- Chief Harrington also outlined the reason behind having part-time officers on MTPD. They help allow the police to respond to urgent situations and serve as a type of “surge protection” for MTPD.
- Issues regarding public facilities, like restrooms, within Metro Transit park-and-rides was brought up. Chief Harrington said that issues in these facilities are evaluated on a case-by-case basis that can lead to different facilities closing to the public at different times.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Kevin Murphy
Recording Secretary