

## Minutes of the

### MEETING OF THE EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 20, 2016

**Committee Members Present:** Co-Chair; Acooa Ellis, Co-Chair; Edward Reynoso, Deb Barber, Tie Oei, David Ketroser, Ruthie Johnson, Leon Rodrigues, Jennifer Munt, Rebecca Stratton, Nelima Sitati Munene, Sindy Morales Garcia, Ishmael Israel, Metric Giles, Steven Chavez, Leslie Redmond

**Committee Members Absent:** Kadra Abdi, Claudia Cody, Kimberly Carpenter, Shirley Cain, Vayong Moua, Elham Ashkar

### 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, September 20, 2016.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Approval of the agenda and minutes was moved by Stratton, and seconded by Reynoso.

### ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Committee Co-Chair Acooa Ellis introduced the roundtable discussion where committee members were asked to share their answers to the following questions with the group:

1. What is your perspective of the Council?
2. What is one suggestion you have for the Council? If you could wave a magic wand to fix any problems, what would it be?
3. What will be your contribution to the committee? What areas of expertise do you have that can help the committee move forward?

Members of the committee then each shared their responses:

- Jennifer Munt – CM Munt would like to help the council build an ongoing relationship with the people whose lives our services touch.
- Edward Reynoso – The goal of this committee is to get input, particularly directly from the communities, and use that input to positively impact Council decisions. This would impact CM Reynoso with work in the Transportation, Audit and Environment committees where equity is a key perspective.
- Leon Rodrigues – Leon has experience in organizational development, which allows for a critical lens to see how organizations are organization-centered, rather than being centered around people or the community. Organizations that are accountable to communities and people that they serve are not always as democratic as they could be, and it is important to build a smooth interrelationship between those communities and the organization.
- Deb Barber – CM Barber feels that it is important to get feedback from people with a variety of backgrounds and expertise. CM Barber's experiences in Shakopee have shown that some people are not engaged because they do not have a seat at the table, and hopes that this committee could help bring that opportunity to the Council.
- Acooa Ellis – Acooa comes to the work of the EAC from a variety of perspectives including being on the receiving end of the Council's work with the Central Corridor LRT. Acooa would like that the Council would align transit routes to match labor, especially in areas of concentrated poverty so that transit is aligned with those that are most transit dependent. Acooa can bring expertise in policy development and quantitative analysis to help the EAC.
- Rebecca Stratton – Rebecca's perspective of the Council is that many in the Prior Lake/Shakopee area have a lack of

- Metric Giles – knowledge of the Council. Ideally, Rebecca would have the council fix the mismatch between where jobs and people are located. Rebecca’s background is in building and developing programming, particularly towards reaching outcomes. Metric wants to help the Council have the EAC move beyond being just another Council committee, particularly with an emphasis on equitable engagement. It is important for the committee to take a step back, after having orientation that had limited time devoted to community. Metric wants to come to the committee to help the process of creating a model to get work done, both internally and externally. Metric also brings realistic messages to the committee’s work.
- David Ketroser – The Council is a large organization, and David feels that the committee’s presence can help make sure smaller parts are not steamrolled. David’s suggestion for the Council would be to have the Council perceive itself as a bunch of tiny pieces moving together, with the EAC representing some small pieces that can get lost. David’s contribution, in addition to a background in law, is that he feels he brings a different perspective to the committee.
- Ishmael Israel – Ishmael feels that the Council is a large organization that has desire to take action on equity, but does not know how to do that. Ishmael’s suggestion would be for the EAC to help the Council create a shift in culture. Ishmael’s background is in real estate, and inside systems change and analysis.
- Ruthie Johnson – Ruthie hopes that the Council can take something that is policy-driven and make it accessible to everyone. Ruthie hopes that having a variety of lived experiences and advocacy work can help engage around issues of the Council. It is important to be able to balance ideas versus how ideas can actually impact work.
- Steven Chavez – CM Chavez described that the Council is a large network of systems, and a challenge is to get beyond the systems based around things, and to systems based around people. CM Chavez hopes that the EAC will start using the word “we” to describe itself. CM Chavez brings a lot of experience with the Council, which is focused on delivering solutions.
- Sindy Morales Garcia – Sindy would like to hear other parts of the Council’s situation, including the critiques. Sindy believes that the EAC has been called to be a bridge between the Council and communities, and hopes that they can each learn more about the other so that the EAC and the Council reaches a point of co-creation. Sindy’s hope is that the co-creation can be achieved through community collaboration, rather than just input. Sindy’s background is in public policy and community organizing, and hopes that the committee can take on its challenges and reinfuse positive energy.
- Tie Oei – Tie did not initially know much about the Council’s work, but was surprised to see the opposition it received at community meetings. Tie’s suggestion is that the Council be willing to be reimaged through this committee because of its impact on people across the region. Tie’s contribution is experience in corporate America and being able to help with the problem of putting people in positions so they can hold jobs. Tie also wished that there be a youth voice on the committee.
- Nelima Sitati Munene – Nelima values the Council as a body in theory, and the purpose for which it was created. Nelima hopes that the Council can put structures in place so that there is a sustainable effort in the committee to achieve equity, regardless of who is sitting in the seat. Nelima’s contribution is to be able to amplify community voices and to look for ways that other community members can get involved with the Council.
- Leslie Redmond – Leslie feels that the Council has a lot of decision-making power and money, and can therefore do a lot of great things. Leslie hopes that the Council can help fix the disconnect between policy making/planning and the communities, and that it can be fixed with attention. Leslie’s contribution is to help bridge gap between theory and the committee’s work.

## **SURVEY OVERVIEW**

Committee Co-Chair Ellis described how a survey was sent out to help gather feedback with ideas for how the committee can move forward. Themes of the survey results include:

- Expectation for desire for collective work
- Desire to innovate and push the envelope in new ways
- Community voices – wanting to hear and amplify community voices.

The [results of the survey](#) were then shared and discussion ensued, including the following topics:

- There is some urgency to get the work plan completed, but it was reaffirming that people felt the work plan should come together by the end of the year
- What is equitable representation between the Council and the community in meetings? The process that has been facilitated has been that of the Met Council.

## **WORK PLAN DISCUSSION**

Using the survey results, co-chairs led a discussion on the work plan:

- The work plan should be a blueprint that is evolving in nature, with constant evaluation
- The work plan process could use development of models in shared leadership
- This is an opportunity to apply the charge of commission to what we do. How do we want to show up? What do we want to create?
- The EAC can be a very influential committee.

The results of the survey indicated support of soliciting a consultant to help with the creation of the work plan. The consultant will take a large portion of the work that otherwise could be restricted by busy schedules of committee members. The co-chairs hope to go forward with the soliciting of the consultant.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The next full meeting of the committee will be on October 4<sup>th</sup>, designed to talk about bylaws, norms and visions. There will be a subgroup formed to discuss how to lead that meeting that will meet on either September 29<sup>th</sup> or September 30<sup>th</sup>.

The EAC will also form a standing subcommittee on team-building and forming meeting agendas. Nominations for this committee must be submitted by September 30<sup>th</sup>, so the subcommittee can be decided in the meeting on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

Michelle Fure, Manager of Public Involvement, described the process of soliciting a consultant. The solicitation for the committee will be broader than the initial request, which received responses of six consultants. The solicitation will be put out, and proposals will be back with an update in the EAC meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

There was also a community-driven document about the EAC that was decided to be revisited after the formation of the committee, and Ishmael Israel requested that the document to be brought before the EAC.

## **COMMITTEE EXPECTATIONS**

Chair Duinick was scheduled to come to the meeting to discuss expectations of the committee and its members, but was unable to make it to the meeting. In his absence, Co-Chairs read through the description of the EAC charter which defines the committee's purpose and scope. Also read was the description of the co-chairs responsibilities as put forth by the Council.

A brief discussion ensued about the committee going forward and other information:

- The committee can hopefully work on internal systems change as well, which has to be very intentional.
- CM Munt hopes that the Council Members on the committee can bring community members close so that they can influence the outcomes that they want.

- There was a discussion of where documents of the committee are located. All agendas, minutes and presentation items are available on the [committee's website](#).
- [All upcoming meetings are posted on the Council's website](#). Meetings of the Council and Standing Committees are also [streamed, with video recordings](#) posted after the meeting. All meetings of the Council are also public meetings.
- Metric Giles brought up the idea of a common space for sharing when different community organization meetings are held. This would allow EAC and Council members to attend these meetings as well. One idea for this was that they could be included in either meeting minutes or agendas.
- Sindy Morales Garcia also wished that a copy of the [Citizens League report on the Council](#) be distributed.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Kevin Murphy  
Recording Secretary