

## Minutes of the

### MEETING OF THE EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

**Committee Members Present:** Nelima Sitati Munene, Francisco Gonzalez, Chai Lee, Kris Fredson, Shirley Cain, Sonya Lewis, David Ketroser, Tie Oei, Tommy Sar, Aarica Coleman, Metric Giles

**Committee Members Excused:** Leslie Redmond, Mohamed Sheikh, Samantha Pree-Stinson

**Committee Members Absent:** Abdirahman Muse, Miah Ulysse

### CALL TO ORDER

Committee Co-Chair Sitati Munene called the regular meeting of the Council's Equity Advisory Committee to order at 6:05 p.m.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda was moved by Coleman and seconded by Cain.

The meeting minutes from March 19, 2019 were moved by Lee and seconded by Coleman.

### BRIEFING ON COUNCIL DISPARITY RESEARCH AND REFRAMING OF AREAS OF CONCENTRATED POVERTY

Joel Huting, Manager of Research, Community Development; Matt Schroeder, Research Analyst; Krysten Ryba-Tures, Senior Researcher, briefly presented on the Research Department, discussed past work on disparities, and introduced their project to reframe Areas of Concentrated Poverty (or ACPs). They would like to come back at a future date to engage the committee for a longer discussion about reframing the conversation about Areas of Concentrated Poverty (or ACP's).

Committee members had the following comments and questions throughout the presentation:

- How can we partner with local historians in our research to incorporate how past racial covenants have prevented the black and brown community from obtaining homes?
- From an equity stand point, the Council must invest more into areas of concentrated poverty.
- What is the impact of the lack of investment in areas of concentrated poverty?
- Places do not get discriminated against, it is people. How does the Council define poverty in a way that does not discriminate against groups?
- Is there room for qualitative research?
- What are the concrete next steps that you can take to present to the committee in the future? And how does the Council share their research in a way that is accessible to the community, rather than just publishing the research on the Council website?
- Did the research include homelessness data?
- Let's change the narrative when we define poverty because when we talk about poverty, we mostly talk about people of color and we often create a negative connotation on people of color based on how we define poverty.
- The Council must talk to the community members and they must also incorporate community member's stories rather than talking for them.
- People of color are tired of being researched, after all is said and done, how is the research going to help communities of color?

## **PARKS EQUITY GRANT DISCUSSION**

Emmett Mullin, Manager, Regional Parks and Open Space Unit; Dan Marckel, Planning Analyst provided an update on the Parks Equity Grant development and discussed priorities for the program moving forward.

Committee members had the following comments and questions throughout the presentation:

- Is \$300,000 the final cap for the grant? If so, this is not enough money. We need to do more.
- Is the grant available for existing projects or is it only given to new projects?
- Who are the ten agencies within the region that can potentially receive this grant and how do they represent the community?
- Who is the “we” that will decide who and where the grants go to?
- Can the grant establish a “community need” requirement?
- How sustainable is the grant project? When the money runs out, what will happen?

## **PRESENTATION FROM METRO TRANSIT**

Wes Kooistra, General Manager of Metro Transit, discussed current Metro Transit initiatives and proposed Green Line changes; Ericka Jones, Manager of the Equity and Inclusion, provided a presentation regarding the Equity and Inclusion Team’s Drive Change initiative.

Committee members shared the following comments and questions:

- With reports of homelessness around Green and Blue Line, this is bad timing for Transit to make the changes. This looks like retaliation against homeless people using the trains for shelter. We need more time and engagement and cooperation from other entities that address housing needs.
- How does this decision align with the Thrive goals? From the EAC’s standpoint, this decision does not align with Thrive at all.
- How does this impact the Unions and Light rail drivers’ work schedule? Has Transit determined if the service hour change will have an impact on Transit employees? If so, how do you plan to mitigate the impact?
- Has Transit explored other solutions instead of shutting down the green line from 2-4 am? And why weren’t those solutions chosen.
- How easily reversible is this decision? Is this decision permanent?
- The responsibility of doing good is to do no harm. This change will cause harm to the community.
- Metro Transit should work with other agencies that focuses their energy in providing shelter to the homeless individuals around light rail transit. Metro Transit must talk to people on the train on what their needs are rather than automatically pushing them into shelters and criminalizing them for not paying fares. This is where Transit can benefit from having mental health workers to talk to the homeless individuals on the train.
- Metro Transit brought forth an item and proposal to the EAC when a decision has already been made. This is not equitable.
- How was the decision [Green Line service hour changes] made to begin with and why didn’t Transit engage the EAC before making the decision?
- Will Metro Transit play videos of their “Drive Change” initiative on Light Rail lines?
- It is hard to the swallow the “Drive Change” initiative given what Transit has decided about the Green Line.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Nelima Sitati Munene had several announcements for the committee:

- The Standing Committee is altering the meeting location. Last month, the conference call did not work as well as expected, so we will be returning to meeting in person. We will be meeting next week, April 23 at 5:30 pm, at Dangerous Man Brewing. As always, if you are interested in

participating in Standing Committee, let me or staff know, and we will forward you the calendar invitation.

- Please fill out the post-meeting survey. It only takes a few minutes complete, and your feedback is really useful. Kalia will send the survey link.
- In pursuant to the EAC By-laws, the co-chair position is a one-year term limit. EAC members who are interested in being the next co-chair should send Yolanda and Mitzi an email.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Kalia Vang  
Recording Secretary