



## **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee**

10 am – 12 pm, Tuesday, June 13, 2023

**Minutes keeper:** Shahbaz Khan

**Attendees** Lynn Barlow, Lorrie Conway, Scott Gall, Shahbaz Khan, Mary Logalbo, Terri Preeg Riggsby, Laura Taylor

### **10:00 am – Welcome/check-in/announcements – All**

- Terri shared updates on Senate Bill 775. This consisted of a review on recent OLIS hearings, status of partnership support, breakdown of the opposition, etc, all leading to news that the rules committee will determine its advancement today, and Senator Fredrick plans to bring the bill forward on 6/25.

### **10:15 am – Review minutes from last meeting – All**

- No changes, accepted as drafted.

### **10:20 am – Update from Mary on how the Indigenous Allyship visioning session went, and next steps for WMSWCD - Mary**

- Mary provided the history of the Allyship's formation and our commitment to support its establishment, such as providing funding for Serina Fast Horse as a consultant, getting other organizations to join and chip in (5 grand each!) and overall seeing a space where individual requests are being shared and addressed through a collective.
- Mary sent out draft notes she wrote from the session, which includes a group narrative focused on identifying preliminary goals and vision resulting from and inspired by a story-telling exercise, as well as the discussion on the role core organizers and agencies may play in land-back/land-access through their respective land-care operations.
  - Success stories were shared of land trusts and their importance in acquiring sites, cleaning them up and providing land back. There is work being done by The Nature Conservancy, as well as through the Oregon Land Justice Project (under the umbrella of the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts) that can be shared and learned from.

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- For SWCDs, there was talks of our role in being facilitators/connectors in conversations with private landowners regarding land-back/access and land care, though there are still many concerns around how we may do that most respectfully, reliably and fairly, alongside all the logistics of crafting those relationships (which will need to be explored further between all SWCDs).
  - **Action Item:** Terri mentioned that she knows a landowner in WA that has provided land access for an Indigenous community, and that she will reach out/connect us to gather more information on how that relationship was established.
- We are planning follow-up and next steps for the Indigenous Allyship group, hopefully as part of the City's upcoming tribal summit in September. Until then, there is a meeting for a debrief on this session being scheduled and a survey that will be sent out to collect information from people who attended.

**10:25 am** – Finalize new committee structure and meeting plan (frequency, day, rotating facilitation) – All

- We determined the new schedule for our DEI meetings will become **quarterly meetings** that will occur from **10am-12pm** on the **third Monday of the related month (March, June, September, December)**. The next meeting will follow this structure and is now set for **September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023**.
  - **Action Item:** Laura and Mary will reconfigure these appointments on staff calendars.
- In terms of committee structure, Laura has officially stepped down as co-chair, and has left us with a very thorough system/spreadsheet for tracking ongoing discussion items and identifying topics to follow up with in future meetings that we can continue to use. The new structure is less around seeing one or two chairs take on the burden of the workload, but to share the workload as a team. We arrived at the decision to co-opt the current system for rotating the minutes keeper role to also determine the facilitator for the future meetings, too. Since the minutes keeper is best tracking action items from any given meeting, it follows that they should also update the spreadsheets/materials, follow up with other staff on sending/creating the agenda, and then lead the next meeting.
  - **Action Item:** Shahbaz, being minutes keeper from this session, will create the agenda and facilitate the next DEI Meeting. Scott being minutes keeper for that session, can expect to then lead the meeting after that, too.
- We also discussed that the DEI committee meetings now become more of a space to flesh out ideas, but not necessarily have the impetus of being where those initiatives are brought forward (and instead being something more like a checks/balances, review, etc). The goal is to ensure it is not onerous to only select staff. We determined (with specifics of how discussed later in the meeting) that bringing this into All Staff meetings makes more sense, since there is already so many of us involved anyways ... So ideally seeing DEI meetings



shifting away from the designated place where the work gets done, to a space to further integrate and check-in with ongoing progress – those more frequent, specific check-ins can now be done in All Staff meetings.

- It was noted that with everyone effectively participating now, that membership in (and the process to officially join) the original DEI Committee Meetings may need to be clarified.
  - **Action Item:** Scott will revisit the procedure that outlines committee structure and the process to join the DEI Committee
- As an aside, the talks of next steps in the restructuring led to a discussion on potentially reviewing the original resolution that provisions the committee with its authority, and possibly bringing an updated resolution for approval by the board. More specifically, this stemmed from if we should discontinue the option for public involvement/attendance, since anyone outside of WMSWCD joining these meetings rarely occurs and may potentially lead to a redundant work in sending out a notification/press release each time. However, this was abandoned due to the following passage from the ODA SWCD guidebook:
  - *Public record and public meeting laws apply to any committee established by the conservation district board. If the committee has been given authority by the board to make recommendations to the board or make decisions on behalf of the board, its meetings are considered public meetings, and must be duly noticed and comply with all other aspects of public meeting law, see Chapter 7.*

**10:45 am** – Discuss the use of Land Acknowledgements - Laura / All

- Deferred

**11:20 am** – Develop plan for examining various elements of our programs/services through an equity lens – Laura / Lynn

- We continued from a previously discussed model (pasted below) which consists of a programmatic approach where individual program managers apply thematic equity lenses each month (examples bolded below) and then can come together to collectively share their findings.
  - **Proposed model for operationalizing equity in 4/11/2023 Minutes:** *All program managers could run equity lenses to examine specific aspects of their programs and then*

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*we could collectively discuss learnings and share what District-wide program aspects could be taken to increase equitable outcomes and/or any specific program changes that we might make as a result. The group really liked how this alternative increases potential of cross pollination. The following program elements (examined with a lens) were listed as potential topics to review: **how we allocate our budgets (overall funding, partner funding, and cost-share models), how we choose who to work with (our projects, our partners, landowners/schools), how we outreach for our programs, how we allocate funding and time, and when we work with contractors and/or green workforce are all topics we may choose to examine.***

- **Action Item:** We will need to come up with more concrete topics for equity lenses, in general, as we begin to apply this model in the coming months. Mary will determine the first topic (related to funding?) and create an equity lens template that will be applied to our initial run of this system.
- We determined that we should utilize the extra 30 minutes being added for All Staff meetings (starting July 3<sup>rd</sup>) as a space to apply this model, and determined the structure of how that may look. This time will be dedicated to advancing the discussion, learnings, and efforts in operationalizing DEI in our programming. The potential for cross pollination was reemphasized as a benefit, particularly since there may be other perspectives that might otherwise be neglected in Tech Staff/optional DEI committee meetings, and are now mostly guaranteed to be included in All Staff Meetings.
  - **Action Item:** These updates/new decisions will need to be explained during the All Staff meeting on July 3<sup>rd</sup> in order to prime staff for the new system (and committee restructuring).
- To be most effective with this new time in All Staff meetings, it was determined that each individual program manager would need to take these specialized equity lenses, then analyze and apply that to their own programs prior to sharing during the meeting. So, the individual should be primed to report after having already done that “homework,” where their ideas will be consolidated and lead to more equitable items/steps going forward. One example was that a staff member might try to specifically bring forward individual summaries/take-aways after having applied their lens, which can also be subject to comment (anonymous or otherwise) and hash out details, then support those commitments/values/etc. in being developed/applied going forward.
  - Since this method requires a monthly activity that the individual program managers will need to run through prior to the All Staff meetings, it also requires work to determine monthly topics, a comprehensive method/program to share and respond to the assignment before the meetings and someone to lead as a facilitator for each month.
    - **Action Item:** Shahbaz will research a comprehensive, shared program (i.e. Sharepoint, our shared drive, etc.) and build a document that can be referenced and used to help systemize this task. Ideally, it is a space where



others can reference the prompt and other work, perhaps similar to our PPP updates.

- **Action Item:** Staff will need to begin to schedule time to run through each lens prior to each All Staff meeting.
- **Action Item:** Shahbaz will create a poll on whether our first run with embedding this practice as an agenda item in our All Staff meeting should be in either the upcoming August or September meeting, especially based around which month will have the largest chance for full attendance.
  - **Note:** *The first attempt at this exercise will depend on which month is selected for our first discussion, as that assignment/prompt must go out about a month before the selected All Staff meeting to provide time for adequate preparation.*
- Other notes:
  - Staff previously made proposals on potential new Associate Board Directors based on various criteria, and these are now consolidated into a single list which needs review ... One outstanding question is who we are reaching out to from that list and who is doing that.
    - **Action Item:** We decided as a group to bring this into the next July All staff meeting (7/3/23) as an agenda topic and continue from there.

**11:55 am** – Action item review – Shahbaz / All

**12 pm** – Adjourn - Next meeting September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Next Minutes keeper: Scott Gall