

Racial Equity Advisory Panel (REAP)
Via Microsoft Teams
Minutes
March 16, 2022

PRESENT: Panel members: Andrea Brett, Chair, Karen Richards (minutes), Clarence Davis. Guests: Catherine Russell, Panel Assistant, Xusana Davis, Executive Director of Racial Equity (EDRE), Shalini Suryanarayana, Racial Equity Education and Outreach Associate, Jay Greene, Racial Equity Data and Policy Analyst, Cary Brown, Executive Director of the Vermont Commission on Women.

BUSINESS MEETING:

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

- A. Panel Introductions: Jay Greene, who recently joined the Racial Equity staff as the Data and Policy Analyst introduced themselves to the panel.
- B. Agenda approval: No changes or additions were suggested for the agenda.
- C. Approval of the Minutes: The minutes of the 2/16/22 Panel meeting were approved unanimously as written.
- D. Legislative Updates:
 - a. H.546: House Appropriations included funding for the bill in their budget. The bill creates a Division of Racial Justice that would include current (AOA-Racial Equity office (REo) staff, and three data analysts, whose primary focus would be on criminal justice disparities.
 - b. IDEAL VT which would support equity projects at the municipal level has been given tentative funding by House Appropriations but they made it clear that funding may be sacrificed if necessary. The State would have a convening role and support participants with workshops and technical assistance. The bill has the support of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and the Vermont Community Foundation, the latter of which will provide \$10,000 to support these efforts.
 - c. S.147: would require a unified language access plan (LAP) for all executive branch agencies. The bill did not make crossover and is likely dead.
 - d. S.148: an environmental justice bill. The legislature appears a little overwhelmed by its scope. Creation of an Advisory Council, staffing within the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), and ANR/Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets (AAFM) to collaborate with other State agencies via an Interagency Committee. Bill discussions express offering stipends beyond the normal for members. Staffing/funding involvement sought from REo.
 - e. H.320 and H.329 are employment discrimination bills which would prevent employers from forcing employees who have made complaints to agree never to work for the entity or its subsidiaries again. H.329 would eliminate the serve and pervasive standard of proof. This has stalled due to educational entities who have concerns about its application to students and monitoring of out of school behavior.
 - f. H.250 is a law enforcement bill that originally included use of force but that has become its own bill. The remaining provisions would update law enforcement

requirements for data collection and add additional hours of equity and diversity training.

- g. S.273 which would support homeownership opportunities for BIPOC will not make it out of committee.
- h. S.139: nondiscriminatory school branding. Legislation has passed the Senate and responsibility will be given to the Sec. of Education and State Board(s) of Education to manage it. It is likely to pass the House as well.

E. New Business:

Panel Retreat: The EDRE spoke with the AOA Chief Performance Officer about getting a Green Belt to facilitate a retreat by the Panel to discuss its role. The Panel is looking at an in-person retreat unless COVID takes another bad turn. Those present settled on early June. The Panel Assistant or the EDRE will send calendar dates. We will discuss the agenda at the next meeting which will be April 13 to accommodate school vacation schedules the week of our normal meeting.

- F. Public Comment: Cary Brown, introduced herself and indicated her interest in the Panel's work.

II. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:43.

Next Meetings: April 13, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Richards

Karen L. Richards, Panel Member