



600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting minutes

Meeting: Committee on Racial Equity Retreat
Date/time: Thursday, November 4, 2017
Time: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Place: Cooper Mountain Nature House, 18892 SW Kemmer Rd., Beaverton, OR 97007
Purpose: Continue the work of the Committee on Racial Equity

Attendees

Co-Chairs: María Caballero-Rubio, Sharon Gary-Smith

CORE Members: Karla Hernandez, Duncan Hwang, Laura John, Patricia Kepler, Donna Maxey, Dele Oyemaja, Daisy Quiñonez, Katie Sawicki, Effie Stansbery, Olivia Walker

CORE Liaisons: Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick

Metro staff: Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chú, Raahi Reddy, Nyla Moore, Scotty Ellis

Guests: Monique Wilson

Absent: Martine Coblenz, Kari Herinckx, Shweta Moorthy, Councilor Sam Chase, Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) Commissioner Karis Stoudamire-Phillips

Welcome

María Caballero-Rubio, Metro Committee on Racial Equity (“CORE”) Co-Chair, called the meeting to order and the CORE members introduced themselves. Sharon Gary-Smith, CORE Co-Chair, shared that the purpose of this retreat is two-fold:

1. To create a shared sense of vision, purpose and common understanding of Metro’s and CORE’s work, and
2. To finalize the CORE bylaws and work plan.

María shared that the Co-Chairs have asked Metro staff to facilitate the retreat, so they can be full participants in the activities for the day.

“Get to know you” activity

Scotty Ellis, Metro Equity Program Analyst, introduced a popular-education style, interactive activity for the CORE members and guests to learn the following two things from one another:

- What talents do you bring to the CORE?
- How do you contribute to the CORE?

The group wrote down the answers to the questions and then shared in pairs. They posted their writing on the walls, so they could revisit the notes during remainder of the day. Scotty offered to take the notes to create an image that they can use to reflect on throughout their time as members.

History and content of the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chíu, Metro Equity Strategy Program Manager, described what Metro does, using the framework image of the four Metro lines of business. María asked Juan Carlos to backup and explain how Metro is organized, discussing the Metro Council, Chief Operating Officer and department directors. During that discussion Raahi Reddy, Metro Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program Director, distilled the roles that Metro plays, which include: raising revenue, regulation, operation, planning, making policies, and convening.

Juan Carlos provided a brief history of the equity strategy at Metro, including the creation of the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (“Strategic Plan”), its five goals, and the evaluation component that the CORE is helping Metro develop. He also reviewed the timeline for implementation of the actions in the Strategic Plan. Juan Carlos also emphasized that the CORE’s goal is not to change the Strategic Plan, but to advise on its implementation.

The CORE members divided in four small groups and each group spent time reviewing one goal, its objectives and actions, and considered these questions:

- How do CORE members envision fulfilling their role of providing meaningful advice to Metro, without getting lost in the minutiae?
- What can Metro staff do to help them with fulfilling their role?

The groups reported back to the big group on what they found more interesting and impactful in that goal, and on the answers to the questions:

Goal 1: Regional partnerships

- Defining
 - Keep eye and focus on the big picture
 - Systems change
- Lack of leadership understanding of racism / classism
- Speak in action terms:
 - Every single person at Metro understands equity (racism / classism) to convey to regional partners
 - Through experiential learning and self-reflection (ongoing)
- CORE’s role:
 - Technical assistance
 - Accountability
- PACe – measuring performance
 - Reapply for the job

Goal 2: Meaningful engagement

- Continue to go back and check with people of color
- Keep intersectionality in mind
- Provide information about Metro services
- Partner with people of color in decision-making
- Partner to create change in all communities, especially youth

- Respect the timing of the processes
- Get people of color interested in running for Metro Council
- Get people of color interested in working for Metro and/or serving on Metro committees
- Metro needs to provide staff to connect community with services, and to get involved in Metro's work

Goal 3: Hire, train and promote

CORE role:

- Assisting and setting outcomes for evaluation
- Livable wage for all employees
- Technical expertise for applying equity tools
- Oversight of implementation
- Social and professional connections to support hiring
- Evaluation tools for retention of employees, engagement / satisfaction
- Ensure touch points in community for hiring processes
- Community engagement tools – face-to-face engagement

How CORE interfaces with Metro staff and leadership:

- HR – know HR policies and practice
- Focus on supervisors / managers
- Build in performance measures for equity:
 - Annual review
 - PPR
- Build in accountability for contractors / subcontractors
 - E.g. Aramark – minimum wage

Goal 5: Resource allocation

- Have a dashboard on money going out
- Meeting equity contracting goals
- Quarterly report to CORE
- Checklist / criteria in relation to ES (?): people hired have to meet equity goals
- Put money aside to help new / start-up businesses
- How is equity infused in how Metro raises money?
 - Bonds / taxes: do low-income people pay more?
 - Where is it invested?

Vision and roles for the CORE

After the Strategic Plan conversation, Raahi lead the CORE members in reviewing the purpose of the CORE according to the CORE charter and identifying the vision and roles for the committee. According to the CORE Charter, approved by Metro Council, the purpose of the CORE is:

“Purpose

“The purpose of the Committee on Racial Equity (CORE) is to provide input and support to Metro Council and staff in advancing racial equity to fulfill the purpose of good government, which is to serve all people effectively and create greater opportunities for people of color to thrive in the region.

“The CORE will achieve this purpose by:

- Providing input and advising on direction to Metro Council and staff for the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (Strategic Plan).
- Providing community oversight and opportunities for Metro to increase its accountability to the community in the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- Providing an independent perspective to assess Metro’s progress in implementing the Strategic Plan.
- Assisting Metro Council and staff in communicating the agency’s progress in implementing the Strategic Plan.
- Assisting Metro staff in the creation and implementation of the Strategic Plan evaluation.
- Providing input, feedback and ideas to Metro Council and staff at times when significant changes to the Strategic Plan are contemplated or required.
- Making recommendations to, and communicating with, Metro Council about the subjects indicated above.”

Raahi lead a world café activity, where the CORE members were divided in four groups, which coincide with the four main roles that CORE members can play to fulfill the Committee’s overall purpose:

- Evaluation of the Strategic Plan implementation
- Community engagement on behalf of the CORE to provide opportunities for accountability
- Provide advice to the Metro Council and staff for better implementation of the Strategic Plan
- Report back on Strategic Plan implementation to the Metro Council and the community

Each world café station discussed the following questions:

1. In an ideal world, what would be the vision that the CORE can deliver?
2. What is the one bold and meaningful next step for CORE to take on this role?
3. What can each member do to fulfill this aspiration?
4. What kind of support does the CORE need from staff?

After the world café, Raahi reconvened the CORE members to review the ideas they shared and prioritize them with a dot exercise. During that discussion members shared and prioritized the following ideas:

Station 1: Evaluation of Strategic Plan implementation

Notes:

- Impact evaluation cohort
- Check on departments’ work
- Find out how staff feel about racial equity and DEI topics (Cultural Compass survey)

- Assess how vendors align with Metro’s values of DEI and accessibility
- Ensure genuine accountability for implementation and sustainability; and leads to next level equity Strategic Plan to happen beyond 2018 [Related to Station 3]

Vote: What can we deliver on 2017-2018?

- Evaluation metrics:
 - Impact evaluation cohort
 - Others
- *Develop weighted performance metrics by department to assess plan implementation [10 votes]*
 - *Identify training and professional development delivered by Metro leaders and staff*
 - *Provide advisement on “next phase” training / professional development needed*
 - *Internal facing*

Station 2: Community engagement on behalf of CORE to provide opportunities for accountability
Notes:

- Provide opportunities on progress to communities
- In particular to communities of color (CBOs)
- Gather feedback, insight and concerns (i.e. use focus group guide)
- Help communities understand what Metro does (provide explanation that CORE received earlier in the day)
- Weigh in on community engagement plans for projects (i.e. SW Corridor) to ensure the plan / contractors / staff have a shared understanding of equity

Vote: What can we deliver on in 2017-2018?

- Accessible
- *Identify and deliver forums based on specific communities that are impacted and not usually represented “at the table” [8 votes]*
 - *Connecting to CBOs: geography & identity*
- Make forums more engaging for communities [3 votes]
 - Less posters and papers
 - Not everyone wears suits
 - Not late at night
 - Not boring
 - No dot voting
 - More pictures and videos
 - Partnerships with agencies on the ground
 - Establish shared best practices

Station 3: Provide advice to Metro Council and staff for better implementation of the Strategic Plan
Notes:

- Provide informed, diverse response to Metro policies and practices and impacts / benefits to people and communities of color
- Evaluation of strategies in Plan: how effective? If not, what's needed?
- Meet with Metro Council and CORE to discuss the implementation of the Strategic Plan
- Weigh in on big projects
- Advise on access / transportation projects
- Each CORE member has relationships with CBOs for "more pointed" information

Vote: What can we deliver on in 2017-2018?

- *Track communication to Metro (informal letter, analysis) and track responses from Council (accountability) to close communication loop [5 votes]*
- *In role as advisors / coaches / representatives from communities, use opportunities to review, critique and recommend policy reviews and implementation [9 votes]*
- Review how Metro does community meetings and reach for greater inclusion [3 votes]
- Provide recommendations on how to better implement aspects of the Strategic Plan [1 vote]

Station 4: Report back on Strategic Plan implementation to Metro Council and the community

Notes:

- Bi-annual / quarterly report to Council
- Community story telling / CORE members work / communication team to collect stories on how equity strategy is playing out in the community
- Highlighting / celebrating success and addressing recommendations for improvement
- Get staff report-backs on outcomes in policy and system change to track Strategic Plan accomplishments
- Evaluation Plan review / report-back – to Council and community
- Gather feedback and input to develop the next Strategic Plan [Related to Station 3]
- Measure impact and implementation by department [Related to Station 3]

Vote: What can we deliver in 2017-2018?

- *Informal gatherings with all Metro Councilors to learn more about their motivations / what is important to them – and candidates for Metro [4 votes]*
- *RTP / SW Corridor presentation / update for CORE members to weigh in and offer feedback [5 votes]*
- Report back to communities (regularly) on progress of CORE in recommending and influencing Strategic Plan
- *Hold Metro Council and staff accountable for making this work sustainable and longitudinal – ensure this work will lead to next Plan [5 votes]*
- Expectation that "report" is actionable [1 vote]

After the prioritization exercise, the CORE members as a whole committee had a discussion to recap and conclude the conversation about vision and roles for the Committee. The themes identified are:

- Keep the next Strategic Plan in the forefront of our work
- Create a forum for candidates for Metro Council [pending OMA review and approval]
- Have / encourage community partners to host forum
- Performance metrics weighted toward experience and equity performance of Metro staff
- Communities not at the table: CORE members' respective communities; identify communities outside the region or on the outskirts of the region
- Criteria for making forums more accessible. Focus group guide
- Communication structure between CORE and Metro Council is needed
- Have the Metro Research Center focus on racial inequity in the region (research and white papers)
- Establish a baseline: "Metro is here"
- Breakdown of the systems of inequity
- Bring contractors up to speed on SPAREDI
- Metro needs to look into who they hire as contractors (Metro Paint) and the inequities connected.

Work plan & bylaws discussion

Juan Carlos began the conversation about the work plan with the input from the previous item final conversation, and with a reminder about the structural reality that the time that members can contribute to the CORE is limited: members have time for one large meeting every other month, and subcommittee meetings during the other months, plus the commitment that five members have made to participate in the impact evaluation cohort. With all these in mind, the CORE members divided into two groups to discuss these two questions:

1. How can the CORE organize itself to adhere to the priorities identified in the previous conversation?
2. How should the CORE prioritize the use of its time and energy in items that fall outside the Committee's priorities?

The notes from those conversations are:

1: How can the CORE organize itself to adhere to the priorities identified in the previous conversation? [Referring to the vision and roles conversation]

- Informal joint conversations with Metro Council two times per year
 - Public meetings or conference calls, chaired by the CORE co-chairs (?)
- Have CORE meetings every other month, with subcommittee reports
- Subcommittees- ideas:
 - Community engagement – coordination with the PERC
 - Policy tracking
- Staff needs to provide the CORE with a list of existing Metro committees
- Subcommittees – ideas [agreed upon by the CORE members]
 - Internal policies and work culture at Metro
 - External policies and processes – coordinate with JPACT, MPAC and others

- Evaluation [existing impact evaluation cohort work, in which five CORE members are already participating]

2: How should the CORE prioritize the use of its time and energy in items that fall outside the Committee's priorities?

- Vet by the DEI Team (criteria)
 - First point of contact
- Support for community connection – should pay CORE
 - One-off vs. policy
 - Payment eliminates laziness
- Assess if Metro staff have done their homework prior to coming to the CORE
- Proactive in conveying roles:
 - DEI's role
 - CORE's role
- Ensure Metro staff are sharing lists of CBOs and other community contacts
- CORE is developing impacted community focus areas. If requests involve these communities, then it meets CORE criteria.
- Track all communities/CBOs who have been connected
- Systems impacts
- Significant resource allocation

Workplan discussion:

The first group decided that the best way to structure the CORE is to hold general meetings every other month, with subcommittee meetings on the opposite months. The two subcommittees that the small group recommended are:

1. Internal policies and work culture at Metro
2. External policies and processes.

The group requested to have a list of all Metro committees to see how their work overlaps.

The second group discussed when requests come to CORE outside of their purpose: DEI would vet the ideas prior to bringing them to CORE; also, to insure staff have done their due diligence prior to coming to CORE, CORE members would be paid by other Metro departments when requesting their services without having done the work first. Inform Metro staff what the roles are for both CORE and DEI.

The conversation about criteria for prioritization of these requests was not completed. It will continue at the next CORE meeting on November 16, 2017.

CORE bylaws:

Juan Carlos shifted the discussion to the approval of the remaining, outstanding elements in the CORE bylaws. Those elements were already discussed by the CORE during the work plan conversation, so it was time to confirm the Committee's preferences:

- Meetings and community participation in meetings: Juan Carlos referred to the previous conversation about how the CORE wants to prioritize the use of its time and energy for

things outside its main purpose. The proposal presented by the group is to have regular meetings every other month, and subcommittee meetings on the non-regular meeting months.

- Patricia Kepler moved to approve this proposal. Daisy Quiñonez seconded the motion. The CORE members present voted unanimously to approve this motion, which is Option One in the draft by-laws document.
- Subcommittee structure: The options presented in the draft by-laws include creating subcommittees by geography, by Strategic Plan goal, or by other topic areas.
 - Patricia moved to approve the group's proposal to establish two subcommittees by topic area: (1) internal policies and work culture at Metro, and (2) external policies and processes. Daisy seconded motion. The CORE members present voted unanimously to approve this motion, which is Option Three in the draft by-laws document.

Overview of next activities and steps

Juan Carlos provided an overview of the next steps:

- Nov. 16 regular CORE meeting to review and finalize the work plan and formalize the subcommittees and other activities identified in the retreat
- Stipends update: CORE members need to sign an agreement. This is hopefully the final step before the members can start receiving their checks. The CORE is the first ongoing Metro committee that is receiving stipends, so staff are discovering new requirements as the process moves forward.

End of the day activity

Sharon led the group in an activity to bring the retreat to a close: Each CORE member reflected individually on the following three questions and shared those thoughts with the group:

- What did you hope for today?
- What got you worried or what made you feel challenged today?
- How are you feeling at this moment?

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Nyla Moore and Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chú