

Racial Equity Advisory Panel (REAP)
Via Microsoft Teams
Minutes
October 21, 2021

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

BUSINESS MEETING:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brett at 6:06 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:

Brett moved to approve the minutes of May 19, 2021 as written. Waples seconded the motion. Vote: 3:0:2 (C. Davis not yet present).

D. On-going Business

- 1. BIPOC Small Business RFP- The consultant was selected through a process that the EDRE will outline in a memo. The contract is still being drafted. The sticking point is the payment schedule. We are officially past the due date for the contract to be executed but the EDRE has been told that this will not be an issue. She is hopeful the contract will be completed in the next few days.
- 2. Office of Racial Equity staffing- The legislature appropriated money for two new positions-data and public policy and education and outreach. The minimum “qualifications” were drawn up for maximum flexibility.¹ In addition, the positions were broadly posted on national platforms, at historically Black colleges and universities, Latinx media, LGBTQIA, and other diverse sites in an effort at broad recruitment. The recruitment was left open for a full month. There were 25 applicants for the data and public policy position and 26 for the education and outreach position. The applications will now be reviewed and the list narrowed to identify interviewees. Panel members are welcome to participate to whatever extent they are interested.

¹ MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS Experience comes in many forms, and is sometimes overlooked or undervalued due to rigid minimum job requirements. There are no minimum qualifications for this role. Candidates will be evaluated through a holistic assessment of several factors, including but not limited to:

- Communication and interpersonal skills;
- Understanding of historical discrimination, structural inequity, and the present-day impacts of discriminatory government policy;
- Demonstrated experience working with historically marginalized communities;
- Education or training in teaching pedagogy, social justice, curriculum development, community organizing, or a related field; and
- Relevant credentials or academic attainment demonstrating expertise in a field that will meaningfully contribute to the team’s equity work.

E. New Business

1. Strategic Planning and Legislative Updates-
Agency of Administration: Being finalized, incorporates goals from racial equity in areas of recruitment/retention and equitable policy advising.
Statewide plan: To be finalized as the agency-level plans are submitted (in progress). Governor's staff intend to incorporate equity throughout the plan and will work with EDRE to do so.

There were no legislative updates.

Last week in a public ceremony, the EDRE read the Governor's recent Proclamation apologizing for the State's role in the Eugenics project that targeted Native Americans and people with disabilities. Chair Brett reported that the Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs is working with the State to set up a truth and reconciliation committee. They are receiving assistance and advice from the International Truth and Justice Project.

2. Annual Report: Both the Panel and the EDRE have annual reports due to the Legislature on January 15, 2022. At the November 18, 2021 meeting, the Panel will discuss the topics to be covered in their report and divide up the work.
3. Next Meetings:
The Panel agreed to meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month for the remainder of the calendar year. Meetings will be on November 18 and December 16. The Panel will also hold January 10, 2022 for any needed tweaks or discussion regarding the Annual Report.

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

II. Adjournment

Waples made a motion to adjourn. Whereby the meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Richards

Karen L. Richards, Panel Member