

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, November 1, 2016

Committee Members Present: Co-Chair; Acooa Ellis, Kadra Abdi, Jennifer Munt, Tie Oei, David Ketroser, Steven Chavez, Ruthie Johnson, Leon Rodrigues, Claudia Cody, Elham Ashkar, Kimberly Carpenter, Leslie Redmond

Committee Members Absent: Co-Chair; Edward Reynoso, Metric Giles, Ishmael Israel, Nelima Sitati Munene, Deb Barber, Vayong Moua, Shirley Cain, Rebecca Stratton, Sindy Morales Garcia

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Co-Chair Ellis called the regular meeting of the Council's Equity Advisory Committee to order at 6:12 p.m. on Tuesday, November 1, 2016.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Approval of the agenda was moved by Claudia Cody, and seconded by Ruthie Johnson.

Approval of the minutes of the October 18th meeting was moved by Claudia Cody, and seconded by Tie Oei.

EQUITY STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PRESENTATION

Meredith Vadis, Deputy Regional Administrator, and Lisa Tabor, from CultureBrokers, presented about the [Council's Equity Strategic Action Plan](#) (ESAP). This plan would create a document that organizes, prioritizes and guides Council staff work around equity based on Thrive MSP 2040 and the Council's system and policy plans. This plan will better connect equity work across the Council, define required resources to accomplish the work, and provide more transparency and accountability to the Council and the community.

The ESAP was launched in September 2016, and will hold three workshops from November 2016 to January 2017. After completing these workshops and being developed, the ESAP will proceed to the Equity Advisory Committee for their endorsement prior to going to the Metropolitan Council for adoption. The workshops will be attended by a large stakeholder group of Council staff, division directors, and others. Lisa Tabor emphasized that the three workshops, and thus the stakeholder group, are open to members of the Equity Advisory Committee to attend and share their input.

A discussion about the plan and questions from the committee followed:

1. Can the Parks Equity Toolkit process be replicated for a comprehensive plan? Would a similar process be helpful for other Council initiatives?

Yes – the Council might find areas where this toolkit might be helpful through the process of creating the ESAP. It might be applicable in comprehensive plans, but the opportunities are still unknown. Lisa Tabor offered that she return, with Council Staff from Regional Parks, to present more information about the Parks Equity Toolkit that was adopted by the Council.

2. When will the ESAP workshops be held?

The schedule is not entirely set yet, but the meetings will be held in the afternoons on three dates in November, December and January.

3. Can you provide a window into how the workshops will go?

The first workshop will primarily dedicated to brainstorming the kinds of strategies that the Council can pursue. These strategies will be narrowed down in the second workshop, and finalized in the third.

4. How is the plan accounting for diversity, not only of race or ethnicity, but of thought or experiences?

The stakeholder group including Council executives, staff from all divisions, and members of the EAC would provide some of the diversity of thought. The Council staff that participate will be from all lines of work in the Council, and there will be an emphasis on including staff who have done previous community engagement work.

5. Are you intending to guide the conversation with research-based strategies used elsewhere? What are the key performance indicators (KPIs)?

The plan will use a literature review of different governmental institutions and their best practices around equity. The KPIs for this plan will be implemented into Council-wide reporting through the process of creating the ESAP. There will be portions of the Logic Model that will be used, but they will not be the entire worksheet associated with that model.

6. Is there a cap on the number of people participating in the workshop?

There is not cap on the number of attendees, but it is important that people attend all three workshops. However, if this is not possible, it would be best for people to attend the first workshop.

7. Why is the ESAP being developed now? Has it been in the works for some time?

The current structure of the Council means that divisions have built within themselves around equity, but the Council would be able to do more with more organized work. Developing Thrive MSP 2040 took two years to create a living document that emphasized outcomes. This is a continuation of that process since equity was outlined in Thrive MSP 2040, led to creation of the EAC, and then into the formulation of the ESAP.

8. How will the ESAP impact Council practices for contracts? Will equity become a potential criteria? It is important to look also at the operational side of the Council to see how money is being spent.

The Council recently adopted an expansion of the Council's MCUB program. It was suggested that in a future meeting Council staff could present about the MCUB expansion to the committee.

9. How did the engagement process for the Parks Equity Toolkit end?

There is some confusion on this topic because of a misleading article in the news about how the Parks Program needed to do more than marketing towards people of color. The conclusion was that parks agencies receiving legacy funding through the Council will use 10% of their funding to outreach and programming to attract people of color to become users of the parks and its programs. The toolkit itself is a five-question worksheet that allows for park implementation agencies to better gauge how their parks and programs impact people of color. It is designed to help them start asking the right questions, as programs and studies often are not designed for people of color or do not accurately capture their desires.

10. A key part of developing the ESAP is defining the criteria in the second and third workshops. Is there an opportunity for the EAC to provide input in that process?

Yes – it is up to the EAC to determine how they want to provide input into this process, including sending representatives to workshops, emailing with Council staff, etc.

After the presentation ended, members of the committee were provided the opportunity to volunteer to attend ESAP workshops, or nominate someone to attend. A discussion ensued about this and the EAC's role in this process:

- Some people on the EAC may be unable to attend ESAP workshops, especially because they are primarily held during the work day
- It is difficult to nominate committee members without knowing their schedule
- The process for ESAP is already eliminating the potential for some members of the committee to participate. This is because the time frames are not compatible with a majority of work schedules.
- The ESAP should have been brought before the EAC earlier in the process. The process for soliciting the ESAP consultant began in September, but the plan was not presented until November. The EAC would have been able to have more of an impact on the plan had they been included earlier in the planning process.
- The two-year term of EAC members further complicates things. Since the first year of EAC appointments has been devoted to orientation and work plan creation, there is only one year remaining in many members' terms. Given this tight timeframe, it becomes even more important to be included early in the process of initiatives like the ESAP.

WORLD CAFÉ DEBRIEF AND NEXT STEPS

Ruthie Johnson continued debriefing from the World Café activity from the October 4th meeting. One portion of the October 14th debrief that was not settled was the procedure for voting for the Equity Advisory Committee. A ballot was distributed to members of the committee to decide whether the committee should allow absentee/electronic voting for members who are not able to attend a committee meeting. This ballot will also be sent to members of the committee electronically in order to include all committee members.

Cedrick Baker discussed additional items that will be included in a preliminary draft of committee bylaws that will be provided at the November 15th meeting. These bylaws will include provisions on:

- Rules and procedures regarding standing subcommittees and ad hoc working groups
 - Including the standing subcommittee tasked with planning and forming meeting agendas
- A clause on conflict of interest and how committee members could respond in such circumstances
- Responsibilities of committee co-chairs

It was noted that the distribution of meeting minutes would accompany the electronic ballot for all members to provide their thoughts on voting procedures, or to volunteer to attend ESAP workshop meetings.

Michelle Fure, Manager of Public Involvement, updated the committee on the response to the RFP for a consultant to help the committee create their work plan. This process received one response. The vendor will attend the November 15th meeting to discuss with the committee, receive feedback and exchange ideas. Michelle also said that further information about the process of soliciting a consultant will be provided to the committee once the process is finalized.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Kevin Murphy
Recording Secretary