

Chairperson
Greta Kenney



Members/District:
George Cortes #2
Patrick Hare #5
Greta Kenney #5
Shirley Konneh #3
Aivi Nguyen #1
Kathleen Rentsch #1
Florette Willis #4
Joseph Ortiz # 4
Open Position Pending
Open Position Pending

Vice-Chairperson(s)
Ms. Aivi Nguyen
Mr. Patrick Hare

**City of Worcester
Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee**

**Minutes
Thursday, June 15, 2017, 5:30 PM
Worcester City Hall, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608
(Room 401)**

Present:

**Patrick Hare – District 5
George Cortes – District 2
Florette Willis – District 4
Greta Kenney – District 5
Joseph Ortiz – District 4
Leonard Cooper – District 2
Jayna Turchek, Substitute Staff Liaison**

Absent: Aivi Nguyen – District 1

Shirley Konneh – District 3

Kathleen Rentsch- District 1

Dr. Malika Carter, Chief Diversity Officer, Staff Liaison

The meeting was officially called to order at 5:32 PM.

c/o Dr. Malika Carter, Chief Diversity Officer
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1. Call to Order, Public Comment Process & Acknowledgement of received public comment submissions.

The public comment process and acknowledgement of received submissions were discussed. There weren't any submissions to discuss and there was an absence of community members at the meeting.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Minutes of Thursday, 04/13/17 [May meeting was cancelled]

On a motion by Patrick Hare approved the minutes and seconded by Florette Willis, the minutes were approved. No members were opposed.

3. Timing Committee Members

- Any public comments, committee members will need to keep to 2 minutes. Committee members discussed the need to try different strategies to keep on target and time. During this meeting, time per committee member was updated to 5 minutes for each committee member to comment on the draft.
- Leonard Cooper voiced his concern on scheduling meetings. He noted that committee members should look at how they are scheduling the future meetings. He had the following concerns:
 - Subcommittee and working groups on Affirmative Action should only take members who are committed to these working groups, otherwise they should leave the committee
 - Scheduling meetings- Committee needs to think about the schedule and calendar of members, especially the month that a meeting takes place (i.e. May, June meeting dates are tough due to graduations)
- Greta Kenney noted that due to limited amount of time, committee members, during this meeting, should stick to procedural comments on the draft alone. If there are any other comments, they should be individually submitted to Dr. Carter before the next meeting.

4. Draft of Complaint Process

Updates from Working Session to determine complaint authority and institutional flow of the complaint process for City of Worcester employees

- George Cortes was given the floor to discuss the draft of the internal complaint and institutional flow of the complaint process as designed by himself and Florette Willis, on behalf of the committee. He noted that no

comments from the last meeting until now have been submitted to Dr. Carter, to his knowledge. He asked for comments on the draft and they are as follows:

- Joseph Ortiz suggested it should quote “the City of Worcester” in the first Page instead of “the city”.
- Patrick Hare asked for the pronouns “they” instead of “He/She” throughout document. Greta Kenney agreed. Leonard Cooper did not agree to this. George Cortez noted that using “they” would not fit throughout the document, based on legal terms because it did not make sense.
- Joseph Ortiz suggested using “affected person” instead of “Aggrieved person” because the latter has a negative connotation.
- George Cortes agreed that using “affected person” would be a compromise, and would leave it for Dr. Carter to have final say
- Florette suggested creating a “glossary of terms” for the end of the document
- Leonard Cooper voiced his concern for the timeline to make a complaint. The 90 days is too long and the process could be prolonged, which is could hinder the “affected person”. George Cortes commented and said he could make a chart with the explanation for each time interval.
- Florette Willis thought we need to spell some details out as well so that people can feel comfortable in moving forward. Florette Willis noted that it would beneficial to explain “protections” and how it will affect the person. A “protection clause” will need to be in the document to say there will be no retaliation and it needs to be in layman’s terms for full understanding. George Cortes commented on “Reprisal and Protection” paragraph being included in the larger text document. Patrick Hare suggested putting this whole paragraph section on “Reprisal...” into the leaflet (shortened version the committee is reviewing).
- Committee would move this document to Dr. Carter and legal team for review. In addition, the Committee would also send questions and concerns to Dr. Carter in regard this document, such as timeline, protection clause, etc. that was mentioned in the meeting. Patrick Hare made the motion to pass document to Dr. Carter along with clarifying notes and concerns from committee. George seconded the motion. Joe opposed the motion, due to his concerns that the document needing more revisions from the committee.

5. NAMI Partnership

- Joseph Ortiz and Florette Willis noted that this program is great. Greta Kenney asked for updated flyers.
- If there are upcoming dates/events from any committee members, a committee member should let the entire Committee know, so all members can be made aware and be able to pass the information on to their networks.

6. Rotation of Physical Space: Diversity and Inclusion Committee Meetings

- It was noted by the substitute liaison that it was difficult to rotate because City doesn't have enough staff for filming. Rotating to another space will take away from already constrained resources.
- Leonard Cooper asked is that possible to move the meeting to first floor for accessible? (HR conference room). It was noted by the substitute liaison that it was not possible to rotate physical space of meetings at that current time. The idea would perhaps, in the future if staff of various departments are changing and/or increasing, can be revisited.
- Greta Kenney said, "Back-up plan is if the committee has to cancel a meeting, another meeting will be rescheduled for the following Thursday".

7. Suggestions for state or federal content-experts to advise the committee on building Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Plans

- George Cortes suggested that committee members ask Dr. Carter to meet with MCAD or EEOC to initiate Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity plans. He noted to move into talks with EEOC Boston to make the next step. Florette asks to get input from Maura Haley's office and the Disabilities office.
- George Cortes suggested if Dr. Carter could contact MCAD if there are any colleagues who could help.
- Florette Willis suggested we may need to get assistance from the legal office, they have a lot of experienced people. Furthermore, we also could ask some help from the Disability Law center .
- Leonard Cooper asked for accountability and education between all these entities, including HR departments, to teach one another on this topic, so there is a "give and take".

8. Suggestions for upcoming agenda items

- Effective Promotion to the Worcester community
 - Greta Kenney noted that they didn't get any suggestions from the city. Leonard Cooper commented that there needs to be effective promotion to the community, including bringing awareness to Affirmative Action groups i.e. Centro
- Develop the recruitment plan
 - George Cortes noted that a recruitment plan needs to be created, including hiring/retention plan. Greta Kenney noted that this item will need to put on the agenda for the next meeting

- George Cortes noted that Dr. Carter's position should be an office in itself, which should be the monitoring office over all hiring.

9. Adjourned at 6:46pm. No members were opposed.

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