



EQUITY COMMITTEE PLANNING GROUP MINUTES

JULY 12, 2022

Present: Co-Chair Cyndy Hillier, Co-Chair Christen Sacco, Glendora Claybrooks, Jennifer Eidson, Rio Espinosa, Rachel Greenough, Valerie Holt, Lusi Hong, Shannon Huggins, Mike Mata (arrived at 7 p.m.), Maria Nguyen, Sharon Noell, Bryan Ortiz, BJ Park, Isabella Raymond, and Shane Skinner

Absent: Stacey Dolezal

Staff: Community Engagement Coordinator Betsy Rodriguez Ruef and Deputy City Manager Megan George

I. Welcome

Co-Chair Christen Sacco called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

II. Ice Breaker

Community Engagement Coordinator Betsy Rodriguez Ruef instructed group members to share their “superpower”, or something that they are good at.

III. Minutes

Co-Chair Sacco reminded the group that as a city committee, we are required to follow public meetings law and take minutes for each meeting. The minutes are intended to provide a high-level summary of the meeting and not a play-by-play.

Motion to adopt the June 7, 2022 minutes made by Sharon Noell and seconded by Shannon Huggins. The motion passed unanimously 16 – 0 (16 Yes [Claybrooks, Eidson, Espinosa, Greenough, Hillier, Holt, Hong, Huggins, Nguyen, Noell, Ortiz, Park, Raymond, Sacco, and Skinner]; 0 – No; 0 – Abstain; 1 – Absent [Mata]).

IV. Ground Rules

Rodriguez Ruef reviewed the ground rules that the group put together at the last meeting and highlighted a few that were refined for clarity.

- “Turn name tent when ready to speak” and “Don’t interrupt” were combined to “Take turns speaking and flip your name tent to signal you would like to speak”.
- “Thumbs vote, clarifying voting process” was rewritten as “Signal consensus with thumbs up/down vote” to make it more clear.
- Finally, a few were rephrased to match the action orientation of the majority. For example, “Be curious” versus “Being curious” or “Remember conflict is okay” versus “Conflict is okay”

Rodriguez Ruef asked whether the group would like to make any further changes. Bryan Ortiz suggested adding “Avoid side conversations” to the list. The group agreed.

Glendora Claybrooks pointed out that there were a few ground rules that seemed to be in conflict and asked for clarification on the intent behind them. The group discussed rephrasing “Remember conflict is okay” and the consensus was to rephrase it to “Remember conflict is okay and seek rationale for clarity”.

The group identified the following ground rules:

- Treat everyone with respect
- Listen with an open mind
- Be open to different ideas
- Take turns speaking and flip your name tent to signal you would like to speak
- Step up and step back
- Signal consensus with thumbs up/down vote
- Speak up, even if you disagree with the majority
- Assume good intent
- Call someone in... not out
- Be curious
- Remember conflict is okay and seek rationale for clarity
- Respect people's boundaries and know your own
- Avoid side conversations

Motion to adopt the ground rules as amended made by Rio Espinosa and seconded by Shane Skinner. The motion passed unanimously 16 – 0 (16 Yes [Claybrooks, Eidson, Espinosa, Greenough, Hillier, Holt, Hong, Huggins, Nguyen, Noell, Ortiz, Park, Raymond, Sacco, and Skinner]; 0 – No; 0 – Abstain; 1 – Absent [Mata]).

V. Presentation – Other Equity Committees

Deputy City Manager Megan George shared that she would be presenting information on other equity committees (or versions of equity committees) in the Portland-Metropolitan Area and across the State of Oregon. Some information was included in the supplemental materials provided at the last meeting. This presentation will focus on the language included in municipal code related to the committee’s name, purpose, and structure.

George reviewed code language from the cities of Ashland, Beaverton, Lake Oswego, McMinnville, Medford, Ontario, and Troutdale. At the end of the presentation, George highlighted the similarities between each of the committees in terms of purpose and structure. For example, all committees were assigned the duty of advising the council and staff on matters of equity. In addition, most committee members served three-year staggered terms.

The presentation materials are attached.

VI. Guest Presentations

Rodriguez Ruef introduced Zoe Mombert from the City of Wilsonville, Guilian del Rio from the City of Lake Oswego, and Alexis Ball from the City of Beaverton. Each presenter was asked to prepare advice on creating an equity committee and share where their equity committees are now.

Mombert shared that Wilsonville's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is still fairly new. She provided the following advice: follow an organic (not forced) process, have full council support, be patient, provide training, consider using a consultant, use a clear application process, be thoughtful about the committee's name, and use subcommittees. Mombert also shared that the committee had recently completed a strategic plan that will likely be adopted by the City Council in July. Their committee has focused on community engagement, communications and education, and inclusive cultural events, celebrations and holiday recognitions.

Del Rio shared that Lake Oswego started by creating a task force that surveyed the community to formulate a strategic plan. One of the actions was to hire a staff member dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion and another was to create a permanent Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Board. Lake Oswego received over 80 applications to serve on the Advisory Board. Del Rio advised Tualatin's future committee to create realistic goals and timelines. Lake Oswego has focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace and community. Several initiatives include planning community events and reducing barriers to participation in governance.

Ball shared that Beaverton also started with a temporary committee, before formalizing their Diversity Advisory Board several years ago. The first recruitment also saw over 80 applications. The Board is now working on the second iteration of their strategic plan. Ball recommended Tualatin's future committee be closely connected to staff and the City Council so that actions and strategies can be implemented. She also recommended the committee have a clear purpose and focus. For example, Beaverton focuses specifically on racial equity. Several initiatives of Beaverton's Diversity Advisory Board include liaising on a Language Access Plan, Equity Procurement Policy, the Beaverton Night Market, and other policies and programming. One of their upcoming goals is to work on creating a multi-cultural center that will serve the community.

Valerie Holt asked how cities have funded culturally specific programs and events. Mombert responded that Wilsonville was able to secure a grant for a recent Juneteenth celebration and plans to request a budget appropriation in the future.

Mike Mata asked what the purpose and vision of Beaverton's multi-cultural center is. Ball responded that the goal is to provide a resource hub for immigrants and refugees, a space to host culturally specific celebrations, and a space for community organizing.

Ortiz asked how the committees measure success or progress. Del Rio responded that it has been critical to create specific goals that can be checked off.

Shane Skinner asked if any committees had reached out to indigenous communities and if so how the experience had gone. Ball responded that Beaverton had reached out to indigenous communities with some success, but that it had been challenging. They identified a need for more dedicated staff support to be successful.

BJ Park asked whether any of the committees had met with opposition. Del Rio responded that Lake Oswego had received several complaints via online suggestion boxes. Their response has been to educate people on the purpose of the committee. Mombert added that Wilsonville had also received negative feedback. The Wilsonville City Council has been a big advocate, which has helped. In addition, community members have responded in defense of the committee on negative social media posts.

Sharon Noell stated that starting with race seems to be a common approach and asked how other demographics have been folded in to committee's work. Del Rio responded that Lake Oswego's

task force completed some preliminary research, which helped to identify priorities for the permanent committee. Mombert added that their committee also started with race, but in conversations there were many other issues that came up and so the committee has not focused on one thing only. For example, their committee has considered advocating for an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) assessment, and language barriers. Mombert recommended pursuing some of the low-hanging fruit first.

Claybrooks asked what percentage of employees identify as Black/African American? Del Rio responded that Lake Oswego does not conduct a formal assessment, but believes the number of employees self-identifying as Black/African American has grown in the last few years. Ball responded that Beaverton recently conducted an evaluation and is able to share that information. The total percentage of employees is about 2%. Mombert responded that to her knowledge Wilsonville does not track that information, but believes the total number is low.

VII. Wrap Up

Rodriguez Ruef reviewed the upcoming meeting dates and reminded group members that the location was changed so that all future meetings will be at Tualatin City Services.

- Tuesday, August 16, 6 – 8 p.m., Tualatin City Services (10699 SW Herman Rd)
- Tuesday, September 13, 6 – 8 p.m., Tualatin City Services (10699 SW Herman Rd)
- Tuesday, October 4, 6 – 8 p.m., Tualatin City Services (10699 SW Herman Rd)
- Monday, November 14 (City Council Meeting), 5 – 6 p.m., Tualatin City Services (10699 SW Herman Rd)

Rodriguez Ruef shared that at the next meeting there will be an optional opportunity for group members to present information from their own research to the full group. George's presentation from this evening can serve as a guide as group members conduct research and put together a presentation. Think about the following:

- What is the committee called?
- What is the purpose and/or duties of the committee?
- How is it structured (number of members, etc.)?
- What does the code language or charter include?

Again, this is optional. If you would like to be scheduled for a time slot on the next agenda, please reach out to Rodriguez Ruef or George by August 1.

Co-Chair Hillier asked the group to reflect on two questions:

1. What did you learn today?
2. What are you looking forward to?

Adjournment

Co-Chair Hillier adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

 Betsy Rodriguez Ruef, Recording Secretary