

**Racial Equity Advisory Panel (REAP)
Room 12
Burlington City Hall
Minutes
December 5, 2019**

PRESENT: Panel members: Andrea Brett, Chair, Stephanie Seguino, Karen Richards (minutes); Clarence Davis. Absent: Nancy Waples. Guests: Xusana Davis, Executive Director of Racial Equity; Beth Fastiggi, Commissioner of Human Resources.

Members of the Public: Mark Hughes, Lydia Diamond

BUSINESS MEETING:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brett at 5:16 p.m.

Minutes:

Motion: Seguino made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 24, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by C. Davis. Vote: 4-0.

Commemorative Calendar: Executive Director (ED) Davis reported that the calendar has been shared with the Administration. Efforts are underway to include the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday into the Governor's early January schedule and to coordinate with other groups, but there is a lot of conflict with the start of the 2020 Legislative Session. She will continue with efforts to confirm and affirm the calendar events.

Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) Membership: GARE is a national network of local and state governments working to "achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all." ED Davis reported that she has followed up on both the budgetary aspects (the membership fee would come out of the REAP budget) and membership options and decided the best course, initially, would be to join as the Agency of Administration (AoA), which would make the fee \$4000 instead of the \$10,000 for a full state membership. She expects a decision to be made by GARE within a week or so. Her first ask will be for assistance in creating a state employee equity survey, which can hopefully serve as a baseline of data going forward. The results of the survey would be public information and will be posted on the REAP website.

Reports to House and Senate Government Operations Committee: Per the authorizing legislation, both the Panel and the ED are to report to these committees, on or after January 15th each year. ED Davis will submit a one-two page summary report along with her testimony. Chair Brett will appear to present the panel's report. They will attempt to arrange for the reports to be presented at the same time and on the same day to both the House and Senate Government Operations committees.

2020 Public Engagement Strategy: Ms. Davis recommended and the panel supported the idea of having a thematic event (likely topics: economic and housing) for these forums and to hold them around the state (focused in the communities outside of Burlington and Montpelier) in the late spring, early summer. We want to partner with

established equity committees and community groups as well as members of the public. The purposes include raising the profile of the ED and REAP efforts, gathering information about what sorts of practices, programs, etc. would help with the problems and using that information to help state agencies provide more equitable programming. Further details will be discussed at the January meeting.

Budget: Our current REAP budget is approximately \$243k, which represents 3.3% of the Human Resources Service Fee, plus an additional appropriation of \$75k for FY'19 and again for FY'20. Beginning in the FY'21 budget, that \$75k drops off, which bumps our budget down from \$243k to \$168k. The ED's salary and benefits are most of the budget. The net, net (the amount left over after considering salary and benefits is \$25,011. So, beginning in FY'21, the REAP will have a ~\$168k budget, and the first \$143,372 of that pays for the ED, leaving \$25,011 for all other expenses.

Vermont Conference for Fairness and Diversity- This is an annual conference. Both the ED and Chair Brett attended. The conference was an ideal place for meeting people involved in the panel issues and for provoking thought on the equity issues facing Vermonters.

NEW BUSINESS

The Attorney General's Racial Disparities in the Criminal & Juvenile Justice Systems (RDAP) just released its report to the Legislature and will be presenting on the report at a meeting of the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee on December 10, 2019 in the Ethan Allen Room at 1:00 p.m. Following that, there will be a presentation by several individuals on systemic racism. The RDAP will introduce an amendment to its authorizing legislation to include the ED of Racial Equity as a member.

Cultural Competency Training: An individual has suggested that the state provide training, titled Abenaki 101. More information is needed on the scope of the proposal itself, as well as research as to whether this would have to be done through a contract bidding process or could be a sole source contract.

Next Meeting:

January 23, 2020- 5:00-7:00 p.m.- TBD

Richards made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Seguino.

Whereby the meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Richards

Karen L. Richards, Panel Member