

FINAL -- WMSWCD Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Meeting Summary -- FINAL
July 17, 2019 Noon to 2:00 pm, WMSWCD Office

Attending: Scott Gall, Susan Weedall (Co-Chairs); Jim Cathcart, Michele Levis, Mary Logalbo, Renée Magyar, Sam Mularz, Terri Preeg Riggsby, Randi Razalenti.

Welcome/Check-In/Equity Shares -- The following announcements were shared.

- Sam shared that he'd recently went through the Office of Equity & Human Rights (OEHR) Equity 101 training and found it useful. Sam also shared that a recent trip to the book store in Seattle spurred an interest in further exploring literature around Native American history and knowledge including the book *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer (Milkweed Editions).
- Terri explained how she's connected with [HAKI Community Organization](#), a nonprofit organization encouraging and promoting East African Immigrants, on recent multiple fronts. Through her work sitting on the West Portland Town Center and at a joint tabling event as well as casual follow-up to get to know one another Terri's had the pleasure of getting to know Founder and Director of HAKI, Saalim Saalim. Terri explained how HAKI has put on workshops for renters rights and homeowner loan assistance, including guidance navigating loan issues related to Muslim laws that bar paying or receiving interest on loans. Terri and Saalim Saalim recently worked together to submit a grant request through the Department of Education to support youth programing.
- Susan shared that in September she will be attending an Oregon PT Association presentation redefining the term Cultural Competence. Susan also passed around a handout from www.mypronouns.org, a resource site to better understand the need for pronouns beyond he and she and tips for respectful pronoun use in the workplace.
- Renée explained how she came across some impactful articles written by a Native American Woman on cultural appropriation while conducting some art work research around headdresses. Renee shared the following title, "An Open Letter to Non-Natives in Headdresses" and link to the article: <https://apihtawikosisan.com/hall-of-shame/an-open-letter-to-non-natives-in-headdresses/>
- Mary reported on the stellar progress intern Indi Keith has made on a paper that centers on a literature review and mapping exercise that examines *Racial Exclusion in West Multnomah County and Impacts on Equity & Conservation Outcomes*. Mary explained how she hopes that Indi will be given the opportunity to present on this at the September DEI meeting.

Approval of the May 14, 2019 Meeting Summary – Accepted with one typo correction pointed out by Susan.

Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Diversity Equity and Inclusion Budget Clarification – Mary explained that the budgeted amount reported as \$16,000 in the "Approved FY 19-20 Budget, Work Plan and Goals Review" was incorrectly reported out as \$5,000 of the total \$16,000 reported for the DEI Budget was actually shifted to the Communications and Outreach Budget leaving the final Diversity Equity and Inclusion budget at \$11,000. This \$5,000 is listed in the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Work Plan under the Partnership Development & Maintenance program area and is dedicated to the use of community liaisons in the update of the Long Range Business Plan. Mary provided an amended Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Plan and budget showcasing this change (copy attached).

Long Range Business Plan Update – Mary walked the group through the District's general framework to updating the current Long Range Business Plan. The current plan expires at the end of December 2019, but the plan is to extend the current plan through December 2020. The District's request for proposal (RFP) for external support and facilitation for developing and implementing the general framework for updating the Long Range Business Plan was not successful as all respondent bids exceeded greatly the District's budget. The District did learn from the RFP process and the plan now is to move forward as much as we can internally. See handout, *Long Range Business Plan: DRAFT Timeline, Roles & Work Plan*. (Note: Terri asked that all draft documents be dated so we can track when and why updates/changes made.) The general framework is to hold three themed conversations – one about Conservation Scope, one about Financial Sustainability and one about Organizational Structure. Underlying these conversations is diversity, equity and inclusion – numerous equity pauses are envisioned throughout each conversation. **Recommendation:** Reach out to Cliff Jones, Capacity Building Partnerships, regarding availability to facilitate at least some of the equity pauses for these conversations. (The Board is comfortable and familiar with Cliff, Cliff knows us and our work and Cliff is familiar with our equity lens.)

The Leadership Team (Jim, Michele, Randi, Kammy, Renée), along with Mary, will serve as the Steering Committee for the update. Each theme conversation will have a theme team assigned to it that will be in charge of planning and setting up the conversation meetings and debrief on the outcomes of the discussions. The theme teams would

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like to have at least one Board representative on the team. The framework has as a starting point an assessment and framing step that would seek input and feedback on where we currently are at from partners, external audiences including those we have not been engage with historically but hope to engage through Community Engagement Liaisons. The idea is to get initial input and perhaps some fresh perspective early in the update process. **Discussion:** The concept of organizational structure, such as succession management, should also be addressed for the Board as well as staff. Ambitious timeline but folk were generally supportive of the initial assessment and framing stage to be completed by October. Would be good to call out Community Engagement as its own theme. The use of Community Engagement Liaisons are designed to get at those communities we have not been traditionally engaged with. But, in general, we need to ensure we are engaging all our communities – traditional (partners, landowners and constituents) and not just those who are new to us. **Question:** is the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee comfortable with its role as outlined in the framework and as such meeting more regularly such as monthly meetings? Also, is Committee comfortable with the District contracting with Ping Khaw and Associates and getting Ping’s input on the design on how we would include Community Engagement Liaison (CELS) in this process? **Yes on both counts. Action:** Randi will schedule a bi-monthly meeting of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee that will be solely devoted to Long Range Business Plan process. These meetings will alternate with the regular bi-monthly meetings of the Committee that would be broader in scope. The end result of both bi-monthly meetings is that the Committee will be meeting monthly, alternating from a meeting devoted to the LRBP update and a meeting addressing the broader scope of the Committee.

Partnership Log – Check in by Susan on the Partnership Log. Susan did her own exercise with the log. Susan proposed a simple activity to create awareness about partners with the Board. It would involve Board members looking at the list of partners and distill out those within their Zones that the District has been working with. Susan wants to engage Board members who may have a relationship with a partner or could develop a relationship with a key partner that is in their Zone. The activity would also build awareness that building partner relationships is actually much more complex and time consuming than perhaps first thought. So, the question is how do we prioritize which partners that Board members may need to invest more time with? **Action:** This would be a good step to take at a future Board meeting. Need to be clear about what we mean by Partner for this activity (i.e., definition). Here is our list of partners and potential partners. Here are those that are active in your Zone (awareness). Who do you have a relationships with? Where do we need to build or strengthen relationships?

Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC) Self-Assessment – See handout. The Committee went over questions where there was not unanimity in the responses. Mission statement was one (question 6). Question 11 (organizational demographics) was another. Difficult for a small organization because people may feel vulnerable in identifying. Question 5: Do we have a racial equity policy? Policy different than a statement (which we have). Policy should include accountability. The group felt there is value in learning from each other when we do not look at things the same. For example, there was good discussion on the need for a demographic survey of ourselves. We need to reach out to smaller organizations and East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District to learn of their experiences, if any, in collecting demographic information about staff and Board. Question 5: Do we have a racial equity policy? Policy different than a statement (which we have). Policy should include accountability. **Action:** In two months, evaluate the use of the CCC Self-Assessment tool and decide whether it needs to be modified so as to better meet our needs. The District has gotten beyond readiness – which the current assessment was designed to measure.

Meeting Days – Meeting now monthly. One meeting LRBP focus. The other meeting is more general Committee meeting. Problem, third Wednesday now follows the new Board meeting schedule to meet on the third Tuesday of every month. For August, the date is Noon to 2 pm, August 14th. Regular schedule is the 4th Wednesday of the month beginning Wednesday, September 25th. (Will deal with November and December dates at a future meeting.)

Next Meeting: August 14, 2019, 12:00 to 2:00 pm (Long Range Business Plan Update focus). Next regular meeting is Wednesday, September 25th). November and December dates TBD because the 4 Wednesday of these months fall during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday periods.

Initial compilation by Jim Cathcart, July 25, 2019 with contributions from Mary Logalbo and Michele Levis. Updated by Susan Weedall July 27, 2019. Finalized by the Committee at the August 14, 2019 committee meeting.