

**DRAFT -- WMSWCD Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting Summary – DRAFT
January 12, 2021 1:00pm to 3:00 pm, WMSWCD Zoom meeting**

Attending: Scott Gall (Chair); Mary Logalbo, Renee Magyar, Randi Razalenti, Laura Taylor, Ari DeMarco, Jim Cathcart

Welcome/Check-In/Equity Shares – Jim mentioned how he has shared DEI readings on the District’s Slack DEI thread that Tryon Creek Watershed Council has been sharing regarding white supremacy culture, and encouraged staff to read these. Renee shared a list of ideas of updates she’d like to make as soon as possible to the District’s web page to update some of the policies and initiatives that the District is doing with DEI work. Partnerships was flagged as an area of concern as some of the groups listed may view us a client rather than a partner. This area needs to be examined more before it is posted to the website. Laura mentioned how two areas that staff have taken a lot of time to devote this work to that weren’t on the list is hiring practices and carefully choosing partner funding. Jim noted that the list was a mix of policies and measurements.

Action item: Laura will draft a blurb about hiring practices and partner funding in terms of DEI work and have Randi and Jim take a look before passing along to Renee. Renee will keep working on the updates overall taking in the various feedback and will reach out to people for links and input as needed.

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

DEI Co-Chair Position – Candidate Selection – Scott reported that Laura has submitted interest in being a Co-Chair for the DEI Committee, and Laura’s submittal was shared with the group. There were no other candidates and Laura’s Co-Chair position will begin July 1st so as to be able to incorporate the duties in the annual workplan.

Review DEI related strategic directions, goals and tactics proposed in draft Long Range Business Plan (LRBP) – Mary presented specific goals and tactics for the LRBP update to the Committee for feedback. The goals and tactics were not in a priority order.

Strategic Direction 1 – goal 1: Mary notes that all tactics aren’t necessarily something that will happen. There are some tactics that are ‘need to dos’ and some are ‘nice to dos’. Jim’s input is to put ‘need to dos’ first and ‘nice to dos’ later. Scott mentions that tactic “d” about staff time devoted should get moved up- the other three items (c, e, f) could be put on hold if there was reason to, such as budget limitations. For the potential DEI internship, the DEI Committee will put together the goals of the internship workplan and there would be a specific supervisor assigned, likely recruiting for someone that is interested as we do for other internships.

Strategic Direction 1 – goal 2: wording on tactic C – whether or not to leave in ‘how to’- Jim sees this as a potential escape route. Jim felt this tactic should change to ‘diversify board and staff’ and that this could potentially be a goal instead of a tactic. It was revealed that this is captured in smart goal 5, and therefore tactic C is redundant and will be removed.

Jim would like to see the DEI Committee be more of the development team for a lot of the LRBP DEI initiatives and pass this along to the Board/Leadership Team for implementation. Examples of this are the Advisory Committee and Board member recruitment. Scott noted that the associate director recruitment process was looked at by the Committee, but one place where there is a snag is that the Board isn’t really supportive of the associates to take over their positions. Until the board is ready to have that be the case, we need to analyze what an Associate Director really is to the District and update materials as needed. The Board needs to decide to diversify itself.

One of the concerns that staff and certain Board members have is that there have been comments from certain Board members regarding the advisory committee that have been unsupportive of this ‘outside’ perspective, and not understanding the value. Jim would like the DEI Committee need to internalize and figure out how to address this. Trainings is one way to help encourage this, particularly finding the right training for this specific issue of diversifying. Facilitated discussions can also be helpful with sensitive topics like this. Randi suggested bringing this issue to the Board directly at the next board meeting when addressing the LRBP update and to discuss these concerns more directly with the Board.

Action item: Scott will take notes on these follow up items and incorporate this into the upcoming DEI Committee workplan and bring back to the DEI Committee for review.

Review 2020/21 Committee Annual Workplan and discuss 2021/22 workplan – Scott presented last fiscal year’s work plan and noted that most of the items would be continuing unless anyone had objections. Renee asked about adding job descriptions for Board members, and adding a DEI component to those job descriptions. Jim mentioned the policies and procedures document for Board members that was approved by the Board that spoke to creating

job descriptions, but this hasn't been completed yet.

Action item: Scott will review last year's work plan and make a recommendation to the Committee on whether or not to continue items for the 21/22 fiscal year. Additionally, the work plan may include the development of a DEI commitment section of the Board of Directors Job Description.

No other comments were given on this topic.

Leadership Team Feedback to DEI Committee on Desired Outcomes and Accountability for DEI Activity in Employee Work Plans – Leadership Team agreed to the terms that the DEI Committee suggested of a minimum of 1% [pro-rated for part-time employees] on all staff work plans to be devoted to DEI work outside of programmatic work, DEI Committee meetings, etc. Scott explained that Jim also wanted to have a performance measure included in employee evaluations and those ratings were developed by Jim and presented to the DEI Committee. The DEI Committee was in general agreement with the ratings. Laura suggested having some sort of self-evaluation tool involved in this. Randi flagged the word 'personal' may not be appropriate and that it's possible it's not the best idea to have a rating around this work as it invokes a lot of personal, self-reflective work that can have an emotional toll. Jim proposed the DEI Committee work on the wording of this performance evaluation a bit more. "Individual development" instead of "personal" was suggested as this was about getting at furthering your development beyond what is in program work.

Action Item: The DEI Committee will discuss this more at the next meeting.

Future DEI committee meetings/times; change month to alternate with TCWC meetings – potential next meeting Feb 9th, 2021- Scott explained the nuances about the timing of the DEI Committee meetings conflicting with Terri's commitment to Tryon Creek Watershed Council meetings, but that those meeting times may be changing. The DEI Committee will meet in February regardless to have more wiggle room to finalize the annual work plan and will discuss whether to move to every other month from there or not.

Action Items

See above.

Next Meeting: February 9, 1:00pm-3:00pm

Notes taken by Randi Razalenti