

WMSWCD Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting Summary
April 12, 2022 1:00pm to 3:00 pm, WMSWCD Zoom meeting

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

Welcome/Check-In/Announcements – Scott shared that Ari has officially joined the DEI Committee.

Mary shared that she reached out to Confluence about creating Sturgeon Lake signage, and heard that they don't have capacity to work with us in regards to this at this point. One equity related project that has popped up is that there is a houseless shelter that wanted to do a garden with us. We'll be supporting that effort with the help of partners. Jeremy Baker from OCEAN reached out, and the CONNECT conference is going to be centered on equity this year and they are reaching out for ideas.

Approval of February 1, 2022 Meeting Summary – Mary – the confluence item from the announcement section of these minutes in the second sentence, instead of Confluence *will* help us, change to *could* help us. The minutes were approved with the amended changes.

Diverse Suppliers update: East Multnomah SWCD is interested in this topic and want to partner and learn from each other. EMSWCD is also starting to track monies spent with women business enterprises (WBE) and minority business enterprises (MBE), including those businesses that are certified and those that have self-identified that found being certified as a barrier. This is a future collaborative opportunity.

DEI Budget Update: This agenda item was moved to earlier in the meeting per Jim's request. Michele and Jim looked over the budget requests from the DEI Committee and had some revisions that Jim covered with the group listed below.

For trainings, this was moved back from \$5,400 for up to two trainings to \$3,000 for one single training. Board members can be invited to trainings, and we can schedule these at a time that would make it easier for Board members to attend these as well. Staff will be the priority for these trainings.

For expenses related to creating an Advisory Committee, it is too ambitious of us to get the Advisory Committee up and running by the end of the fiscal year. This was reduced from \$8,000 to \$1,000 in the budget in case we have to convene a focus group, or any preliminary expenses to get started. With all of the transition happening this year with transitioning back to the office, having an office move, and ambitious annual workplans, as well as Mary's capacity, these are all factors that will make this difficult to tackle this year.

Regarding the budget item related to researching historical and current tribal demographics for informing the development of land acknowledgements, this was revised from \$5,000 to \$1,000. The monies were needed for conservation programs.

\$15,000 was requested to contract with Metro for demographic analysis within District boundaries and vet through partner organizations. This was too much for our budget to take on. Jim was brought up to speed by Mary on the need for this, so this is in on the list to restore in case we are able to afford this later on when we look at the budget again in June. In the interim Terri is going to follow up with Mary on Terri's ideas for working with existing census data.

\$5,000 was requested for COBID certification disparities analysis and protocols review / legal counsel, and has been denied. We can give preference in RFPs for businesses that have certification as an ESB, but for protected classes such as WBE or MBE, we cannot give preference unless we do a three-year disparities analysis. The path forward is to continue to collect the data on monies spent with WBEs and MBEs and include this as a metric in our annual report as prompted by our Budget Committee.

Future Board trainings Annual DEI Check-in – The DEI Committee Co-Chairs will go to the board annually and provide a check-in / update on the District's DEI initiatives. Laura noted that there's recent experience with providing trainings to the board where we're having a challenge that all board members may not show up and it makes it hard for all to be on the same page, which can also make for challenging debriefs. Terri's feedback was requested as the Board Chair for the District and Board Liaison for the DEI Committee.

Terri expressed that if the board are going to receive training, they would prefer this to be on conservation work. Some on the board have felt that the equity trainings aren't a good use of their time. A professional facilitator is

good to have with the board. All of the trainings with the board have been focused on equity work rather than environmental work. It would be beneficial to slow down somewhat on trainings with the board on this. Terri is unsure if any actions or decisions have been changed on the board based on education that they've had from these equity trainings. CONNECT having training with an equity focus is another good opportunity to get board training that is being provided by a larger group.

Scott noted that we can satisfy needs for technical/conservation training outside of the organization because they are already in existence and don't need to be specifically crafted as our equity trainings are. Staff also noted how these trainings are an important key for our Long Range Business Plan goal to be welcoming to staff and the community.

Associate Board Director Recruitment process: We want more people providing more perspective, and Associate Directors can be a helpful way to fill gaps in knowledge. Talking to the board about what skillsets need to be filled would be helpful. Terri also said that if the staff find gaps to fill, to note those as we may need to fill positions for Directors that are going to possibly leave the Board. One of the paths to becoming a Director is by being an Associate Director for one year. Jim noted that human resources experience is one of those gaps that needs to be filled. Mary noted how we want to diversify our Board according to our Long Range Business Plan, and that the Advisory Committee, which is on pause, was going to help tackle this. Laura brings up that diversifying the board can change behavior of a group more than a training. Mary and Randi mention how bringing in more than one person that are from marginalized communities at a time can make it more comfortable for those individuals.

Action item: A subset group get together to find what characteristics we are looking for in the Board. Jim let the group know that Michele would like to join, and Laura, Scott, and Ari said that they would like to join.

Staff training updates: Scott announced that on May 26th there will be a training on white supremacy culture and tokenism facilitated by Capacity Building Partnerships, with a voluntary discussion on May 31st to debrief on the training. Randi updated the group to let them know that funded partners have been invited to this training. We will do a trauma informed care training next fiscal year, but will need to seek different trainers for this as this is not a topic covered by Capacity Building Partnerships.

New date and time; in-person meetings: The timing of current meetings is not good for a couple of the staff. The folks that were at the meeting were happy with a change in time of day to be 10am-12pm. We need more understanding of how the in-person requirements and remote requirements of public meetings will affect future meetings.

Action item: Scott to check in with Terri to see if the time works for her. Randi will check in with Oregon Department of Agriculture on clarifications about the in-person and remote requirements of public meetings.

Action Items Review

See above

Next Meeting: June 14, 10a-noon (pending Terri's response on time).

Notes taken by Randi Razalenti