



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

12 pm – 2 pm, Wednesday, August 12th, 2020

Any person may attend the meeting by calling 971-247-1195. A conference ID and password will be required to access the conference call. Interested participants may request the ID and password by emailing scott@wmswcd.org with the subject line "Request for Conference ID".

Meeting documents will be available for inspection on the District's webpage (<https://wmswcd.org/people-places-things/the-west-multnomah-swcd/diversity-and-equity/>) no later than August 11st, 2020.

AGENDA

12 pm – Welcome/check-in/announcements – All

12:20 pm – Approval of July 22nd, meeting summary – Scott/All

12:25 pm – Recruitment of associate board directors – How to make the process equitable – Michele/Mary

1:00 pm – LRBP - Organizational health and Conservation Scope Evolving Success Criteria questions to be answered by the DEI Committee – Mary

1:50 pm – Action items review – Scott/All

2 pm – Adjourn

**DRAFT -- WMSWCD Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting Summary – DRAFT
July 22, 2020 Noon to 2:00 pm, WMSWCD Conference Call**

Attending: Scott Gall (Chair); Terri Preeg Riggsby, Michele Levis, Mary Logalbo, Renee Magyar, Randi Razalenti, Hannah Spencer, Laura Taylor; Guests: Gianna Petito & Kristen Balschunat (Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District)

Welcome/Check-In/Equity Shares – Mary shared that she heard back from Indi Keith, who has confirmed she is interested in moving forward with the peer review of the *Whose Land is Our Land?* paper with the District.

Approval of the May 2020 Meeting Summary – Approved as written.

Financial Report – The group reviewed the report from the end of the fiscal year. There were ADP payroll items from April and May that were accidentally coded to DEI, but were not DEI expenses.

Action Item: Michele to correct ADP items in QuickBooks.

Long Range Business Plan (LRBP) – Organizational Health & Conservation Scope Teams’ Evolving Success Criteria Questions for DEI Committee – This item was moved up on the agenda due to Terri not being available at the meeting yet. The group looked at the questions from the planning teams and discussed. Mary iterated that the DEI Committee is charged with giving insights, and this does not need to be final answers.

Organizational Health Team Question 1: How can we ingrain equity and inclusivity in our decision making?

- Diversifying leadership
- Slowing down
- Equity lens & abbreviated equity lens
- Outreach for perspectives from different communities in our District
- Finding tools that can be used habitually by staff on an individual level for decision making that has medium and short term impact, such as the abbreviated lens & continuing/increasing use for full equity lens for long term impact decisions (such as hiring)
- Having a diverse standing advisory committee
- Continuing/increasing working with diverse partners
- Continuing education for staff and Board with DEI trainings

Organizational Health Team question 2: How shall we ensure ample time and slower pace is supported to be more equitable and inclusive?

- Making it clear that we are allocating time for this on individual annual work plans
- Adjust expectations for how long things take and how many projects we can do in a year
- Actually making the space to do the practice – such as a reminders in workflows
- Leadership need to continue to be supportive of actually taking the time to make space for this
- Track how staff time is spent. This will help inform how to set this up realistically in annual work plans, and will make it easier to allocate the necessary resources to do this work.
- Rewarding and encouraging the behavior as well as holding staff accountable for making time

Conservation Scope Question #1: Should we include equity and inclusion in our mission statement?

Mary let the group know that the Board was asked this question and it was met with some uncertainty because they were unsure if this is the right place to have this. The mission statement should be why the District exists. The vision statement is our goals. Renee and Mary have been discussing having a tagline in addition to a mission and vision. The group had general support of including this in the mission statement with the following notes:

- Actual words used for this needs to be worked on, and being succinct is important.
- We exist to serve people in an equitable and inclusive model.
- Stay simple, clear and straightforward. Our current mission talks about people – it’s not exclusionary the way that it reads.
- Mary notes that a tagline for NRCS was accidentally introduced to the Board as a mission statement to the Board, which they were very supportive of how short it was, but didn’t know it was a tagline at the time. Taglines can read shorter and mission statements can include more.

- Michele notes that Jim Cathcart had a tagline that he had suggested: Clean water. Healthy soil. Diverse Habitat.

This topic was cut short due to time constraints. Scott noted that the group can contact Mary with anything outside of the meeting about this topic as needed.

Recruitment of Associate Board Directors – This is now called an Associate Director Information packet instead of an application packet as a first step to make it less intimidating. Michele added some information about what the District does so if we want to really reach out to new people they will understand what their role would be, attributes that would be helpful, and what the selection process would be like. Michele incorporated items from the roles that the Board approved of the role they want Associate Directors to do. Michele reminded the group of changes to the document that came from the DEI Committee’s last meeting.

The group looked more at the information form and discussed and made additional modifications to make the form more approachable for all. The group discussed different ways to simplify the form and a subcommittee was formed to work on the form some more before bringing back to the DEI Committee. Michele, Renee, and Terri will work on this. The DEI Committee will reconvene to look at the revised form and talk about the perspectives and process that the Board uses with these materials. There may be more revisions based on this insight of how the form may be used.

Action item: Michele will schedule time with Renee and Terri to work more on the information form.

DEI Reports to Board of Directors – Terri reminded the group that the Board members wanted to have a quarterly report from the Committee, or more often as needed. There may be ways to do this that make it more digestible and engaging for the Board to track what the Committee is doing and how annual work plan goals are being met.

Action Item: Scott and Terri will come up with an example of the DEI Committee report to the Board for both the Board and DEI Committee to weigh in on. Scott may reach out to Committee members as needed for items to include on the report.

Voluntary DEI Discussion sessions for Staff – Through conversations and surveys with staff, it has been noted that the staff need more time and space to have more open / less structured conversations around equity outside of the DEI Committee meetings. Particularly during the pandemic with the office closed, there currently isn’t a natural way of talking about some of the current issues related to equity like there would normally be when staff were all in the office together. The District is going to start having monthly open-ended discussions, and perhaps increasing the frequency of these discussions as desired. The first two are going to have more structure in that they are going to be voluntary debriefs of the two upcoming trainings – one training (with Board and some partners) on microaggressions, and the other training on gender (staff only, Board to have their own training after the LRBP update).

Action Item: Randi to facilitate the first two discussions and then check in with Scott about when to have the more open ended discussions after that and who will facilitate. Scott and Randi will coordinate these and alternate facilitating.

Add August DEI Meeting – Due to the need for more discussion related to the LRBP questions and Associate Board Director recruitment, a meeting has been added on August 12 from noon- 2:00pm.

Action Items – see above.

The group talked a bit more to the guests at the end of the meeting and Kristen invited staff to talk about these questions that their District is thinking about: How do we best talk about landownership, especially in relation to Native Americans? Safety on the job, particularly in rural communities, how can we make sure that people of color in these positions are safe? Gianna found our District by searching for conservation districts and DEI.

Next Meeting: Noon to 2:00 pm, August 12.

Notes taken by Randi Razalenti



WEST MULTNOMAH
Soil & Water Conservation District

WMSWCD ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR INFORMATION

Draft for discussion 7.22.2020

Associate Director's Role

Associate Directors are volunteers and serve as non-voting members of the Board. They may be appointed to serve on committees and may contribute to discussions of District business. Board meetings are held monthly at the District office. Associate Directors are encouraged to attend Board meetings, board trainings, and committee meetings; additional encouraged activities include staying abreast of local conservation issues, attending area and state meetings of the various state associations and other conservation partners, and promoting the conservation district's work to local landowners, its constituency, partnering agencies and organizations, legislators, and any decision makers regarding the conservation district's funding.

Selection of Associate Directors is based on the ability of candidates to:

- Fulfill current needs as identified by the Board of Directors
- Represent WMSWCD, its Board of Directors and policies in the community.
- Work to pursue the mission of WMSWCD.
- Represent the interests of constituents to WMSWCD.
- Bring valued skills and abilities to enhance the Board's effectiveness and/or
- Assist the District in better including and serving the interests of communities we have not yet fully engaged.

Qualifications/Skills

Associate Directors may be appointed by the Board of Directors if they meet the following requirements:

- Ability to build inclusive, community-based partnerships between individuals, agencies, and citizen groups with diverse interests and values.

- Commitment to working as a team member with the district staff and Board.
- Willingness to serve on a Board Committee.
- Commitment to a voluntary, non-regulatory, collaborative approach to conservation.
- Willingness to represent the Board and District on committees, as a District representative to other organizations or by assisting the District in another activity, mutually agreed upon with the Board of Directors.
- Demonstrated interest in natural resource conservation.
- Expertise in a relevant area such as community involvement and outreach, conservation practice implementation, project management, accounting, law, personnel management, land and water management (farming, forestry, ecological restoration etc.) and/or public policy.
- Advance the current Associate Director recruitment goals identified by the Board.

Selection Process

- To be considered for an Associate Director position, a candidate may submit a letter indicating interest in serving as an Associate Director, setting out relevant skills/qualifications and indicating a particular area of interest in working with the District and its Board. Alternatively, a candidate may complete and submit the Associate Director Information form on the next page.
- WMSWCD Directors may interview all interested candidates to learn more about candidate's qualifications, skills and other factors relevant to the Board. A Director may make a request to the Chair that the appointment be placed on a Board agenda.
- Having then received a request from a Director so to do, the Chair will place the appointment on a Board agenda for consideration. A decision regarding appointment will not be made at the meeting where a request is first presented.
- Associate Directors are appointed by majority vote at a regular WMSWCD Board meeting. Once appointed, Associate Directors continue to serve at the Board of Director's discretion, or until they choose to resign.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

Please contact the District office about other ways to become involved in volunteer activities at WMSWCD.

Associate Director Information

Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle) (I go by ...)

Address: _____
Street, P. O. Box City State Zip Code

Telephone No.: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Do you have a specific reason for wanting to serve as an associate director?

Have you interacted with the district in the past?

Is there anything else you'd like to share with us (relevant work or volunteer experience, knowledge, skills, interest in diversity, equity and inclusion)?

Feel free to use a second page to elaborate on any of the above, if needed.

Return by mail, fax or email to:
West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District
2701 NW Vaughn St, Ste.450
Portland, OR 97210
F: 503.326.3942
Email: info@wmswcd.org

Evolving Success Criteria Questions for DEI Committee Review on August 12th, 2020.

Conservation Scope

- 1) Should we consider adding equity, environmental justice, access and climate change in our vision?

(Scott Gall note: Again, this is to provide guidance and not necessarily the how. Also the focus here is mainly equity and environmental justice. Conservation Scope Team is providing feedback on climate change – though that can certainly factor into the other two).

Current Vision Statement:

The District is committed to working with its constituents to meet the demand for natural resource education and technical assistance to urban and rural residents, farmers, business owners, public schools and the general public and to increase the economic viability and environmental health of the rural and urban regions.