

Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 20, 2015

11:30 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

WILDER FOUNDATION

COUNCIL CHAIR	Vayong Moua
ACTING CHAIR IN COUNCIL CHAIR'S ABSENCE	
TYPE OF MEETING	Regular monthly
NOTE TAKER	Dawn Duffy
ATTENDEES	Titilayo Bediako, Michael Birchard, Patricia Brady, Mitchell Davis Jr., LaRone Greer, Kamaludin Hassan Sia Her, Ann Hill, Pa H. Lor, Rep. Rena Moran, Vayong Moua, Saciido Shaie, Nyagatare Valens, Pahoua Yang
NOT IN ATTENDANCE	Annastacia Belladonna, Sen. Michelle Benson, Joni Buffalohead, Rep. Matt Dean, Tenzin Dolkar, Jill Kehaulani Esch, Muriel Gubasta, Dave Haley, Sen. Jeff Hayden, Rev. Janet Johnson, Rep. Tina Liebling, Rep. Diane Loeffler, Sen. Tony Lourey, Rep. Tara Mack, Chelsea Magadance, Anna Mazig, Edward McDonald, Ahmed Mullah, Rep. Joe Mullery, Susie Nanney, Bauz Nengchu, Sen. Julie Rosen, Maria Sarabia, Sen. Kathy Sheran
DHS STAFF	Huda Ahmed, Brian Ambuel, Anne Barry, Rong Cao, Jay Colond, Dawn Duffy, Huda Farah, Carrie Vogelsang, Stephanie Cookie Walker, Antonia Wilcoxon
SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTERS:	DHS Commissioner Lucinda Jesson; DHS Assistant Commissioner Anne Barry; Huda Ahmed, Ilhan Omar and Cordelia Pierson of Humphrey Policy Fellows
PUBLIC:	Carol Priest of Beltrami County (via conference call)

Agenda topics

20 MINUTES

OPENING REMARKS

VAYONG MOUA

DISCUSSION		
<p>Vayong Moua highlighted upcoming items of today's meeting and other news:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Humphrey Policy Fellows presentation (both Vayong and Antonia Wilcoxon are past fellows) • membership list hand-out • council member terms that end soon • new openings that will be announced in December (applications must be completed online with the Secretary of State and may serve two terms) • the importance of Council participation and structure • new strategy sub-committee • proposed 2016 calendar of events and feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Michael Birchard and Titilayo Bediako prefer monthly meetings o Pahoua Yang likes the new bi-monthly proposal o It was suggested that different day of the week or location could be considered (a communications on this will be distributed) • overcoming Racism Conference • Jay Colond is new DHS project manager working under Antonia Wilcoxon • DHS equity policy. 		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

50 MINUTES

DHS UPDATE / Q&A

COMMISSIONER LUCINDA JESSON

DISCUSSION	
<p>Commissioner Lucinda Jesson said that the Council's recommendations help DHS's leadership. We need vigilance, structure and authentic community engagement.</p>	

The Bush Innovative Grant helps us to build capacity. We need to go where the people are and where they are talking so that we can participate in open dialogue. Trainings are a step in the right direction. So are equity measures, which now are a part of our infrastructure.

New measures also include:

- Legislative proposals now have to have equity considerations/lens
- Community and Partner Relations group led by Anne Barry
- Diversity recruiter (David Everett) who helps HR with hiring hire
- Increased number of contacts with cultural and ethnic communities
- Upcoming creation of a rules analysis process

Q&A with and feedback to Commissioner Jesson:

- Sia Her recommends various other commissioners to also be involved in our communities more. We need to “open the gates” to commissioners and legislators so they go into the communities with us to meet the community members, build a sense of trust and have face-to-face discussions. Commissioner Jesson agrees and requests that DHS be told of these meetings and gatherings. Sia Her recommends to the Council members to reach out to the commissioners and others since they are bridges between the community and leadership. She adds that sometimes we are the barriers if we don’t share information.
- Titilayo Bediako says we need to be more inclusive of all of groups (both big and small) and we Council members need to tell (not ask) DHS what we want.
- Saciido Shaie reminds that we all come from communities who trust us to bring issues to the table.
- Kamaludin Hassan remembers that, when he was living in Somalia, his tribe was the dominate one. He saw that there was peaceful coexistence, but not fairness. There isn’t fairness in the U.S., either, and we shouldn’t have to ask for permission to have equity.
- Titilayo Bediako says that the historical develop needs to be understood. There is systematic racism that has destroyed our businesses (i.e., where highways were/are built). Our power is in talking to each other and knowing our history.
- Kamaludin Hassan says our communities are losing the motivation to open our own businesses due to fear. This is not just about child care (which has been in the news), but also restaurants and grocery stores (i.e., losing the ability to accept EBT cards and community members having limited access to specific kinds of meat).
- Rep. Rena Moran reminds that we are here to work with Commissioner Jesson. We don’t want to get distracted. We need to be focused on what we want the Commissioner to do. Vayong Moua added that we aren’t just fighting Health and Human Services. It is a structural issue that also includes MnDOT, DNR, etc. We need to see the many connections.
- Ann Hill wants the people to be a part of the review with legislators, people who have been through the trauma. Currently, legislation is made and discussed without the people at the table. How do we make these connections at DHS? Commissioner Jesson said that the legislature passed several items in the last session. The idea of having a group of advocates to oversee the implementation of these things is good. She asked Ann to send her a note so she could make the connection for her. Ann Hill said there already is a group that does this and she is a part of this group.
- Michael Birchard says DHS needs to building cultural capital. Businesses are being destroyed and there is distrust with the system. DHS needs to get out and be a part of the community and to be a part of the healing process.
- Sia Her says we spend a lot of time talking about the system and how the system is at fault. She cautions that we need to look at our communities, as well, regarding what we need to do to bring others to our community. If we are intentionally perpetuating fear in our people, we are our own enemy. Vayong Moua says we need to make sure that we don’t blame the victim.
- Commissioner Jesson is attending a healthcare financing taskforce today, where DHS is working to help people navigate the healthcare system. She encourages the Council members to be a part of this taskforce (representing the Council or each individual organization).

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

20 MINUTES

DHS SENIOR TEAM MANAGEMENT UPDATE

ANNE BARRY

DISCUSSION
<p>Anne Barry says that, once the DHS Equity Policy is passed, it will be time for the work to be done. DHS will need to dedicate resources, train people and use an equity lens on all future policies. It is every employee’s responsibility and needs to be the first thing policy writers think of.</p>

Vayong Moua says that we want to make sure this equity policy has accountability measures.

Next step – More time with the Commissioner on a regular basis would be beneficial (i.e., more than once a year was mentioned).

See four-page handout on how we measure ourselves.

Green on the dashboard doesn't mean all people are experiencing the green. We want to change the way we do this. If not all people affected are green, then we can't move the dashboard to green.

Titilayo Bediako asked who determines the measurements and results, and Anne said she would like to bring these issues to the Council for discussion.

Mitchell Davis asked if this input would be now or later, and Anne responded that the equity policy is in the final stages and the work, education, training will begin in the new year.

Rep. Rena Moran asked about the agenda and if there is a sub-committee. Vayong confirmed that there is a policy and strategy committee.

Patricia Brady says that dashboards treat information generally until you can aggregate the data. How do we show the progress we are making so every single person can see how they are doing? We need accurate measurement. Anne Barry confirmed this is something the Council can work on.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

40 MINUTES

**HUMPHREY POLICY FELLOWS:
"REALIZING HEALTH EQUITY: ACCESS TO
OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL"**

**HUDA AHMED, CORDELIA PIERSON,
ILHAN OMAR**

DISCUSSION		
<p>The Humphrey Fellows were tasked with doing a policy project and this group chose health equity.</p> <p>What can we do in our everyday lives and work to raise equity issues and broaden awareness? This can include both small (racially diverse photography on web sites) and large (ask questions and make our expectations known) steps</p> <p>Minnesota ranks sixth as the healthiest state in the nation, but it also is near the top in disparities (i.e., youngest death rates, most obese youth, later-stage breast cancer rates, mental health issues with GLBT university students, etc.)</p> <p>Vayong Moua said that we don't have the data to advocate for change because we don't have data on several communities (including Hmong, Vietnamese, etc.)</p> <p>The loss of opportunity is the cost of inequality. There are other costs, too, including economic burdens, medical care costs, premature deaths, etc.</p> <p>The definition of "health" does not always mean healthcare. It also includes also access to receive the care and access to opportunities.</p> <p>Having one person in the room should not mean you are engaged with that community. It should and must be bigger and more engaged.</p> <p>The team has these three recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Regional partnerships2. Sustained public leadership3. Sustained private funding <p>Their next steps include sharing this research and their recommendations with stakeholders.</p> <p>Vayong announced that, if DHS can pass an equity policy, any organization can. The DHS policy leveraged and used as an example. He will keep DHS on guard and he wants to influence other organizations. He offers the CECLC support to the Fellows.</p> <p>Rep. Rena Moran encourage the Fellows to push this research and information throughout St. Paul.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

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1 MINUTE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER MEETINGS

VAYONG MOUA

DISCUSSION		
A quorum has been reached.		
MOTION TO APPROVE:	Saciido Shaie	
MOTION 2ND:	Michael Birchard	

1 MINUTE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR NOVEMBER MEETING

VAYONG MOUA

DISCUSSION		
The meeting closed at 2:12 p.m.		
MOTION TO APPROVE:	Ann Hill	
MOTION 2ND:	Michael Birchard	

