

WMSWCD Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting Summary
February 1, 2022 1:00pm to 3:00 pm, WMSWCD Zoom meeting

Attending: Scott Gall & Laura Taylor (Co-Chairs); Mary Logalbo, Randi Razalenti

Welcome/Check-In/Announcements – Randi shared that Renee Magyar pulled the analytics that Terri Preeg Riggsby wanted to see for the District’s DEI page, and offered that it could be shared via email to the group. Scott shared that he attended a Changing Hands workshop helping farm owners and land managers connect, and there was a great introductory that was very welcoming of people of different backgrounds. Scott will share the welcome statement with the group via email.

Mary shared in the Zoom chat: I’ve helped the Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group (PHCAG) plan its next meeting centered on “The Place of Plants in the Restoration of the Lower Willamette.” I will be on a speakers panel alongside Greg Archuleta Cultural Policy Analyst with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and Dom Maze of the City of Portland on February 9th at 6:30 pm. The PHCAG (Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group) provides on-going education and community support regarding the clean-up of the lower Willamette River – typically they have 65 people attending who represent industry, restoration companies, the community and government agencies.

Mary also shared that Mary reached out to Confluence Project regarding the Sturgeon Lake restoration project. Confluence Project could help us connect with Indigenous communities to find a way to share stories of the land that this area sits on through art and/or information such as a kiosk.

Action item: Randi forward the email to the DEI Committee that contains the District DEI webpage analytic data.

Approval of December 14, 2021 Meeting Summary – Randi noted that the agenda had the wrong date for the minutes, and that the minutes to approve are from December 14, 2021. The minutes were approved as written.

DEI Committee Work Plan check-in for 2021-22, and planning for 2022-23:

The group went through the annual work plan for the DEI Committee, checking in on the status of where things were at for the current fiscal year, as well as noting what items would be continuing into the following fiscal year. Below are some of the details discussed.

- Item #15 was redundant to other items above it (#3 & #8); these may be combined but still keep track of the strategic directions from the Long Range Business Plan (LRBP).
- Item #4 - Mary believes we are still finding ways to implement sharing stories of race, place and equity in ways other than just with the *Whose Land is Our Land?* document and that there are more opportunities outside of this specific publication to share these stories. It is unclear at this time if the original author Indi Namkoong, would have time to be engaged again on finalizing this draft work.
- Item #5 – The group agreed that the plan for this should be deferred by one year. There are too many changes taking place in the District coming up and not enough bandwidth for staff to take this on.
- Item #7 – The group agreed to defer forming the Advisory Committee (AC) this current fiscal year due to staff bandwidth. So far there is a team put together to put the AC together. The earliest time period this group will have to meet will be in May. Funds that were allocated for this will not all be used this fiscal year, and can be allocated for a 2nd trainer the staff and board’s upcoming equity training on white supremacy culture and tokenism.

Action Item: Available DEI Committee members form a working group for creating Associate Board Director recruitment materials, and invite Michele Levis. Meet in months that the DEI Committee doesn’t meet.

Laura and Scott will pull DEI items from staff’s individual workplans and will put in another tab in the DEI Committee work plans for the DEI Committee to reference as needed.

Affinity Groups planning – In looking over the annual workplan in preparation for this meeting, Laura and Scott noted that, to their knowledge, this item hadn’t been tackled yet, and in response Laura sent out an inquiry to staff

asking if they had interest in forming any affinity groups. Staff were to reply to Laura only, so that Laura could follow up with the DEI Committee.

There was some interest from staff for being involved in LGBTQ+ affinity group, potentially meeting with some other local groups to get other perspectives from other organizations. Laura can reach out to local partner soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) to see if they have an affinity group in existence that could be joined as a starting place. There was also another idea of making a work/life balance affinity group.

Laura also had feedback of concern that a small group of people in an affinity group would make large change without having a bigger discussion with a larger group.

Randi brought up talking to partners that already have affinity groups to find out the pitfalls, process, etc., including if the group wants to change something in the organization, what steps do they take. Mary talked to East Multnomah SWCD about this, and they were interested in possibly teaming up with our District, and they worked with a consultant on forming affinity groups.

Action item: Mary to email East Multnomah SWCD to find out if we have staff that identify as BIPOC if they are welcome join affinity group (assuming that this group may exist, we believe it does) & cc Laura on the email.

Staff & Board trainings update: Randi noted that the DEI Committee needs to put training funds aside for next fiscal year, and shared some concerns that raise the need for trauma informed care training. Other Committee members also saw the need for this training. Mary noted Capacity Building Partnerships doesn't do this type of training. Randi suggested having a more open conversation about this with all staff during the DEI section of an all staff meeting to get thoughts on this. Laura suggested that using a poll on Teams is another method for getting input.

Action item: Randi to look up and get Scott the dollar amount for equity related trainings funded from the DEI Committee training funds this fiscal year to include in next year's budget. Randi will work on getting the white supremacy culture and tokenism training set up with Capacity Building Partnerships.

DEI Committee to follow up on discussing ideas for next fiscal year trainings with staff.

Action Items Review

See above

Next Meeting: April 12, 1:00pm-3:00pm

Notes taken by Randi Razalenti