



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting minutes

Meeting: CORE Meeting
Date: Thursday, March 18, 2021
Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Place: Zoom

Attendees

Co-Chairs: Tristan Penn, Martine Coblentz

CORE Members: Dele Oyemaja, Saara Hirsi, Patricia Kepler, Nura Elmagbari, Mahmood Jawad, Jamila Dozier, Anthony Deloney, Nabin Dhimal, Rebecca Descombes

MERC Commissioners: Dañel Malán,

Metro Councilors: Metro Councilor Nolan, Metro Councilor Lewis

Metro staff: Raahi Reddy, Sebrina Owens-Wilson, Melissa Palavecino, Tiffany Thompson, Nathan Sykes, Cassie Salinas

Absent: Daniela Ortiz, Quincy Brown, Laura John, Maria Magallon

Welcome and Overview of the day

Melissa shared an overview of using zoom.

Martine - CORE's annual report to Metro is scheduled for May 4 Each year we ask a couple of members to participate. We would like to ask our remaining founding members to present because this will be their last year on the committee. At next month, we will talk as a full committee to put together the report.

Sebrina will send an invitation out to Committee members.

Public Comment

No public comment

Committee Business and Updates

Danel – Re-imagining of the Expo Center. There have been some community conversations. I attended one yesterday. They are very important community listening sessions and they are genuinely seeking input on the future of Metro. The next meeting is Tuesday at 10:00 am and Sebrina will share the information out. Your opinion really matters.

Tristan – Next week NTEN is having their conference which will be virtual. Expecting 1500 – 2000 folks aimed toward non-profit professionals. A lot of opportunities for professional development. In my role with MTEN have created a racial affinity space or attendees.

Conference Link - 2021 Nonprofit Technology Conference <https://www.nten.org/ntc/>.
Agenda for the conference: <https://www.nten.org/ntc/program/agenda/?page=day-1>.
Looking for some support for Racial Affinity Spaces.

Raahi – Space for honoring and recognizing the rise in anti-Asian violence across our country. The massacre this week in Atlanta. We have raised this issue in DEI and with Directors. We had shared resources before the Atlanta massacre. We have seen an increase in our region around vandalism and attacks. Folks have been experiencing this over the last year with the hate rhetoric from officials both local and national. This white nationalism and white supremacist hate impacts all communities, even though it is differently. Tomorrow, Friday, we are hosting a gathering space for Asian and Pacific Islander staff. Our COO has put out a statement acknowledging the pain we are going through. For colleagues to check in with each other and to check in with staff. Raahi will share a blog post about the impact on Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

Councilor Lewis – Metro Council has put out a statement. It is our role and responsibility to call out that this was racialized and sexualized violence. As the media does this, it is even more important when the media is downplaying this. Councilor Lewis read the statement which can be found on social media.

Nabin shared resources to report hate crimes. Report a hate incident/crime in addition to calling law enforcement:

In Portland: <https://www.portlandunitedagainsthate.org/>

In Oregon: <https://www.doj.state.or.us/oregon-department-of-justice/bias-crimes/about-the-law/>

And Nationally: <https://stopaapihate.org/>

Nura asked, we have been struggling with vaccine events and getting our events attended. The wrong folks have been coming to events that are specific to BIPOC communities. Can Metro help with this?

Martine shared that there is a BIPOC working group around the vaccine and Martine will share that information later.

Council Update

Metro Councilor Nolan

Councilor Nolan – We are diving into a few tasks coming up this spring as we are looking at reviewing the recommendations on the supportive services measure. Looking to approve Multnomah County’s investment plan which is the first of the three counties and to deliver services July 1 when the funds become available. They have done a lot of work around DEI

work for this including culturally specific services, highlighting individuals from BIPOC communities in need of services. And ensuring to the extent the services will be provided outside of county employees, making sure that those organizations employ and are led by people of color. Our budget is coming up and we are getting a lot of input from citizen advisory groups. Focusing on our budget decisions centered on racial equity.

Approve Minutes

February Minutes.

Patricia motioned.

Dele seconded.

Aye: Almost all.

Nabin: abstaining.

Evaluation of Investment and Innovation Grant Program – WPES

Presenters: Susan Piluso and Matt Korot

How well is the program meeting its goals of advancing racial equity?

Nura: Will these programs stop when their funding from you ends? What did they do to become self-sustainable projects? How did you follow up to make sure the clients served by these companies were also equitable. I ask because traditionally homes that need to be deconstructed by hand are in old communities of color, specifically black neighborhoods that are now being gentrified.

Suzanne – In terms of supporting that grantees are dependent year after year on this funding. Framed them as 18 month to two year grants. In the application, we have information and follow up information on how applicants will sustain it post the grant. It was framed as a one off opportunity. There were some that were framed as a one off or had plan to sustain it later or become self-sustaining. For example, with the deconstruction company it was attended to set them up to be able to grow as a company. Organizations need continued funding. It is a really great point you are making in regards to gentrification. I don't have much to say there but it is a good point. We didn't have a lot of deconstruction grants. We were really focused on the environmental impact of deconstruction vs destruction. It is good feedback for us to look to in the future to understand the impacts on racial equity.

Tristan: What was the process on decision making for the grantees? Who were the committee members for selection? What projects were completed by the grantees? Success is tied internally with the decision makers. Investigation needs to be around decision makers? How might you do it in the future if the decision makers were not diverse?

Suzanne – I have a list of the committee members. This is a great question. Metro Councilor required. Local government representatives. Non-solid waste business rep. It

didn't talk about selection process for these members. We hand selected the committee members this first couple of round. With the community members on the committees worked with members on the regional waste plan process. We had members that were just representing themselves. Latino Network. PSU. They varied each round. The second year of the program it became such a big grant program and split it into capital and program grants. Then we did not have the ability to have two committees. The program grants were then managed internally. Got input from community members on the criteria for the program grants. Finding in the evaluation that every review body needs to have community representation and we need the capacity to manage that. The committee makes funding recommendations to WPES Director and he largely adopted the recommendations. There were only a couple of times there were adjustments. Metro Council had 7 days to review the recommendations and then they were final.

Anthony: Are there opportunities for education for youth? People make a huge jump when there are education among BIPOC communities. Would love to see the list of awardees also.

Suzanne – Happy to send a list with more a description of the projects. We did send out a document that showed the equity outcomes of each grant but happy to share this with more detail. One had a series of parent and student led waste reduction in schools. Waste and composting in schools and effort to work with Title I. This was the one project with a school age project. It was not a huge part of this program but it could be in the future.

Dele - \$8.7 million through 40 grants were awarded to companies and non-profits. How much of this money was awarded to businesses in the BIPOC community?

Suzanne: We have that statistic. From the capital side the City of Roses was the big material recovery facility that was through two grants of almost \$1million total.

\$867,000 awarded to Black-owned material recovery facility; \$464,000 awarded to six community organizations serving communities of color

Matt – Your question hit on a basic challenge in the systems. Of dozens to hundred waste related companies serving our region there are less than 5-10 that are owned by BIPOC folks. This speaks to a longer body of work that we need to. Is there a place for an incubator model to bring new companies into this sector? It is a fundamental structural problem on the for profit side.

Dele - So the data about the black owned business and communities of color – \$464,000 dived by six communities is not a lot of money. What is the reason for this? Maybe based on capacity?

Suzanne. You are seeing a difference in capital and program investments. The amount in the program is much smaller than the giant capital investments.

Additional questions asked in the chat and answered there.

Update from DEI Organizational Impact Team

Presenters: Nyla Moore and Cassie Salinas

Nura: How can we extrapolate the work you did outside of METRO? Are you working on the core issues with us as humans to change our thinking regarding hate and bias in general?

Raahi – We were trying to respond to CORE request for what we are doing internally. Cassie and Nyla will be back with our HR folks for a deeper dive conversation on particular projects. Supervisor training is on par with some of the systems change work that Cassie discussed in her first presentation. Creating a mandatory training with 4-6 that is a part of their employment to help them be effective retention agents for our diverse staff. Retention has come up a lot at CORE. Front line supervisors are critical for that first year and beyond. We haven't done this systems change at Metro before.

Martine – Racial equity framework and the roll out of that. I love that you are thinking about train the trainer for rolling this out. I am hoping you carve out the time for managers within the teams to reflect. Think about being mindful for affinity learning places because disruption and harm can happen in those spaces. As you roll out the framework it can get messy.

Tristan - In one of the interviews for the COO, white dominance and supremacy they become nuanced at that level and become harder to detect. What are we doing with the practices and trainings at the COO level and Councilor level? Meaningful changes can't happen internally if hard conversations are not happening and training and professional development at that level? What is the process?

Cassie - In the last year, when we realized shutting down MRC, I was lucky to already have a great group of trainers and facilitators. We have worked with a lot of people. Shiloh George came in to have conversations about trauma and how that shows up in the workplace. Marissa welcome the conversations. Centering and grounding as we start to talk about race, racism and white dominant culture. This has helped us move forward. We have had intentional trainings just for senior leadership.

Raahi – Coming to councilors at the end of the month with the racial equity framework and what they will be seeing from staff. Need to be familiar with how staff are changing their practices.

Adjourn