

Racial Equity Advisory Panel (REAP)
Via Microsoft Teams
Minutes
September 23, 2020

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

BUSINESS MEETING:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brett at 6:12 p.m.

Minutes: Seguino made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 22, 2020 panel meeting. The motion was seconded by Waples. Vote 4:0.

Additional Responsibilities for the Panel from the Legislative Session: ED Davis reported on legislation touching the Panel's work including: creation of a Sentencing Commission; a Department of Public Safety Pinpoint Plan; collection of race data on mental health; the Cannabis Control Board; the creation of an Equity Dashboard; the Immigrant Relief fund; and \$50,000 to the Panel for additional staffing (most likely an assistant). More information will be provided at the next meeting after the Legislature adjourns.

Consultant for Public Survey: At the last meeting the Panel discussed that a survey might be a good way to collect information from state employees and stakeholders, with the possibility of public fora afterward to follow up on issues identified. After some discussion, the Panel agreed that given the amount of qualitative data being generated by other groups, the Panel's mission would be better served by sifting through the information that already exists and making recommendations to the Governor as to which are most important to pursue. As an example of the work being done, ED Davis gave an update on the work of the Racial Equity Task Force (RETF), which has been actively engaged in collection of qualitative data on the issues assigned to it (systems of support, free speech/hate speech, composition of boards and panels). The report on the systems of support is completed. ED Davis will send that and other relevant reports to the Panel.

Russell reported that the annual SOV Employee Engagement Survey will be sent out in February/March of 2021 and the Panel can propose additional questions related to racial equity.

Community Groups List Review and Edits: The Panel had no additions or deletions to the list.

NEW BUSINESS

REAP Website Enhancements: The initial website was intentionally set up as a basic shell that the Panel could add to as its work got underway. The Panel discussed

thinking philosophically about how we want to approach this. Suggestions were made that it could serve as a central clearinghouse, with hyperlinks, to government-related reports. Resources, such as the Action and Allyship Guide could be posted there. The Panel designated a subcommittee consisting of Waples, C. Davis, Russell, and ED Davis to make recommendations to the Panel at the next meeting.

Racial Equity Dashboard: Federal funds through the CARES Act are being considered for this purpose. The dashboard would be able to track racial outcomes, across government agencies, from the COVID 19 pandemic. The House is considering an appropriation of \$50,000-100,000 for this purpose, which would allow for hiring of a part-time person dedicated to the project. The allocation must be spent by December 31, 2020. There are many other existing dashboards within state government that can be used as models.

Review of Available Grants/funding: Chair Brett reported that funding is available through a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin. She suggested that information on available grant funding for racial equity projects could also be posted on the REAP website.

Public Comment: The chair asked the public guests if they wished to address the panel. They indicated they were attending to learn more about what the Panel was doing. ED Davis told the attending state employee about the SOV Racial Equity Teams fora.

Waples made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Seguino. Vote 4:0 Whereby the meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Next Meeting:

October 28, 2020 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