

MINUTES OF THE DIVERSITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, HELD TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023 AT 10:00 AM AT THE PEORIA PARK DISTRICT BONNIE NOBLE CENTER FOR ADMINISTRATION AT 1125 W. LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, IL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustee and Chair Alexander Sierra, Trustee and Vice Chair Timothy Bertschy, Sherry Carter-Allen, Pastor Marvin Hightower, and Executive Director Emily Cahill

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Timothy Bertschy, Joyce Harant, Reagan Leslie Hill, Steve Montez, and Alexander Sierra

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Attorney Bill Streeter, Brent Wheeler, Matt Freeman, Becky Fredrickson, Mike Dixson, David Gray, Chanel Hargrave-Murry, Melinda Huett, Katie Hogan Van Cleve, Scott Loftus, Shalesse Pie, Karrie Ross, Nicole Staley, and Alicia Woodworth

OTHERS PRESENT:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Sierra called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

2. ROLL CALL

3. MINUTES

3.A. Approval of April 18, 2023 DEIA Committee Meeting Minutes

Trustee Bertschy moved to approve the amended DEIA Committee meeting minutes of April 18, 2023. Motion seconded by Sherry Carter-Allen. Motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

4. PROCESS/POLICY UPDATES

4.A. DEIA Strategy Discussion

Trustee Sierra stated that he wants to discuss what direction this committee wants DEIA to grow. There have been discussions about hiring a DEIA Officer and also how to more inclusively address other groups. The point of this discussion is to determine where are we headed as a collective as we continue to 1) make this committee a standing committee and 2) make sure everyone agrees, lock step, going forward.

Emily Cahill stated that a conversation still needs to be had about how to define the target/goals in Pillar Two: Focus on the PPD Workforce. Also, there have been some really great conversations in the committee about inclusion and accessibility and staff is prepared to be part of that discussion as the committee sees fit.

Trustee Bertschy stated that he would like to see the committee concentrate on three things. One, is to concentrate on making sure that the policies that were adopted last year are fully enforced and enforced in a way that meets the expectations of everyone on this committee. And two, he wants to congratulate Emily Cahill in adopting an REIA

document that this committee previously requested. This document allows the Board to evaluate all requests and actions through a Racial, Equity, Inclusion Analysis lens. This document has been implemented and was part of the agenda documents in the last Board meeting. He would like to see this continued to be enforced. This is not a contracting policy, but it ensures that in evaluating everything the District does, the Board will recognize REIA and make sure that policy is enforced in a way that the committee anticipated it would be done. And finally, three, he would like the committee focus more on accessibility. Some efforts have been already begun. He would like to talk with Heart of Illinois Special Recreation Association (HISRA), and other groups in the community to understand more about what needs to be done to focus more on accessibility. He would like to know about what workforce from the disabled community can we get to work on projects either contractually or add to the internal workforce. Also, discussions with staff have begun about how we ensure that inclusiveness factors are taken into consideration on all projects undertaken, i.e., that all PPD playgrounds, not just one, are accessible and inclusive for all, including children, caregivers, etc. He would like the committee to discuss considering adding a member(s) to the committee from the disabled community.

Trustee Sierra stated that he would like to discuss how to work collectively to address the potential hiring of a DEIA professional staff member, as this committee has expressed its desire to do so. Emily Cahill stated that the District just posted a DEIA Officer job position. Please see *Attachment A*. This position will help ensure the District is adhering to all best practices, and make sure that all parts of the workforce and userbase has a voice. At the last meeting, she shared with the committee a spreadsheet where all of the City and County DEIA Officer job duties and articulated how the District currently addresses those same duties and functions. It is the District's commitment to continue to share that responsibility across the leadership and full staff to be a part of this effort. The District's success to date has come from that shared commitment, and responsibility in the application of the four pillars across all the work that is done. However, the District does see the opportunity to not undermine that work or commitment, but to look at those spaces where more hands-on deck is needed to continue to make progress. As such, the draft job posting for a DEIA Officer at the District focuses their work on assessing to make sure the District is at the forefront of best practices and helping to make sure that all parts of the workforce and userbase has a voice.

This position would complement the Compliance Officer position which is close to being filled, in building relationships with contractors and vendors. They will participate in community committees, and most of all, will be focused on professional training and building the expectation of how we treat each other, how we treat those we serve, and how we respect all of the many assets of our community. While staff has worked to the best of their ability to do this work, this is the space that the District feels is the space where more help is needed. In looking at the job duties as shared in the spreadsheet, there are some spaces on there that potentially the District doesn't live in i.e., housing discrimination. Some of the other things that were seen in those postings and responsibilities are things that currently are core District responsibilities of the entire workforce. This position would complement the strong commitments that exist already.

Sherry Carter-Allen stated that as reports are received showing the progression the position has made, would they have the opportunity to address that to the Board and to the public? Emily Cahill stated that that would be part of staff supervision. She would be happy to share it with the Talent Management and Engagement Committee that the new position would also be a part of the DEIA Committee and it could be shared there. She does not want to get in the practice of talking about supervision or performance of staff in a public Board meeting. Sherry Carter-Allen stated that her question may be been misunderstood. She is asking that if an annual or semi-annual report in terms of the progression data of that position would be provided to the Board, reflecting the work of this position. Emily Cahill stated that that will continue in the format that is seen now in those four pillars. Sherry Carter-Allen stated she just wants to make sure that the position does not become diluted from what it was originally meant for. She wants to ensure that there is some metric put in place to measure the impact and success of this position.

Emily Cahill stated that she wants to assure everyone that the District is committed to making this person, whomever is hired, an effective part of moving us forward. As a Park District, we do not have enough staff to create a position and let them just do nothing. That is not ever what we would want to see happen. This position has real value to the District and she assures everyone that the District will make sure they are an effective, impactful person in the work that we're doing. They will be a huge part of the next steps of improvement they you will see. Pastor Hightower stated that he is very glad to hear that the District is dedicated to making sure that the person in this position is successful and is carrying out the expectations set.

Trustee Sierra thanked everyone for creating this position. It is strategically developed. When developing those strategies there are three things he has concerns about. 1) The timeline in which the position is implemented, 2) ensuring that the District has the appropriate budget to cover this position, and 3) that it is complementary to the robust system already built out.

Pastor Hightower asked if the interview process would include a hiring committee and if so, is it only internal staff that is part of the hiring process or will community members be able to participate in the interviews? Emily Cahill stated that including an outside person in the interview process is not usual. She stated that generally, there is a lot of risk associated with having community members on a formal interview panel, however, the District would certainly be open to looking at different ways to gain perspective based upon who gets to the second round of interviews.

Sherry Carter-Allen asked how will the existing staff and culture be prepared to be open to this position coming on board? Emily Cahill stated that the executive team has been a part of this conversation and as reflected in the job description, the work has been discussed at length with every member. They have all talked strategically about what they want and what they need and they are all a part of that. Part of the onboarding is what it means to come in to the Park District family and organization.

Trustee Sierra stated that by the next meeting, he would like to determine what members will be returning or not. Then, discuss adding new members.

Shalesse Pie asked what the thoughts of the committee were, when talking strategically, if and how we will address the LGBTQ+ community and what will be the strategic direction of that. Trustee Sierra stated that that's a conversation to be had while having the accessibility conversation and the expansion of the committee.

4.B. Standing Committee Process

Trustee Sierra stated that at the last Board meeting it was revealed that the DEIA Committee was an ad hoc committee and not currently designated as a standing committee in the District's policy manual. Emily Cahill stated that during the strategic planning process that the Board participated in, committee charters were developed. It was agreed that those charters would live in that "temporary" space for a year in order to allow any modifications that may be found necessary. Once that year is up, as it is now, the committees with charters would be included in the policy manual as standing committees and presented to the Board for review and approval. The DEIA Committee is one such committee that would be presented as a standing committee and no longer an ad hoc committee. Staff is currently working to present those policy modifications to the Board for their review at the May 24 Board meeting and approval at the June 14 Board meeting. This process not only impacts the DEIA Committee but all the other committees and their committee charters where the work of the committees was refocused.

Trustee Bertschy asked what was the distinction between an ad hoc committee and a standing committee. Emily Cahill stated that any committee that isn't in the policy manual, is by definition an ad hoc committee. That's all that it means. This committee will be, as has always been the intent, a standing committee, subject to that policy manual modification approval which will occur during the next two Board meetings. Placing the committee as a standing committee in the policy manual is the last step in formalizing the process of recognizing it as a standing committee.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.A. Pillar One: Equitable Access to Parks, Facilities, and Programming

Chanel Hargrave-Murry reported that the new program The Streets Belong to Me will be held on June 2 at Proctor Rec Center, June 27 at Trewyn Park, and July 11 at Glen Oak Park. The focus of the program is to create safe zones and spaces for productive things to do in the parks and around the schools in the summer time in order to lessen violence and associated crimes. The District collaborates with the Peoria Police Department and Peoria Public Schools in this effort.

5.B. Pillar Two: Focus on the PPD Workforce

Shalesse Pie presented the April 2023 workforce statistics. *Please see Attachment B.* She is pleased to report that summer positions have all been filled. This includes counselors and lifeguards.

5.C. Pillar Three: Actively Promote and Encourage the Diversity, Equity, Inclusiveness and

Accessibility of PPD-Funded Contractors and Suppliers.

Nothing new to report that was not already discussed previously in today's meeting.

5.D. Pillar Four: Support Community Workforce Development

David Gray stated in a week another professional development session with the current group of interns will be given. There are currently 7 interns with plans to hire another 5 this summer. Many job recruitment and career fairs are attended as well.

6. PENDING BUSINESS

None at this time.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Trustee Sierra stated that at the state IAPD conference, he understood that there is no other park district doing the type of DEIA work that the Peoria Park District is doing. Accolades to staff for their work in this area.

8. ACTION ITEMS REVIEW

None given at this time. Please see committee membership discussion above.

9. NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 at 10:00 am

10. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:16 am Trustee Bertschy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion second by Member Carter-Allen and carried on unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Secretary to the Board