



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting minutes

Meeting: Committee on Racial Equity Kick-Off
Date/time: Thursday, September 21, 2017
Time: 6 to 8 p.m.
Place: Metro Council Chamber, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232
Purpose: Begin the work of the Committee on Racial Equity

Attendees

Co-Chairs: María Caballero-Rubio, Sharon Gary-Smith

CORE Members: Kari Herinckx, Karla Hernandez, Duncan Hwang, Patricia Kepler, Donna Maxey, Shweta Moorthy, Dele Oyemaja, Daisy Quiñonez, Katie Sawicki, Effie Stansbery

CORE Liaisons: Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick, Councilor Sam Chase, Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) Commissioner Karis Stoudamire-Phillips

Metro staff: Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chú, Raahi Reddy, Nyla Moore

Guests: Cassie Salinas, Ernest Hayes

Absent: Martine Coblentz, Laura John, Olivia Walker

Welcome

The Committee on Racial Equity (“CORE”) members gathered for a regular committee meeting on September 21, 2017 at the Metro Regional Center in the Council Chamber.

CORE, as a Metro Council-created committee, is a public body and subject to Oregon’s public meetings and records law. The CORE needs to keep records of its work, and an important part of this is to keep minutes of the meetings, which are then reviewed and approved by the committee members.

The meeting minutes were considered. Shweta Moorthy motioned to approve the Aug. 17, 2017 CORE meeting minutes as submitted by staff. Effie Stansbery seconded the motion. All members present voted yes. The motion carried.

Duncan Hwang asked the Co-Chairs for the floor to bring attention to the Regional Transportation Plan (“RTP”), which was the subject of a Metro Council work session on September 26, 2017. Duncan asked staff to give copies of a letter written by himself and Noel Mickelberry of Oregon Walks, encouraging the Metro Council to consider equity in the RTP. Duncan proposed to have the CORE co-chairs to write a similar letter and submit it to Metro Council. Katie Sawicki suggested getting approval from the organizations that CORE members work for. Duncan reminded the CORE they serve on the Committee as individuals, and if their organizations are interested they can sign onto the other letter separately. Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chú, Metro Equity Strategy Program Manager, pointed out to the Committee that they cannot vote by email (because of Oregon Public Meetings Law), so members can give the co-chairs permission to write and submit a letter on their behalf, given the short turn around. The CORE members present indicated that they approved asking the Co-Chairs to do so.

Raahi Reddy, Metro Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program Director, asked the CORE for examples of why the RTP is important to them. CORE members shared the following examples:

- Kari Herinckx shared her experience working in Washington County with a significant amount of community members of color. Urban communities take priority to rural communities of color.
- Maria Caballero-Rubio mentioned that farm workers and undocumented communities are impacted. They are unable to renew driver's licenses and rely on public transportation and walking.
- Shweta Moorthy indicated that she coordinated a research project in Washington County and realized the equity lens is missing in overall research about people of color in the area. An equity focus in the RTP would help to better capture racial inequities in transportation and how people travel.
- Duncan Hwang shared the tragic deaths of two Asian elders in the Jade district. It is important that communities of color be engaged and able to give input.
- Sharon Gary-Smith shared stories of the displacement of people of color to the east side where people cross high traffic streets like Halsey, Glisan and Stark. There are little to no sidewalks in most places.

Councilor Chase responded by sharing that Metro needs to be more mindful of the entire region. He will share these stories with the Metro Council, so that Metro can be more strategic in their planning.

Meet Raahi Reddy, the new Metro DEI Program Director – Raahi Reddy

Sharon reminded the CORE members that Metro's DEI Program has a new director since August: Raahi Reddy. This was the first meeting that Raahi was able to attend. Raahi shared her experience in labor research at the University of Oregon where she collaborated with labor organizations and those impacted by inequality. Raahi is the board chair of Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon ("APANO") and oversaw the development work in the Jade district. She also shared a story of how Metro is connected to the community—even at her own child's school.

Report from the first CORE tour of Metro facilities – CORE members who attended the tour

On September 1, six CORE members (Daisy Quiñonez, Dele Oyemaja, Donna Maxey, Kari Herinckx, Katie Sawicki, and Laura John), attended the first tour of Metro facilities. The tour consisted of visits to three Metro sites: Broughton Beach, Metro Paint, and the Metro Central transfer station and hazardous waste collection area. The participating members shared their reactions and thoughts about the tour.

Dele Oyemaja thanked Metro for the opportunity and shared how eye opening it was to learn about how equity exists in these sites. He also shared the equity issue around parking meters at Broughton Beach and how few people of color were present at that site. Members also expressed concern about the racial inequities that they observed during the tour, especially around the racial composition of the Metro workforce. They left the tour feeling excited about the work they will do on CORE, and with the realization that there is much work to do. From the experience came the idea for possible subcommittees grouped by departments. Daisy Quiñonez shared how Broughton Beach used to be known Dittlers Beach when she was growing up and that it was nice to see the updates made by Metro. Katie encouraged other members to attend the upcoming tour opportunity.

Consideration of the draft CORE by-laws – Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chú

Sharon reminded the CORE members that the committee started the process of deciding on the content of its by-laws, which are meant to be the document that expresses the CORE's internal culture and agreements. At the August meeting, the CORE members agreed on the way how the committee will make decisions. Now there are four other areas in which the CORE members have been asked to choose what options they want to include in the by-laws. Juan Carlos lead the conversation on the choices in each of those areas.

Juan Carlos referred to the most recent iteration of the by-laws document, sent to the Committee members last Friday, Aug. 11, 2017. This document outlines the options in these four areas: stipends, attendance, CORE Subcommittees and meetings.

The members discussed the following:

1. Stipends

Patricia Kepler mentioned that she did not like any of the options that the CORE was asked to consider, but she preferred Option 2: after the first year, the Co-Chairs will evaluate members' participation and decide whether any member would forfeit their stipend the following year, due to poor participation in the CORE. Several members indicated that evaluation is subjective and that attendance does not equate to participation or contribution to the committee. Duncan Hwang moved to adopt option one, which reads "Receipt of the stipend shall not be tied to a member's participation expectations or performance evaluation. If a member's participation becomes a problem, instead of establishing a stipend penalty, [CORE leadership or staff] shall explore with the member what issues are causing this problem and how to remedy it." Kari Herinckx seconded the motion. The members present voted unanimously in favor of the motion, which carried.

2. Attendance

In the context of the option presented for their consideration, CORE members discussed the idea of what is an excused absence versus an unexcused absence. The emerging common understanding was that a member would have an excused absence when they have let staff or the co-chairs know they cannot attend a CORE meeting. Donna Maxey suggested that options one and three be combined.

The members were all in favor of option three, CORE members shall have a maximum of two unexcused absences per year.

3. CORE subcommittees

The committee agreed not to discuss the options for subcommittees until they agreed on the meeting schedule.

4. Meetings and contacts

Juan Carlos shared that adopting a set schedule will allow the committee to meet at community spaces with the opportunity to invite people from those communities.

Dele was concerned about the amount of funding and effort spent to have meetings with community members. Duncan expressed that having the community voice at meetings is important. It is a value CORE can uphold without having it be a part of their by-laws. He preferred option one, General CORE meetings every other month, with subcommittee meetings during the non-general meeting months, and encouraged members to find ways to engage with community leaders. Donna suggested advertising more widely so that community knows about these meetings and attends. Karla Hernandez suggested leaving time on the agenda for community members to speak and

provide translation services at future meetings. Patricia suggested keeping in mind safe transportation at night.

Due to time constraints, the CORE members decided to table this and the subcommittee item to a future meeting.

Evaluation cohort update

Juan Carlos provided an update on the impact evaluation cohort work. Staff heard from seven CORE members who indicated their interest and availability to participate in evaluation activities as part of their CORE duties. Four members signed up to participate in the 12-month cohort process: Kari Herinckx, Laura John, Olivia Walker, and Shweta Moorthy. Two other CORE members are interested in participating in the data collection part of the cohort work: Karla Hernandez and Patricia Kepler. Duncan is also interested in participating in evaluation activities separate from the cohort process.

If any other CORE member is still interested in any of these opportunities, please contact Juan Carlos and let him know.

The equity impact cohort at Metro will kick-off on Oct. 31. It will include a group of about 20 people, including CORE members and Metro staff. Metro is very excited about beginning this work, and will keep the committee informed about this important work.

CORE work plan discussion

Due to time constraints, Juan Carlos suggested to table this discussion to a future meeting. He also mentioned that when the Co-Chairs, Raahi and he met earlier in Sept., they agreed to propose to have a CORE retreat sometime in Oct. or Nov., with the purposes of having CORE members develop relationships among them, learning more about the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, identify a common sense of purpose and priorities, and finalize the CORE by-laws and work plan. CORE members agreed with this idea. Juan Carlos will send a poll to find the best Saturday in Oct. or Nov. to hold the retreat. Karla suggested Metro staff or the co-chairs assign different portions of the work plan and present it back to CORE. Katie suggested becoming familiar with the plan through front line staff experiences.

Overview of next activities and steps

Juan Carlos provided an overview of the next steps:

- Juan Carlos will send a meeting poll for identifying a Saturday for a half-day retreat
- Juan Carlos will send an invitation for CORE members to attend a welcoming event for Raahi and Jon Blasher, Metro's new Parks + Nature Department Director. This event is organized by the Coalition of Communities of Color. You will receive more information in an email tomorrow.
- Members are asked to submit their W9 forms in order to get their stipends.
- Members interested in participating in the evaluation activities are encouraged to contact Juan Carlos as soon as possible.
- The next regular meeting will take place on Nov. 16. Details to follow.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Nyla Moore and Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chú