

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, October 17, 2017

2:00 PM

221 NW 2nd Ave, Portland, OR 97209

Council work session

2:00 Call to Order and Roll Call**2:05 Chief Operating Officer Communication**

Ms. Martha Bennett, Chief Operating Officer, introduced Metro councilors and provided background on the purpose of the work session as well as the history of the Metro Racial Equity Strategy and the Community Partnership Program. She explained that the idea behind the program was to create ongoing relationships with communities of color and other underrepresented communities. Ms. Bennett acknowledged Ms. Becca Uheberlau and Ms. Peggy Morell, Metro staff for their work on the Community Partnership Program. She introduced Ms. Uheberlau to give an overview on community partnerships.

Ms. Bennett introduced Ms. Morrell for the first presentation.

Work Session Topics:

2:10 Welcome

2:15 Community Partnerships Overview

Ms. Uheberlau shared that they were coming to council to provide an update on the partnership program per the guidelines in the Racial Equity Strategy. She expressed the hope that the work session would provide an opportunity to initiate and deepen a relationship between individuals and get feedback from everyone in the room about how to measure success in terms of the partnerships. Ms. Uheberlau explained the seating plan and the schedule for the day.

2:20 Agency-wide Community Partnerships

Ms. Bennett introduced Ms. Morrell for a presentation with Momentum Alliance. Ms. Morrell discussed the purpose of the outcomes at each of the tables in the

room, and introduced Ms. Emily Lai from Momentum Alliance.

Ms. Lai shared the background and mission of Momentum Alliance. She discussed why Momentum partnered with Metro, and explained that they had helped draft the Racial Equity Strategy. Ms. Lai highlighted work that had been done between Momentum and Metro over the past year. Mr. Jaime Limon-Guzman, Momentum Alliance staff recounted his own experiences with Metro. Ms. Lai asked Momentum youth to introduce themselves and give testimony about their experiences with Metro.

Ms. Ahlam Osman, sixteen years old, explained that she had been to six or seven focus groups. She recalled that the zoo was her favorite because she was able to learn a lot about the zoo and their conservation efforts. Ahlam's advice to Metro was to be more open minded and to continue to reach out to underserved communities.

Ms. Anika Becker, fifteen years old had been to three Metro focus groups. She noted that she also enjoyed the zoo and learned about the zoo's conservation efforts. Ms. Becker's advice to Metro was to keep doing the work they had been doing, and to talk to youth of color. She added that self-reflection was important.

Ms. Fatmah Worfeley, Momentum Alliance staff discussed some of the challenging elements of the partnership between Metro and Momentum. She explained that there as a lot of challenges building trust and relationships. Ms. Worfeley used personal experiences with Metro staff to show that there had been difficulties building trust and bringing the two agencies together. Ms. Worfeley asked the youth if they trusted Metro.

Ms. Raishel Covington from Momentum Alliance shared that she thought there wasn't trust yet but that they were getting there. She expressed that she didn't feel like she fit in at Metro because she hadn't seen anyone who looked like her or shared her experiences. Ms. Covington added that there hadn't been reason to trust Metro in the past.

Ms. Osman agreed with Ms. Covington, and added that Metro staff hasn't always listened. Ms. Melissa Munoz shared that some people from Metro had been very open and others hadn't. She explained that there was a big difference between how Metro operated and how Momentum operated and that was clear in the partnership.

Mr. Llundyn Elliott, Momentum staff, conveyed that he did not feel trust between Momentum and Metro. He explained that in spite of the work that had been done, Metro continued to do business as usual without focusing on social justice.

Ms. Lai expressed that there weren't enough resources dedicated to racial justice, and that every department should have a staff person dedicated to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, instead of just one department.

Ms. Worfeley explained that Momentum Alliance was willing to work to build the trust. Mr. Elliott discussed Momentum's visions for the future of the partnership. He explained that one of their goals was to shift the conversation to whether or not Metro trusted young people and people of color. Mr. Elliott remarked that Metro putting trust in young people and people of color would benefit the whole region.

Ms. Morrell highlighted that the shared outcome of

Metro and their partners was the hope that decisions that came out of Metro should better reflect the racial diversity of the region. She explained that building relationships was necessary to build a community partnership, and that relationships transform public service culture. Ms. Morrell introduced Ms. Shweta Moorthy from Coalition of Communities of Color.

Ms. Moorthy discussed the goals of the Coalition's Bridges program. She highlighted that there was a wealth of leadership potential coming from the program. Ms. Moorthy introduced a video clip that included testimony from alumni of the Bridges program. She discussed the work between the coalition and Metro over the past five years and the relationship building that had taken place. Ms. Moorthy emphasized that there needed to be a support strategy for leaders of color to grow and continue their careers in public service. She introduced Ms. Jenny Lee, Advocacy Director at CCC.

2:45 Break and Self-Introductions

Work Session Topics:

2:55 Partners in Nature

Ms. Sheilagh Diez, Metro staff, discussed the history of partnership between Metro's Parks and Nature department and Unite Oregon. She highlighted the significant role that nature plays in people's lives, and how it is shaped by culture.

Mr. Oscar Guerra-Vera, Unite Oregon staff provided background on the relationship building process, and the challenges and opportunities that came up in the partnership. He explained some of the programming and training that Unite Oregon had done with Metro, and relayed feedback from community members about the outings and trainings. Mr. Guerra-Vera introduced their

2017 Natural Areas Field intern, Mr. Muwafaq Alkattan.

Mr. Alkattan recounted his experiences with Unite Oregon and Metro. He explained that for many people in immigrant communities, it's difficult to ground themselves in a new space, but these programs made it more possible.

Mr. Kayse Jama noted that he felt that the goals of the partnership had been achieved. He explained that he had some concerns about creating an authentic process that involves and benefits underrepresented communities from the beginning.

3:10 Advancing Social Equity in the Solid Waste Workforce Partnership

Ms. Molly Chidsey, Metro staff, introduced the partnership between Metro's Property and Environmental Services department and Oregon Tradeswomen and Constructing Hope. She highlighted the challenges faced by Metro and PES specifically. Ms. Chidsey explained that they chose organizations that were the focused on the same goals. She highlighted the desired outcomes of the partnership and explained some of the ways that changes had already been made. Ms. Chidsey introduced Ms. Pat Daniels, director of Constructing Hope and Ms. Valerie Curbelo, a graduate of the Constructing Hope program.

Ms. Daniels shared the background of Constructing Hope and described the way that the program was set up. She highlighted the importance of retention rates in the workforce and explained that Unite Oregon provides opportunities to create more retention. Ms. Daniels discussed equity issues surrounding waste and the lack of representation of women and people of color in the industry.

Ms. Curbelo discussed her experiences on the tour of the solid waste facility. She raised concerns that there weren't many opportunities for career growth, and she noted that finding those positions was important, and the partnerships helped to do that.

Ms. Tiffany Thompson from Oregon Tradeswomen explained what was happening with regard to the workforce program in PES. She noted that there was a focus on construction but also on the general solid waste structure. Ms. Thompson explained that they were working on getting better strategies with PES to get women involved in careers in solid waste. She discussed the opportunities that have come out of the partnership and noted that students were very excited about the career prospects. Ms. Thompson highlighted some of the upcoming events hosted by Oregon Tradeswomen and Metro. She emphasized that the end goal was to increase job quality and access to jobs.

3:25 Small Group Discussion at Tables

Participants were asked to split into small groups, and each was assigned a topic to discuss.

- A. Create decision-making spaces where both youth and electeds are heard and respected
- B. Develop a continuum of support for placing leaders of color on Metro advisory boards and committees
- C. Increase an understanding of Metro with immigrant and refugee communities
- D. Promote workforce diversity, job quality and career pathways that advance racial, gender and economic equity
- E. Build and deepen trusted relationships between community based organizations and Metro

Group A spoke to their ideas about what a successful decision making space would look like. They noted that hearing young people speak up in meetings is a success, and that they opportunity to share a decision making space would be significant progress. The group discussed how these opportunities might be created, and decided that Metro needed to create opportunities using their power. They emphasized the need to keep the connection between Metro and communities strong.

Group A shared ideas about who should set the agenda. They explained that Metro wouldn't always know what is needed in communities, so outreach was necessary. They discussed other informal avenues for youth to be involved with Metro, and proposed outreach in public schools and after school programs. They highlighted potential markers of success, including more people in communities being aware of Metro, communities being confident enough to speak up, and individuals having access to careers.

Group B proposed some ideal outcomes, such as every project would include community leaders in co-creating the process to help staff do a better job. They emphasized the importance of communities being involved from the beginning. The group expressed the need for community members to be supported on committees. They discussed ways that Metro and partners might collaborate to inform other governments about equity and community engagement.

Group B prioritized creating a safe environment for community members to give honest feedback, and noted that this would be a measure of success. They added that retention rates could also be a measure of success, as well as expanded relationships across Metro. They suggested taking advantage of visitor venues to engage

communities, and emphasized the need to fund partnerships. The group shared that developing more geographically specific equity committees would be a step towards success.

Group C discussed ways that Metro and immigrant and refugee communities might connect. They highlighted the need for Metro to keep up to date about key issues impacting immigrant and refugee communities, including DACA or the refugee ban, mental illness and individual's capacity to be involved. The group discussed that Metro could have an impact on these issues but it was important to be specific about how, and they needed to do their own research about that. They highlighted the importance of Metro taking on that burden. Group C emphasized the need to respond during times of crisis while also developing long term strategies. They suggested opening up a dialogue focused on expanding the partnerships beyond just one program, and acknowledged that mutual understanding was important.

Group C conveyed that there was a lack of understanding about what Metro was in the immigrant community, and suggested ways to increase this understanding, including working with educators and doing outreach to communities.

Group D discussed their perception of successful workforce equity. They expressed that measurable goals and a baseline to measure workforce diversity were important first steps. The group noted that a diverse workforce should be described as important in Metro contracts. Group D remarked that the region was changing and it was better to work together with community partners than to remain isolated.

Group D suggested creating more career pipelines or pathways to get jobs with opportunity for advancement. They recommended creating a new model that could be expanded to other areas in the region.

Group E shared the idea of a “cultural broker” or a liaison from the community to work with Metro on engagement. They highlighted the need for real outcomes from partnerships and linking those outcomes to meaningful goals of the agency. They explained that while building relationships took a long time, resources were often available to be shared with underserved communities. They discussed pathways for underserved community members to be involved at Metro, including internships, and paid training opportunities.

Group E conveyed the need for Metro to have a cultural awareness. They suggested reframing the question to ask “When will Metro trust people of color?” instead of the opposite. They advised that Metro support individuals in finding positions at other agencies as well as Metro.

3:45 Report out

Councilor Sam Chase referred to the group discussion and explained that they had discussed the importance of communities being able to be engaged in the co-creation of ideas, and the importance of bringing people into the process early. He added that it’s not just about the invitation but respecting individual’s time and providing stipends or other support. Councilor Chase emphasized the importance of education so that individuals can be a part of the conversation. He added that it was important to have more people from underrepresented communities on committees, and that they have an influence on the process.

Council President Tom Hughes recounted that his group agreed that there was a need for education in the school system so that a broader range of young people can understand Metro. He added that there could be a set of materials used to explain the work that Metro did. President Hughes suggested that setting the agenda was an important authority, and that process needed to involve more youth. He emphasized that it was important for youth to set their own agenda and create a space for Metro to approach them and address help address their issues. President Hughes added that the gap of resources in underserved communities needed to be addressed.

Councilor Carlotta Collette expressed the importance of recognizing that it was a long process to create a long term relationship. She raised concerns about Metro needing to compensate individuals for emotional labor. Councilor Collette discussed potential next steps, including the potential for internships that were specific to communities. She emphasized that it was important to get more diverse people in the workforce, and that engaging families was key. Councilor Collette added that it was important to spread the word about what was being done, and let people know that Metro was supportive.

Councilor Harrington shared that they had a lot of discussion about finding ways to ensure that youth were participating. She shared that they learned how young people were busy and had a lot of obligations, much like the councilors. Councilor Harrington noted that in spite of challenges, they were committed to working together.

Ms. Curbelo highlighted the need for underserved community members to have opportunities in humanitarian and public service careers, and noted that

partnerships with Metro could provide an avenue for this. Councilor Bob Stacey emphasized the need to have articulated goals. He noted that it was important to continue to use community partners, and share their objectives around the region to connect with other community partners. Councilor Stacey suggested that Metro create a baseline study and a defined goal, then move forward from there.

Councilor Shirley Craddick advised Metro to do better to understand immigrant communities, and shared that that needed to happen before immigrant communities understand Metro. She acknowledged the need to know more about the issues and concerns facing the immigrant community.

Ms. Lai highlighted the intangible but powerful changes since the beginning of the partnership. She explained that she felt more comfortable with Metro now, and that while there was work to be done, Metro was an agency to learn from.

Councilor Chase thanked everyone for participating, and expressed appreciation for the personal connections he made. Councilor Collette seconded Councilor Chase's comments, and emphasized the importance of such meetings.

3:55 Questions and Appreciations

4:10 Councilor Liaison Updates and Council Communication

4:30 Adjourn

Seeing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Miranda Mishan, Recording Secretary

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 17, 2017

| ITEM | DOCUMENT TYPE | DOC DATE | DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION | DOCUMENT NO. |
|-------------|----------------------|-----------------|--|---------------------|
| 3.1 | PowerPoint | 11/17/17 | Community partnerships that transform public service culture | 101717cw-01 |