

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

**Attending:** Scott Gall & Laura Taylor (Co-Chairs); Ari DeMarco, Mary Logalbo, Terri Preeg Riggsby, Randi Razalenti

**Welcome/Check-In/Announcements** – Mary shared the following in the group chat: I sent out information about a neighborhood DEI training/café chat series that anyone interested can participate in (led through NWNW). Laura, Kammy and I applied a lens to partner funding and I'd be happy to report out on that later. Also, Education Program Niche Finding RFP had a great pre-bid session including contractors already working with CELs on the proposal.

Mary shared the following via email, unsure of being able to fully join the meeting: "Building Diverse Communities" NWNW supported community conversations, workshops and presentations on our staff Teams channel, but I also wanted to mention these at the DEI meetings, so I'm sending along a link to these opportunities here: <https://nwnw.org/about-us/what-we-do/building-diverse-communities/>

Mary also shared that mid-November is when Mary & Isa may be able to get census data to work with.

Terri shared that she is looking to run for Metro Councilor for District 6, and if she gets appointed, may not be able to stay on the District's Board of Directors, but would still be involved in the District in other ways.

**Action item:** Mary to follow up on partner funding via email.

**Approval of August 10, 2021 Meeting Summary** – Laura noted that a sentence that was unclear regarding the suggestion of collecting demographic data from staff – it said a "threshold", and should be changed to say 'threshold of people' to be more clear what the threshold is referencing. The minutes were approved with this change.

Randi brought up that the District's draft DEI Committee minutes are currently posted to the website as part of the packet, but we do not follow up with posting approved minutes, and asked if the group thought this would be a good change if it's not too cumbersome for Renee's time to post the approved minutes as well. Terri was curious to see DEI page analytics at some point when possible to find out how often the page was visited, and would like to see this again when we update the website.

**Action item:** Randi make changes to the final approved minutes as discussed. Randi talk to Renee about getting analytics with traffic on webpages on the current DEI site vs. new site after some time, and if possible, to start putting approved minutes up on the DEI site. Renee to report out on DEI page analytics when she gets a chance during a check-in at a future DEI Committee meeting.

**Bias awareness training needs for hiring-** Mary shared resources from City of Portland (COP) hiring process for Bias Awareness training, and Ari used these resources for this past year's internship hiring process. This Bias Awareness training process consisted of staff on the interview panel reading the COP training materials and signing an agreement acknowledging having read the materials as well as a component on confidentiality. Ari reached out to the DEI Committee to see if we want to tailor these materials to be more District specific. Mary shared that when she was on an interview panel for COP the group talked about some of their own biases and had a discussion around it, and Mary noted that this might be most important in times when there are partners outside of District staff. This process didn't happen in the internship hire as Ari was not aware of this process. Ari noted that the confidentiality piece was only on the agreement form, and is wondering if this should be elsewhere than just in the agreement. Laura (who was on the interview panel for last year's interns) noted that the training was helpful and felt there wasn't a need to reinvent anything, but it may be good to have the discussion piece added for consideration. Ari noted having some issues with the discussion piece as this can reveal things about yourself to the group that you may not be comfortable sharing.

Mary had another session with using this packet for the Climate Change Intern and a lot of it is on the facilitator to convey that the process is a safe space and is confidential, noting that the most important piece is that it is voluntary to share your own biases. Mary noted this can also be a good opportunity for interviewers to discuss if they know an interviewee so the group can discuss how to deal with that situation. Mary also noted that Metro offered to share with us a bias awareness training that they do with their own staff.

Ari noted that the confidentiality piece would be good to give to everyone that works on any component of our hiring process including resume reviewers, administrative redactors, interview panel, etc.

Mary noted that the equity lens facilitator guide has good information that could be used for coming up with a “cheat sheet” for the facilitator process for a bias awareness training (saved on our server here, for internal reference: \\WM2\Shared Folders\Shared\Planning & Reports\Long Range Business Plan\2021-2025\Team Materials\DEI\Equity Lens\LRBP Equity Lens\LRBP Equity Lens Facilitators Guide.docx)

The following were decided upon at the meeting amongst the group:

Confidentiality acknowledgement: for everyone working on any piece of a hiring team (including redactors) – all to look through this & sign off in the beginning stage of the hiring process.

Bias awareness training & voluntary bias discussion: for those reviewing resumes and those on an interview panel.

**Action items** - Ari & Randi: 1) create a facilitator “cheat sheet” for the bias discussion based off the equity lens facilitator guide that Mary gave, and bring to the DEI Committee in December for review (as well as any other updated components that specifically need the team to review); 2) Look at the Bias Awareness Training Acknowledgement form to determine if the confidentiality component should be removed or repeated on this form; 3) Create a confidentiality form for all to use for District hires; 4) Incorporate these pieces into the upcoming hiring schedule for permanent hire and internship hires as soon as possible; 5) Incorporate these pieces into the permanent and internship hiring schedule templates at their ideal times in the process as well as store the materials as part of the overarching Hiring Playbook.

**Redaction of applications during hiring** – Terri mentioned having an automated redaction processes to consider, but Randi has looked into this before and let the group know of the limitations. Terri retracted the automated suggestion because of our size and all the nuances with redaction. Laura suggested having candidates that apply do this themselves. Randi felt that there may be some hiccups along the way, but that it is a good time to experiment with a permanent position and see how it goes. The permanent position is a better chance to experiment with this due to there being more of an investment for the candidates to take the time to do this for a full time permanent position rather than candidates applying for a part-time temporary internship. Randi relayed that Jim Cathcart wanted the group to have a check-in on whether or not there was still merit in redacting resumes. Randi recused herself from this discussion since she is normally the primary person to redact resumes. Mary noticed that redaction has been very helpful in understanding self-awareness and self-biases, and would like the District to continue this process. Scott noted seeing benefits from the process as a way to easily remove biases. Overall, the group echoed sentiment on feeling best about staying the course on redacting, and agreed to try self-redaction with the upcoming permanent position (as long as this works for the Core Hiring Team for this position), and redact candidates’ materials internally (with help from intern Martina Avendano) for the internship recruitment.

**Action Items:** Randi – to check in with the Core Hiring Team for the Forest Conservationist to ensure they are comfortable with the self-redaction process by candidates. Laura – will help with writing instructions on how to self-redact.

**Board and Staff Trainings** – Terri let the group know that the Board had a consultation with Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO), and the results on the reporting on how they were doing were good, but that coming out of remote conditions was noted as something to be cautious about by the assessment. Terri was in touch with SDAO about a training related to this, and SDAO recommended having a training about supporting a culture of openness at work that would be beneficial to both Board and staff. SDAO recommended HR Answers to conduct this training and Terri will look at this with Michele and Jim. Terri noted that part of an openness at work is nurturing a positive environment and knowing how best to give and receive feedback, and that it would be beneficial to include in this overall training topics that are related to this in terms of microaggressions, gender identity, etc. or any other DEI-related matter that we may want to incorporate. Terri felt that specifically including microaggression in the training would be especially important to incorporate so that giving and receiving feedback (which will be included in the training) will be successful, positive and constructive. Funding for this training would not come from DEI budgeted training funds. As far as timing goes, Terri felt this was best to do this sooner than later as it’s best to do this before staff return to work at the office. Terri and applicable staff will try as much as possible to get all staff and board to attend, but Terri would prefer to not wait and push this training out too much longer just based on trying to get 100% participation. Terri felt that this would be in addition to the microaggression refresher that Scott and Laura plan to present to the Board at their November meeting.

Randi reminded the group that the Board still need to complete a high-level gender awareness training. Terri would like the gender awareness training to be part of an existing Board meeting, and paired down to about an hour (the original high-level training was quoted as a two-hour training initially).

Mary reported that she doesn’t have much of an update on staff trainings with Capacity Building partnerships, but

noted that they are happy to work with us, but won't be ready to work with us until January next year. Mary circled back with Laura, Scott, and Jim about this and they all agreed this timing can work for us. Capacity Building Partnerships also mentioned bringing in their colleagues earlier to deliver these trainings if needed, and Capacity Building Partnerships could still develop the training.

**Action items:** Terri will follow up with HR Answers about the all staff and Board training and will get back to the group about timing. Mary will work with Capacity Building partnerships about a 1-hour training with the Board at a Board meeting while also circling back about staff trainings. Terri will work with Jim to find a Board meeting that will work for the gender awareness training.

**Action Items Review**

See above

**Next Meeting:** December 14, 1:00pm-3:00pm

Notes taken by Randi Razalenti