

Racial Equity Advisory Panel (REAP)
Pomerleau Conference Room
St. Michael's College, Colchester, VT
Minutes
August 22, 2019

PRESENT: Andrea Brett, Chair, Stephanie Seguino, Karen Richards (minutes), Clarence Davis, Nancy Waples, panel members. Guest: Xusana Davis, Executive Director of Racial Equity.

BUSINESS MEETING:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brett at 5:19 p.m.

Agenda Amendments: The agenda was amended to add:

- Human Rights Commission appointment to the REAP
- REAP interest in participating in community forums on race

Human Rights Commission appointment (HRC): Richards was appointed to a one-year initial term on the panel by the HRC. She will be reappointed as of September 1, 2019 to a three-year term.

Panel Discussion with Xusana Davis: Ms. Davis has been meeting with people in government and in the community. She intends to create a conceptual framework, of shared language and uniformity of understanding, around the issues, the values we hold as a state and the goals of the office. From this, she will create a strategic plan for accomplishing the goals, including training, data collection, etc. She wants to ensure public engagement and create space to have difficult conversations—encourage the belief that people need to be educated about the issues, rather than assuming bad intent.

Coordination with existing entities, doing similar work in state government, was identified as an important goal in ensuring that Ms. Davis is able to maintain a level of consistent messaging and accomplish her goals. This includes: Human Rights Commission, Governor's Workforce Equity & Diversity Council (GWEDC), the Attorney General's Racial Disparities in the Criminal & Juvenile Justice Systems Panel (Racial Disparities Panel), and potentially others. Ms. Davis indicated that the Racial Disparities Panel has asked for the REAP to have a more collaborative role with it. The REAP panel agreed this was important.

Ms. Davis indicated that many groups, outside of state government, are reaching out to her for assistance with system's change. It was suggested that, to the extent she is able to provide such assistance, it should be done as much

as possible through a central entity that can disperse the information to its members.

Panel members shared some collected data reports on bias in policing, disparities in state systems, and identified other areas where data, that may be helpful, exists and can be accessed.

Ms. Davis indicated that she would like to meet fairly monthly with the panel, at least at the outset, as she is creating the strategic plan. The panel wants to use its connections and knowledge to assist Ms. Davis as much as needed.

Community Forums: The panel discussed whether it should take an active or collaborative role in sponsoring community forums on race. Several suggestions were discussed including a project in Los Angeles that creates trial by jury scenarios to foster public discussion and possibly seeking a grant from an entity like the Ford Foundation. No consensus was reached regarding a particular approach or plan.

Meeting Schedule: Several new meeting times were set (with some places to be determined):

September 25, 2019- 5:00-7:00 p.m. tbd

October 24, 2019-5:00-7:00 p.m. (2020 schedule to be set at this meeting)-tbd

December 4, 2019- 5:00-7:00 p.m.- Room #12, City Hall, Burlington

Waterbury state office complex was discussed as a possible meeting site for some meetings going forward.

Waples made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Seguino. Vote 5-0.

Whereby the meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Richards

Karen L. Richards, Panel Member