

Racial Equity Advisory Panel (REAP)
Via Microsoft Teams
Minutes
December 2, 2020

PRESENT: Panel members: Andrea Brett, (Chair), Karen Richards (minutes), Stephanie Seguino, Nancy Waples. Guests: Xusana Davis, Executive Director of Racial Equity (ED Davis); Catherine Russell, Panel Assistant.

BUSINESS MEETING:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brett at 6:04 p.m.

Panel Introductions: Since no members of the public were present, and no recording of the meeting was being made, introductions were waived.

Agenda changes: None were offered.

Approval of the November 18, 2020 Minutes: Given that only two members, who were able to attend the November meeting were present, the approval of the minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

ON-GOING BUSINESS

Review and Discussion of the Draft Legislative Reports:

The EDRE's report draft is still in progress. The Panel reviewed and made suggestions for revisions to the content of the Panel's draft. Richards will make the changes and send it to Panel members for final review by next week. Any final changes to either report, will be discussed at the next meeting of the Panel on January 13, 2021. The final report then will be submitted to Panel Assistant, Russell and ED Davis for filing with the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations (and other entities) by the January 15, 2021 deadline. We will attach to the Panel's report, Seguino's July 2020 PowerPoint presentation, *REAP Economic and Social Data by Race and Ethnicity* which highlights racial disparities in Vermont, and provides a basis for further state government analysis and focus.

COVID Relief Funds Project Updates:

Economic Stimulus Equity Fund- A single-source contract is being finalized to distribute general funds to individuals who were residents of Vermont on April 1, 2020 but who were unable to participate in the federal COVID relief programs due to immigration status. The funding is available to individuals and families of undocumented people. It does not include immigrants who are present for a finite period of time (i.e. student or work visas). If people have questions about eligibility, they should apply. The providers will ensure confidentiality and privacy of applicants and recipients.

Equity Dashboard: The uncertainty of on-going funding to maintain the Dashboard, led ED Davis to conclude that the \$100,000 in CRF funding should be re-allocated. There is existing data in other agencies that would serve some of the intended purpose. The Panel discussed collecting those resources and highlighting them on the enhanced REAP website, as an alternative to the Dashboard.

Racial Equity Training: The Legislature allocated \$50,000 in CRF funding for equity-related training. ED Davis will complete the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Training in February. The other funds, which would have been used to provide advanced equity training to agency and department designated Equity Liaisons and funds to hire a vendor to revise the unconscious training, will be reallocated and drawn later from general fund.

NEW BUSINESS

DHR Employee Engagement Survey- The Panel will discuss additional questions at the next meeting. Panel members are requested to get suggestions to Chair Brett at least three (3) days before the next meeting (i.e. by January 10th). She will then compile them into a single document that can be used as the basis for discussion. ED Davis is also collecting suggestions from other groups and individuals interested in racial equity in state government employment.

Budget- The Panel Assistant, Russell, reported that the licenses for the “partner” email accounts set up for the panel members in 2019 were done through the DHR budget but properly belong in the REAP’s budget. She is in the process of working with the Agency of Digital Services to make this transfer happen. As of FY22, the \$440 will come out of the REAP budget.

Waples noted, with strong concurrence of the other Panel members, the incredible on-going support of Ms. Russell to both the Panel and ED Davis. Many thanks, Catherine!

Public Comment/Questions: No members of the public were present.

Waples made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Richards. Vote 4:0
Whereby the meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Next Meeting:

January 13, 2021 from 6-8 p.m. via Microsoft Teams
The agenda and information re: call-in for public access will be displayed on the REAP website.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Richards

Karen L. Richards, Panel Member