

WMSWCD Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Meeting Summary
Long Range Business Plan (LRBP) Update
August 14, 2019 Noon to 2:00 pm, WMSWCD Office

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

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

- Terri – Provided the Committee an update on the Soil and Water Conservation Commission process to review eligibility requirements for running for a Soil and Water Conservation District Zone Director position in wake of the controversy created when an East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District candidate, who is a person of color, was ruled ineligible by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Unfortunately, the process being laid out by the Commission is not being inclusive of bringing in new voices to the process.
- Renée – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion summary statement review for Annual Report. There is a need to have a summary statement of the District’s diversity, equity and inclusion initiative for the Annual Report to make the statement more readable and accessible than relying on the explicit language of the District’s Racial Equity Statement. The current version of the summary statement has been vetted by the Leadership Team but has not gained the perspective of all Committee members. **Action:** *Renée to distribute for review a draft of the summary statement to All Staff with a cc: to Susan and Terri as the Board members on the Committee.*

Approval of the July 17, 2019 Meeting Summary – The original version was updated to reflect Susan’s additional comment submitted on July 27th reflecting Susan’s report out to the group that Susan would be attending a Physical Therapy Association presentation redefining the term Cultural Competence. This version was reviewed and accepted with one additional correction to the date referenced in the header of the meeting summary.

Input on the Updated Work Plan & Community Engagement for LRBP Update –Mary briefed the Committee on Mary and Renée’s meeting with Ping Khaw (PKS International LLC) about the plan’s approach to community engagement. One idea discussed was the formation of a diverse community liaison LRBP advisory group and should the focus and make-up of this advisory group be on underserved and historically marginalized communities, or in addition to these groups, should the group also be representative of our traditionally served communities such as landowners and conservation-focused partners.

Mary opened a discussion on how Committee members felt about the plan for updating the LRBP. Terri confirmed that the Board members invited to serve on the Conservation Team, Financial Sustainability Team and the Organizational Development Team have confirmed. The purpose of these teams is to be responsible for organizing, facilitating and debriefing on larger group discussions addressing their respective topics.

The Committee went through an exercise where members could post their views with respect to questions, concerns and feedback on the plan. See the attached for the results of this exercise. Committee members could also provide their views on how diversity, equity and inclusion is being addressed as well as with respect to the planned use of the equity lens throughout the process. A lot of the questions focused on the make-up of a community liaison advisory group and what groups could be sourced through Community Engagement Liaisons (CELs) provided by PKS International LLC. Also, to what extent should partners and more traditional constituents serve on the advisory group or should this input rely on other processes so that the use of CELs on an advisory group is focused on those underrepresented or marginalized communities we have not been traditionally engaged with.

Determine When to Utilize Equity Lens & Pauses During LRBP Process – Discussion centered on the worthwhileness of updating the equity lens based on Cliff Jones’ (Capacity Building Partnerships) recommendations to do so after the District’s Board Equity Lens training conducted in January 2019. The recommendations centered on streamlining the lens so that it could be applied to a topic within an hour. This recommendation is consistent with the “lite” version of equity lens developed by Mary for application in one of Mary’s courses for the Executive Master of Public Administration program. The Committee felt it was probably best to not use the March 30, 2018 version of the lens in the LRBP Update process and instead update the lens based on folk’s experience in using the March 30, 2018 version of the lens and recommendations that came out of the Board equity lens training. The Committee also provided feedback on when to apply the lens in the process to be used for updating the LRBP. Other discussion focused on the benefits of hiring an outside facilitator to guide the use of the equity lens in this process. **Action:** *Susan and Jim will work on developing an updated version of the equity lens based on their experience using the lens to date and based on the feedback provided by Cliff Jones of Capacity Building Partnerships. Susan and Jim will get an updated version out to the Committee for review and comment prior to the September 25, 2019 Committee meeting.*

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Examples were given as to when the lens would be applied by different groups in this process such as pausing to evaluate the make-up of the invitees to each of the conversations planned for each of the themes: conservation scope, financial sustainability and organizational development, or to apply the lens for evaluating the framework questions that will guide the conversations. Another example is applying the lens to the assessment and debriefing outcomes from each of these conversations. **Action:** *Mary to work with other Core Team members to develop a specific schedule in the LRBP update process.*

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Goals – Scott led a discussion about the goals we have set for diversity, equity and inclusion. There are overarching goals and those that are specific to the District Racial Equity Statement. What is also needed are clearly stated goals that are understandable and measurable to track our progress towards achieving our goals and to ensure organizational accountability to the goals. The Annual Work Plan is the document that contains the more measurable goals. There is still a lack of awareness about these goals and the purpose of the goals. For example, are they Committee goals or organizational goals? **Action:** Further discussion to be scheduled for the September 25th Committee meeting.

Next Meeting: Next regular meeting is Wednesday, September 25th. October meeting is October 23rd. November meeting is November 27th (day before the Thanksgiving Holiday). The December meeting date conflicts with the December 25th Christmas Holiday. The December meeting is rescheduled to December 18th.

Initial compilation by Jim Cathcart, August 14, 2019. Review and comments posted by Committee members through August 19, 2019. Those were addressed by Jim Cathcart in a second draft released August 19, 2019. Final amended draft per the Committee's review and discussion at the September 25, 2019 Committee meeting completed by Jim Cathcart on 10/22/2019.