

Racial Equity Advisory Panel (REAP)
Via Microsoft Teams
Minutes
May 19, 2021

PRESENT: Panel members: Andrea Brett, Chair, Karen Richards (minutes), Stephanie Seguino. Absent: Nancy Waples, Clarence Davis. Guest: Catherine Russell, Panel Assistant.

BUSINESS MEETING:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brett at 6:02 p.m.

- A. Panel Introductions: No members of the public were present so panel members did not introduce themselves.
- B. Agenda changes: No changes were made to the agenda.
- C. Approval of the Minutes:

Seguino moved to approve the minutes of April 21, 2021 as written. Brett seconded the motion. Vote: 3:0:2

D. On-going Business

1. Legislative updates:

Ms. Russell updated the panel members on the status of the bills the REAP has been following. *Post-meeting note: there were additional legislation updates following this meeting. Changes will be reflected in the next meeting minutes or an amended 5/19/21 version, as needed.*

H. 128 which limits criminal defenses based on victim gender identity passed both houses and was signed by the Governor.

H. 265 This bill would establish an Office of the Child Advocate, independent from State government, to provide transparent and impartial oversight of Vermont's justice-involved youth and child welfare systems. It is in the Rules Committee.

H. 210 This bill addresses disparities and promoting equity in the health care and calls for creation of an office of health equity in the Health Department (VDH). It passed both houses and was signed by the Governor.

H. 145 This bill would amend the standards for law enforcement use of force. It passed both houses and was signed by the Governor.

H. 245 This bill relates to the Ethnic and Social Equity Standards Advisory Working Group. The bill is not moving this session.

H. 159 This bill is related to community and economic development and workforce revitalization. The bill is not moving this session.

H. 430 This bill would expand Dr. Dynasaur coverage for children regardless of immigration status. It passed both houses. Some sections take effect immediately, others on July 1 and still others in 2022.

H. 273 and H. 232 which relate to promoting racial and social equity in land access and property ownership and promoting land and home ownership and economic opportunity, respectively are not moving this year.

H. 196 which would add two positions to the Racial Equity Office is in House Appropriations. Its status is unclear.

2. Other Equity Initiatives/EDRE in progress:

The EDRE was not present for the meeting so no status updates were available.

E. New Business

1. Racial Equity Staffing- see discussion of H. 196 above.

2. Seguino announced that there will be a George Floyd virtual memorial on May 25th. Further information can be found on Facebook.

3. Next Meetings:

June 23, 2021 is a possible meeting date but the Panel will leave it up to the EDRE to let members know if it is needed. If not, the Panel will skip monthly meetings for the summer (June- August) and resume in September. Further discussion needs to occur regarding a good day of the week for meetings. Tuesdays are not good for Seguino.

F. Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

II. Adjournment

Seguino made a motion to adjourn. Whereby the meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Richards

Karen L. Richards, Panel Member