

 **Metro** | *Meeting minutes*

Meeting: Equity Strategy Advisory Committee
Date: Monday, March 9, 2015
Time: 3 to 5 p.m.
Place: Metro Regional Center, Room 301, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland

Attendees

Equity Strategy Advisory Committee: Carl Talton, Rey España, Irene Konev, Pam Treece, Daniel Vázquez, Betty Dominguez, Julia Meier, Ben Duncan, Kirsten Kilchenstein

Absent: Virginia Nguyen, Philip Wu

Guests: Scotty Ellis, Jared Franz

Metro: Patty Unfred, Cassie Salinas, Karen Scott-Lowthian, Nyla Moore, Craig Beebe and Scott Robinson

Welcome and introductions:

Carl Talton welcomed the Equity Strategy Advisory Committee (ESAC) members, guest and staff to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves and the organizations they represent.

Carl asked that the group review the minutes from the February 23, 2015 ESAC meeting for approval. Betty Dominguez asked that the minutes be updated to reflect her actual concern that the group should not request “to alter the work of the paid consultant.” This was captured by Nyla Moore and Carl asked for a motion to approve the minutes with Betty’s amendment. Rey moved and who seconded?. The minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

“Ban the Box” discussion:

Patty reported back on Irene Konev’s question from the last meeting concerning volunteer applications and “Ban the Box”. All volunteer programs have some updated version of this. It is not yet uniform but it is underway. Some positions require background checks, however.

Carl asked the group if they are familiar with “Ban the Box” and how it works. Without “Ban the Box,” organizations lose applicants because many self eliminate when they see the box about prior criminal history on the application. Daniel Vázquez brought up the point that some organizations look at the crime and make the decision based on the situation. Betty said it has been adopted in Home Forward, her organization, since last summer. Betty added that “Ban the Box” also applies to housing applications because that question makes it

difficult for people to find housing after being released from jail. Other housing organizations are working towards eliminating this box.

Discussion of the draft ESAC recommendations memo to the Metro COO:

Ben Duncan asked how ESAC should reconcile the letter from Scotty Ellis in connection with Julia Meier's concerns. It was determined that information shared at the smaller meeting between Julia and Jared was inconsistent with the group's thoughts.

Ben expressed that if there were differences concerning the voice and language in the report, then there should be added language in the recommendations memo stating those concerns. Patty Unfred agreed to make additions to the "other observations" section of the memo to reflect ESAC's concerns. Ben and Julia made suggestions for updated language and for making it more inclusive to many readers.

Pam Treece began a discussion concerning the relationship between ESAC and the consultants. ESAC was not clear if the report was a partnership or contractual relationship. Scotty Ellis replied that the community-based organizations that wrote the report saw this as a partnership and wished to have worked more closely with ESAC. Jared Franz expressed that the procedure that emerged was not conducive to a partnership and he would have loved to have ESAC's feedback earlier in the process. Carl requested that ESAC come to a conclusion. ESAC agreed to move forward with Patty's additions and receive the updated memo with markups via email.

Stakeholder engagement presentation and discussion:

Cassie Salinas presented the community stakeholder engagement strategy. She stated that the next steps will be to produce the action plan. She discussed the plan for reaching out to community stakeholders by partnering with Metro's senior leadership, and conducting nine discussion groups in collaboration with Metro's community relations team, and conducting community wide public engagement. After presenting, Cassie introduced the questions to be used for the discussion groups to ESAC and offered a detailed timeline and action plan. Patty then explained that the idea is to select a consultant from a community based organization. All of the committee members' organizations are eligible to apply.

Cassie opened the question. ESAC members asked about the community relations team, assuming the community will know who Metro is, the questions being too broad, and the length of time and amount of people per group for the focus groups. Cassie explained this was in an attempt to accommodate the limited resources and reaching a broad, cross sector audience to ensure engagement. Metro staff agreed to consider reframing the questions to reflect the small organizations that may not be thinking high level yet. Judi Martin indicated willingness to help update the questions.

ESAC suggested offering incentives for the discussion groups' participants, adding a youth discussion group, asking for the CBOs priorities, sending information prior to the meeting, and utilizing staff and volunteers to bridge trust among Metro and the communities. Other

suggestions included having a clear decision making process to help understand how the community engagement will impact the process.

The next ESAC meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 15, 2015, 3 – 5 p.m., at the Metro Regional Center, Room 401.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by Nyla Moore