

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: January 19, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (Hybrid)

### Attendance

**CECLC Members:** Alex Abraha, Lizette Banini, Philip Gaye-Bai, Lashalle Campbell, Lolita Davis-Carter, Cratè Darden, Mozana Ebrahim, Shannon Geshick, Rebecca Graves, Josefina Geronimo, Chris Green, Foua-Choua Khang, Kimetha Johnson, Tonia Lofton, Abdirahman Mumin, Margarita Ortega, Joanna Rosa, Micaela Schuneman, Paul Slack, Farhia Said, Nelly Torori, Manuel Zuniga, Senator John Hoffman

**DHS Staff:** Elyse Bailey, Kelly Barnebey, Matt Burdick, DeAnna Conover, Misty Coonce, Cate Dymit, Helen Ghebre, Victor Gonzalez, Leigh Grauman, Nina Harris, Nicole Juan, Dr. Karen McKinney, Wendy Wilflower, Hli Vang

**Public Attendees:** Angela Fields

### Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:20	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:25	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:30	Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative &amp; External Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Internal Operations &amp; Policies</li><li>• CECLC Updates – Legislative Report / Administrative</li></ul>
1:45	Legislative Team Brief Session Preview
2:20	Break

2:25 Presentation from Office of Equity & Inclusion on its Initiatives/Priorities  
3:10 CECLC prep for Day at the Capitol/Work on Revision of Legislative 1 Pager  
4:00 Adjourn Meeting

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell welcomed everyone and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve December minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and December minutes: Paul Slack
- Second: Kimetha Johnson
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share Community Highlights.

- **Residents of Color Collective** [Community Love Midday Movie & More Event](#)
  - February 10 at 11:00am
  - Thompson County Park in the Dakota Lodge, 360 Butler Avenue, West St. Paul, MN 55118
- **Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans Holiday Get-Together**
  - February 2 from 1:00-5:00pm
  - Minnesota Humanities Center, 987 Ivy Avenue E, St. Paul, MN 55106
- [Symposium on Voting Rights: Our Past, Our Present, Our Future](#)
  - February 1 from 8:30am – 12:30pm
  - Anderson Student Center, Woolfe Hall, 2115 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55105
- [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives March](#)
  - [Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition East Phillips Park Cultural and Community Center](#)
  - February 14 from 11:00am – 2:00pm
  - East Phillips Park, 2399 17th Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55404
  - Speakers begin at 11am, march begins at noon (will be held rain/snow/shine)
  - Please wear red
  - Everyone is welcome!
  - For more information, please contact **Naida Medicine Crow**, MIWSAC Community Engagement [nmedicinecrow@miwsac.org](mailto:nmedicinecrow@miwsac.org) or **Ana Negrete**, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives Office Community Planner [ana.g.negrete@state.mn.us](mailto:ana.g.negrete@state.mn.us)
- **Next Legislative Task Force on Child Protection Meeting**
  - February 9 from 9:00am – 12:00pm
  - People may attend in person to observe or watch online via Livestream. Individuals and organizations have also been welcomed to submit written comments that they would like the task force to consider related to our state's child protection system: Legislative Task Force on Child Protection Meetings: <https://www.lcc.mn.gov/tfcp/meetings.html>

- **Foster Youth Day on the Hill**
  - March 4 from 1:00-3:00pm
  - Minnesota State Capitol, 75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard, St Paul, MN 55155
  - Registration is open; presented by MN Youth Leadership Council. It includes a march and rally in the afternoon. This is a youth-led event, and it is great to have other supporters join in!
  - Link with more information: [Home | FCYDH \(fosterchildand youthday.com\)](https://www.fosterchildandyouthday.com)
- **Black History Month Celebrations**
  - The partnership between the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County for Black History Month events are upcoming, starting with a breakfast and resolution on Thursday, January 25.
  - For more information please open the link:  
<https://www.minneapolis.org/calendar/holidays/black-history-month/>

## Office of Equity and Inclusion Job Postings:

- **Communications Project Coordinator** – Application deadline **January 30, 2024**
  - This position will provide business project management and coordination services for the Office for Equity and Inclusion (OEI) and Equity Directors. This work will be done through a lens that prioritizes equity and antiracism. As the Project Coordinator you will be responsible for project communication, managing teams, removing obstacles, facilitating prioritization within a project, escalating issues, and motivating team members.
  - If you have questions about the position, contact Jacob Day at [jacob.day@state.mn.us](mailto:jacob.day@state.mn.us).
  - Applicants who are not current state employees can apply through the state career with this link: [Job Id: 72808](#)
  - Current non-probation employees who are in the same class and seniority unit may bid [here](#) by searching for posting: **(1768# 128249)**
  - Current state employees not in the class or seniority unit or are on probation may apply via [self-service](#) by searching for **(Job ID # 72808)**
- **Director of Equity and Inclusion** – Application deadline **February 6, 2024**
  - The Director of the Office for Equity and Inclusion (OEI) will play a vital role in strategically planning for and obtaining legislative, stakeholder, and organizational support for advancement and implementation of the equity and inclusion strategic priorities. This position aims to foster an environment that embraces and values diversity, eliminate systemic barriers, and ensure fair and equitable opportunities. The Director is responsible for directing and managing the activities of the office by providing oversight and direction to four direct reports, two supervisors, a data analyst, and a policy lead. The office which the Director would lead conducts business to enhance understanding of equity and inclusion principles, develop comprehensive strategies, and implement programs that promote collective access, diversity, inclusivity, and equity in state policies, practices, and services. Through collaboration with key stakeholders, executive team, directors, and staff of DHS, the role will be working directly with senior leadership in setting strategy for creating more equitable outcomes for DHS. The incumbent will be responsible for creating enterprise-wide outcomes.
  - If you have questions about the position, contact Dr. Karen McKinney at [karen.m.mckinney@state.mn.us](mailto:karen.m.mckinney@state.mn.us).
  - Current state employees may apply via [self-service](#) by searching for **(Job ID # 73039)**
  - Applicants who are not current state employees can apply through the state careers website with this link: [Job Id: 73039](#)

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

At its last meeting, Shawn Sorrell said the workgroup continued planning for the upcoming CECLC Legislative Meet and Greet. In that meeting, Nicole Juan provided a legislative update.

Joanna Rosa introduced herself as co-lead on this workgroup and described her background.

### **Topics & Issues Workgroup**

At its last meeting, Paul Slack said the workgroup continued discussion on the workgroup's slate of priorities in 2024 and beyond, and continues to look at equity tools in the Department of Children Youth and Family (DCYF) implementation.

A council member asked how the workgroup will navigate in the new agency. Paul replied this is why they are looking at equity tools across the new department and why the workgroup has invited Jerad Green, DHS Equity Director in Children and Family Services, to present.

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Foua-Choua Khang who is helping Cratè Darden co-lead said the workgroup continued discussion on renaming the workgroup, reviewing its scope of work, ways to engage DHS and support Community Relations, and equity metrics. Malissa Adams was invited to join a future workgroup meeting.

They are also focused on being supportive to our tribal nations and plan to invite tribal liaisons to future meetings. The workgroup has felt James Cooper's departure and hopes the momentum he contributed during his tenure continues.

The workgroup is seeking an additional Co-lead.

### **Administrative Updates**

Helen Ghebre shared the draft 2024 CECLC Legislative Report is nearly complete and will help prepare for the Meet and Greet at the Capitol. Shawn Sorrell thanked the Community Relations team for their work on the report.

## **Legislative Team Brief Session Preview**

Shawn Sorrell introduced Matt Burdick, DHS Director of Legislative Affairs, who provided a 2024 legislative session preview that included a 2023 legislative session recap, committees relevant to DHS, the 2024 legislative calendar, and a long-term budget outlook. The slide deck will be shared with the council following today's meeting. Staff from the Legislative team will continue to attend council meetings to give updates.

## **Presentation from Office of Equity & Inclusion on its Initiatives/Priorities**

Shawn Sorrell welcomed DHS staff Wendy Wilflower, Hli Vang, and Victor Gonzalez who presented the Office of Equity and Inclusion's (OEI) initiatives and priorities: education, continued growth, culturally responsive communication, and engagement. The slide deck will be shared with the council following today's meeting.

## **CECLC Preparation for Day at the Capitol/Revision of Legislative 1 Pager**

Draft materials were sent to the council in advance of this meeting:

- CECLC 2024-2025 Priorities Workshop documentation
- Draft CECLC One Pager with Strategic Priorities (handout)
- Draft CECLC Legislator Visit Script 2024

The council was invited to offer edits and feedback.

- Motion to approve the CECLC priorities as written: Lolita DavisCarter
- Second: Farhia Said
- The motion passed

**Meeting adjourned at 4:16 PM**

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: February 16, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (Hybrid)

## Attendance

**CECLC Members:** Lizette Banini, Philip Gaye-Bai, Lashalle Campbell, Lolita DavisCarter, Cratè Darden, Elizabeth Ebot, Mozana Ebrahim, Anita Fineday, Josefina Geronimo, Chris Green, Ann Hill, Foua-Choua Khang, Kimetha Johnson, Tonia Lofton, Abdirahman Mumin, Margarita Ortega, Micaela Schuneman, Shawn Sorrell, Paul Slack, Farhia Said, Pachua Vang, Manuel Zuniga

**DHS Staff:** Malissa Adams, Cate Dymit, Helen Ghebre, Leigh Grauman, Nina Harris, Ashley Oolman, Rebeca Sedarski, Steven Wilson

**Public Attendees:** Yele Akinsanya, Kamaty Diahn, Angela Fields, Linda Sloan

## Agenda

### Lunch & Community Networking / WebEx Opens

- 1:00**      **Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement**
- 1:05**      **Introductions, Welcome & Check-in Activity [Breakout Sessions]**
  - Check-in question (10 min)**
    - Do you consider yourself an Apple or Orange?
  - Debrief CECLC Meet and Greet Day at the Capitol (Breakout Sessions - 30 min)**
- 1:45**      **Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes**
- 1:50**      **Community Celebrations & Shout Outs**
- 2:00**      **DHS Update: 2024 Equity Forum “Beyond the Unwind: Centering Equity Together”**  
Nathan Chomilo, Medical Director | Medicaid & MinnesotaCare
- 2:15**      **Workgroup Updates**
  - Legislative Workgroup
  - Topics & Issues Workgroup
  - Internal Operations Workgroup
  - CECLC Leadership Update – Foua Choua Khang & Shawn Sorrell**
- 2:25**      **DHS Equity Directors & Equity Analysis Toolkit**
- 3:10**      **Break**
- 3:15**      **Discussion: Developing Equity Metrics [Breakout Sessions]**

4:00

## Rename the Internal Operations Workgroup Closing

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua Choua and Shawn Sorrell welcomed everyone and led the council through the land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve January meeting minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and January minutes: Shawn Sorrell
- Second: Paul Slack
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Foua Choua opened the floor for members to share Community Highlights.

- **Residents of Color Collective Essential Needs for Unsheltered Persons**
  - Please donate travel size items to help us create self-care kits for the unsheltered. (Drop off items between 8:00am-3:00pm)
  - Date: Donation Drive February 17 through March 7
  - March 7 at the Moreland address we will make the bags from 5:30-7:30pm
  - Location: Residents of Color Collective, 217 W Moreland, West St. Paul, MN 55118
- **Immigrants and Disability in Central MN**
  - Event: Discussion Topics include Physical Disabilities, Cognitive Disabilities, Mental Health, Healthcare Resources
  - Date and Time: Saturday February 24, 2024, at 1:30-4:30pm
  - Location: St. Cloud Public Library, 1300 W St. Germain Street, St. Cloud, MN 56301
  - Contact for more information: [Abdirahnman@fomn.org](mailto:Abdirahnman@fomn.org) @ 619-808-4040, [www.fomn.org](http://www.fomn.org)
- **The Rock in My Throat**
  - Join us for an unforgettable evening celebrating Kao Kalia Yang's latest children's book, "The Rock in My Throat."
  - Date and Time: Tuesday, March 12 from 5:30-7:30pm
  - Location: Minnesota Humanities Center, 987 Ivy Avenue East, Saint Paul, 55106 MN.
  - [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/kao-kalia-yang-book-launch-the-rock-in-my-throat-tickets-796213785867?aff=oddtcreator&mc\\_cid=e998506d46](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/kao-kalia-yang-book-launch-the-rock-in-my-throat-tickets-796213785867?aff=oddtcreator&mc_cid=e998506d46)
- **Council of Minnesotans for African Heritage – African Heritage Day on the Hill at the Rotunda**
  - Date and time: Friday February 23, 2024, from 2:00-4:00pm
  - Location: Minnesota State Capitol at 75 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55155
  - Event details are in the flyer: **This event provides an opportunity to speak with legislators about the African American Families Preservation Act and other community priorities.**

- African Heritage Day on the Hill: link to the registration form is:  
<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=RrAU68QkGUWPJriclVmCjDexQir2A1NLudxjfHoTsoxUNFpaUDNVMkNUWVA5UVZBNVdKQUdRT0FONC4u>
- **Community Guest:** Philip brought a community member: Kamaty Diahn, ED Director of Liberian in Minnesota
  - Website: <https://www.olmbp.org/>
  - The Organization of Liberians in Minnesota (OLM) is a community base 501c 3 Non-profit organization that caters to the needs of Liberians in the State of Minnesota.
- **The Community Connections Conference:** An annual free event that connects residents of Minneapolis, community groups, neighborhoods, and local government. This year's conference will have workshops, performances, fun activities for the whole family, an expo, and a community dialogue.
  - Date: Saturday, February 17, 9am-4pm
  - Location: [Minneapolis Convention Center](#), first floor, Hall E, 1301 2nd Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55404
  - Registration link: <https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/departments/ncr/inclusive-community-engagement/connections-conference/>
- **Foster Youth Day on the Hill**
  - March 4 from 1:00-3:00pm
  - Minnesota State Capitol, 75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard, St Paul, MN 55155
  - Registration is open. It includes a March and Rally in the afternoon. This is a youth led event and it is great to have other supporters join in! Here is the link with more information about this event: [Home | FCYDH \(fosterchildandyouthday.com\)](#).
- **Black History Month Celebrations:** Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis
  - The partnership between the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County for Black History Month events are upcoming, starting with a breakfast and resolution on Thursday, January 25, 2024.
  - For more information please open the link:  
<https://www.minneapolis.org/calendar/holidays/black-history-month/>

### Community Articles:

- <https://minnesotareformer.com/briefs/coalition-of-latino-led-groups-announces-policy-priorities-for-minnesota-legislature/>
- <https://www.startribune.com/many-minnesotans-with-disabilities-earn-far-less-than-minimum-wage-a-push-for-equal-pay-continues/600341714/>

### Community Guests:

- Philip brought a guest from the Organization of Liberians in MN, Director Kamaty Diahn, ED <https://www.olmbp.org/>. Most of the staff within OLM are comprised of volunteers. OLM creates programs to help people navigate and access funding, resources, employment services, and more. Kamaty provided an overview of the history of the Liberian community, and how it was one of the first countries that US Born freed slaves migrated back to. They developed the nation. In 1837, the Commonwealth of Liberia was established. Liberia was modeled after the United States of America with three branches of government and is a Unitary state. The first 13 presidents elected in Liberia were African American, with one of the most unique communities within the African Diaspora. Within Minnesota, over 75% of Liberians are employed within the Healthcare industry workforce.



# CECLC Meet and Greet Day at the Capitol Debrief

## Council Member Reactions/Thoughts

- Foua Choua and Shawn asked council members to share their thoughts and reactions from the CECLC Capitol Meet and Greet.
- Members shared their reactions:
  - This was a great time to connect with the legislature.
  - A member shared that they got a chance to speak with two of the legislators and that appeared very committed to the work of the CECLC and it was very inspiring.
  - Members reported feeling very inspired through learning from one another.
  - This was an awesome event, and it felt good to participate within this opportunity. We hope there are more opportunities to participate within the CECLC.
  - We believe in this Council, and we showed up even when feeling fearful to converse with some of the legislators.
  - We felt empowered by having the strength in numbers of other CECLC council members to support each other talking with the Legislators.
  - Two takeaways: the food and refreshments were awesome, and this event inspired several of us to feel rejuvenated to perform this awesome work.
  - It felt really energizing to come in person and to connect with other CECLC members in person and share my enthusiasm.

## What would you recommend the CECLC Meet and Greet in 2025?

- Members shared that partnering with other Ethnic Councils to include them within the invite of 2025 planning for the CECLC meet and greet at the Capitol would be beneficial engagement.
  - Members suggested that we move the meet and greet event at the Capitol out 1-2 weeks later after the Legislative session starts so that we have a chance to meet and build interactions with more legislators.
- Foua Choua shared how this is the Nexus point within the CECLC as it has been in operation for 10 years, this is our 11th year.
- It was emphasized that it would be helpful to get community narratives and feedback on how the MN legislative policies and practices adversely impact their quality of life.
  - Members shared the importance of incorporating more community voices within the Meet and Greet Day at the Capitol.
  - Members encouraged us to start engaging and bringing core groups of organizations and community leaders to the meetings on a regular basis so that we can align their goals with their purpose and be ready for the next year.

## 2024 Equity Forum Updates: Beyond the Unwind from Dr. Nathan Chomilo

Agenda presentation: DHS Update: 2024 Equity Forum “*Beyond the Unwind: Centering Equity Together*” with Nathan Chomilo

Dr. Nathan Chomilo shared slides on the Medicaid Equity Forum.

### ***Presentation Highlights***

- Persons who give birth can access Doula care services without receiving a referral from a healthcare provider.
  - Policy reimbursement and billing rates for Doula reimbursement have been increased recently.

### **2024 MN Medicaid Equity Forum**

- Dr. Nathan Chomilo shared that his office will host the 2024 Medicaid Healthcare Equity Forum, with in-person and virtual options on Healthcare Equity forum 2023.
  - DHS will host two separate forums: one in-person and one virtual using the same agenda and content for each forum.
  - **In-person forum: Friday, April 12, 2024**, from 8:30am-4:00pm. Location to be determined.
  - **Virtual forum: Friday, March 22, 2024**, from 8:30am-4:00pm
  - Permalink: <https://www.mnsure.org/assister-central/announcements/index.jsp?id=34-609226>
- Dr. Chomilo shared he is seeking panelists to participate within the 2024 Equity Forum Panel Discussions. He has requested that we consider potential panelists or projects to highlight and send our recommendations, questions, and ideas about the Medicaid renewal to Leigh Grauman at [leigh.grauman@state.mn.us](mailto:leigh.grauman@state.mn.us).
- Dr. Chomilo shared he will come back to discuss the racial equity reform on Medicaid and provide status updates.
- Call to action: consider panelists for engaging conversations about healthcare inequities.

### **Health Care Renewal**

- When the COVID-19 Unwind of the Public Health Emergency ended several of the policies ended, which resulted in 1.5 million MN's having to go through the process again to reapply for their healthcare benefits.
- CECLC members asked about the process for community members and how they should proceed, if they missed their time to renew their healthcare benefits and what would be the best way for them to get back to applying if you have missed your renewal window on accident.
- Dr. Chomilo shared that when you complete the renewal healthcare application within the first 4 months of a missed deadline coverage will still be applied retroactively to avoid unnecessary financial burdens on applicants.
- Applicants are encouraged to start completing the renewal for their coverage online as soon as possible <https://mn.gov/dhs/renewmycoverage/>.
- Helen Ghebre shared the MNSure website for applicants whose coverage was cut off and need help getting back on the medical assistance/MNSure: <https://www.mnsure.org/>.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

At its last meeting, Shawn Sorrell asked members for support of a Co-Lead to help lead the Legislative workgroup. Joanna Rosa volunteered to help Co-lead the Legislative workgroup. The CECLC voted for her to be one of the Co-leads.

Nicole and Ann Bobst helped the workgroup discussed status updates on the Legislative Session Proposal. Legislative workgroup discussed the planning and logistics for the CECLC Meet and Greet Day at the Capitol on

February 13. They discussed the essential importance of engaging community providers at CECLC monthly meetings.

## **Topics & Issues Workgroup**

At its last meeting, the workgroup continued discussion with Anita Fineday and Hannah Quinn from the DCYF Implementation Team. They provided status updates on their outreach and engagement strategies to receive consultation and feedback from Native American and Indigenous communities on the design and implementation of increasing equity within the development of the new division.

Topics and Issues and the Implementation DCYF team discussed the great need for Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of staff from marginalized communities to help lead within the innovative design of Department of Children Youth and Families.

## **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Foua-Choua Khang who is helping Cratè Darden co-lead said the workgroup continued discussion on renaming the workgroup, reviewing its scope of work, ways to engage DHS and support Community Relations, and equity metrics. The newly revised workgroup structure hopes to help the CECLC achieve some of the following duties: informing Anti-Racism efforts, building community responsiveness through co-creating with DHS, building metrics that define our focus and assess the needs of the CECLC (measurements and evaluation), identifying the areas of significant importance for CECLC members.

The workgroup discussed a focus of building intentional relationships and supporting our tribal liaisons and nations, with hopes to engage them within CECLC monthly meetings. The workgroup discussed reaching out to Sean McMoore who supervises the Talent Acquisition team, to reengage their staff upon James Cooper's recent departure.

## **Administrative Updates**

Shawn Sorrell and Foua Choua Khang thanked the CECLC for their participation within the Meet and Greet day at the Capitol event. Shawn gave special recognition and shout-out to Philip Gaye-Bai for bringing a community guest to the CECLC meeting and being intentional to help us incorporate the community's voice into our CECLC monthly meetings. Foua Choua shared she has received inquiries in regard to when Department of Children Youth Families Division will develop a duplicate version of the CECLC or if the CECLC will become the council for both divisions.

## **Presentation from the DHS Equity Directors**

### **Presentation Highlights from Ashley Oolman and Malissa Adams on the Equity Policy Toolkit**

- Within the presentation, the Equity Directors described their roles and the history of how the CECLC instrumental advocacy for the creation and expressing the need of their roles, in leading equity.
- Ashley described the importance of the Equity Directors building out their structures, systems, and processes.

- Ashley shared the Org Structure for the Equity Directors and the great diversity amongst the directors and how each Equity director is designated over a specified area.

### ***Challenges faced by the Equity Directors***

- The Equity Directors highlighted some of the challenges they face within their roles, such as defining power dynamics and their difficulties trying to influence without authority.
- CECLC co-chairs asked how the CECLC support the Equity Directors going forward.
- Foua Choua shared the significance of the Equity Directors (coming home) receiving relational support from the CECLC.
- Equity Directors have been subject to unfair treatment as the work is unsustainable, and they do not have the same positional power as other directors across DHS.
- Equity Directors shared that role reclassification is one of the best ways that DHS can help support us. Review data from the Hay Study.
- We need teams who can be dedicated to having these conversations and committed to the work of reclassification to help this equity work be defined through defining an equity structure.
- Equity Directors need the power to demand the changes to be able to sustain the work, through receiving the support of building a team and being able to hire staff that help us implement this essential work.

### ***DHS Equity Policy***

- Ensures that these broader organizational plans align.
- Analyze everything that we do, who it impacts. and how.
- Point out that all employees need to utilize the Equity Analysis Tool, when creating policies, programs, and procedures. We have limitations within enforcing that these standards are followed.
- CECLC asked if the Equity Directors have utilized Dr. Stephanie Burrage to help them make movement, as she has the ear of our Governor Tim Walz.
- Ashley shared she is performing special projects and working closely with Dr. Burrage and the Chief Inclusion Officer to help the Equity Directors develop advocacy and support.
- The CECLC will have to dedicate more time to discussing this and working with HR to discuss classification standards as their representation is super valuable.
- The policy has been revised and we are discussing who does what with the policy, and how to hold divisions accountable for implementing and utilizing an equity analysis.
- Enhancements for Policy Review and Attestation will be required for employees on an annual basis.
- Encourage DHS divisions to conduct an equity analysis for various divisions across DHS when proposals and policies are being created.

### ***Equity Analysis Toolkit***

- The toolkit has been developed to help mitigate the challenges and barriers within increasing equity.
- All the analyses are streamlined through having them electronically. It is an online form, and the spreadsheet can be filtered through administration.
  - Automation and training SharePoint Dynamic Form
  - Workflow for Notifications
  - On-Demand Training

- How to inform the work; all the equity reviews are in one place on the SharePoint database.
- The compliance structure is difficult because we are working hard with divisions to convince them to conduct and utilize the Equity Analysis Toolkit, as an accountability system has not been created for those who are not utilizing it when they need to.
- CECLC asked how Equity Directors know when a DHS Division is utilizing the Equity Analysis Toolkit.
- Equity Directors can see the results of utilizing the toolkit and we are able to assess if divisions are reaching out to the end user and permit the shift.

### ***Implementation Updates***

- Instrumental within implementing the policy.
- Intentional of centering the leaders.

## **Discussion: Developing Equity Metrics**

- What will equity look like to you? Defining Equity
- We will discuss this more in depth at the next meeting.

## **Rename the Internal Operations Workgroup**

- Foua Choua shared she would like the council to vote on the name **Equity Alignment** at its March meeting to rename the Internal Operations Workgroup.

## **Decisions Made**

- Motion to approve the CECLC priorities as written: Lolita DavisCarter
- Second: Farhia Said
- The motion passed

## **Meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: March 15, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (Hybrid)

### Attendance

**CECLC Members:** Alex Abraha, Lizette Banini, Philip Gaye-Bai, Lashalle Campbell, Lolita Davis Carter, Cratè Darden, Elizabeth Ebot, Mozana Ebrahim, Anita Fineday, Josefina Geronimo, Chris Green, Ann Hill, Foua-Choua Khang, Kimetha Johnson, Sheila Lipsco, Tonia Lofton, Abdirahman Mumin, Margarita Ortega, Micaela Schuneman, Shawn Sorrell, Paul Slack, Farhia Said, Pachua Vang, Manuel Zuniga

**DHS Staff:** Malissa Adams, Cate Dymit, Helen Ghebre, Leigh Grauman, Nina Harris, Nicole Juan, Sean McMoore, GaoSheng Thao, Maurice Wilson, Steven Wilson

**Public Attendees:** Angela Fields, Opalina Peralta

### Agenda

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2:00	Planning for 2025 Legislative Meet & Greet
2:20	Break

2:30	Introductory Remarks from DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead
2:45	DHS Strategic Plan, Transitions, and Considerations for the 'New DHS' (Elizabeth Scherber)
3:15	2025 Budget/Strategize for 2025 Legislative Session [Large Group Discussion]
4:00	Closing

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua Choua and Shawn Sorrell welcomed everyone and led the council through the land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve February minutes and meeting agenda: We made Quorum.

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and February minutes: Foua Choua Khang
- Second: Manuel Zuniga
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Foua-Choua Khang opened the floor for members to share.

- **Residents of Color Collective & Dakota County**
  - **2024 Community Resources Fair**
  - **Date:** Saturday April 27, 2024
  - **Time:** 11:00am-3:00pm
  - **Location:** Thompson County Park, 1200 Stassen Lane, West St. Paul, MN 55118
- **HACER (Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research)** is hosting a learning session on best practices when engaging with Latin Communities on
  - **Date and Time:** Wednesday March 20, 2024
  - **Location:** In person 1pm at HACER office in St. Paul: 155 Wabasha St S, Suite 105
  - <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=YgRD--NxJEm1vB4zkCZUJpw8-Z2aGmtNvtKHVRCgbwFUM1I3REtZQTE1QUc0WE5RTko0SkfJNTZURi4u>
- **Immigrant Contributions to Minnesota's Workforce:** In-person learning session on the many immigrant contributions in MN.
  - **Date and Time:** March 22, 2024, 8:45-10:00am
  - **Location:** 1694 Como Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108, Room Number: Hall of Nations
  - Hear from JP Holwerda, the Institute's Senior Director of Workforce Development, and Lynn Thompson, Business Pathway Program Manager, to learn more about immigrant contributions within the Minnesota workforce.
  - [International Institute of Minnesota \(iimn.org\)](https://iimn.org)
- **Health Disparities Roundtable 2024 | Preparing the Public Health Workforce in Addressing Health Equity**
  - Hybrid event hosted by the University of MN on health inequities and disparities

- **Date and Time:** April 5, 2024
- **Location:** In Person in Coffman Memorial Union Theater & Zoom
- [https://www.sph.umn.edu/event/health-disparities-roundtable-2024/?utm\\_source=Advances+in+Population+Health&utm\\_campaign=777ab9cebe-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2019\\_07\\_30\\_02\\_49\\_COPY\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_a692478962-777ab9cebe-89210622](https://www.sph.umn.edu/event/health-disparities-roundtable-2024/?utm_source=Advances+in+Population+Health&utm_campaign=777ab9cebe-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_07_30_02_49_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a692478962-777ab9cebe-89210622)
- Opalina Peralta shared the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council ([MIAC](#)) [board meeting on May 22-24](#) at Lower Sioux Indian Community Jackpot Junction.
  - The Indian Affairs Council Day on the Hill is May 6 from 9:30am-2pm at the Minnesota State Capitol.
- Manuel Zuniga highlighted the upcoming [2024 API Day at the Capitol](#).
  - Speakers will be announced as they are determined but will include key players from the Minnesota legislature, API-serving community-based organizations, and others.
  - **Date and Time:** Wednesday April 3, 2024
  - **No registration is required.** Seating is first come, first served.
  - [Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans / Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans \(mn.gov\)](#)
  - The event will be livestreamed on the Council's Facebook page.
- ***Beyond the Unwind: Centering Equity Together! Minnesota Medicaid Equity Forum***
  - DHS will host two separate forums: one in-person and one virtual using the same agenda and content for each forum.
  - **In-person forum: Friday, April 12, 2024**, 2024 Minnesota Medicaid Equity Forum (Virtual Session) on March 22, 8:30am-4pm. [Register here.](#)
  - **Virtual forum: Friday, March 22, 2024**, 2024 Minnesota Medicaid Equity Forum (In-Person Session) on April 12, 8:30am-4pm. [Register here.](#)
  - Please take a moment to visit the Eventbrite pages (link below) to reserve your spot and learn more about the virtual and in-person sessions.
  - Permalink: <https://www.mnsure.org/assister-central/announcements/index.jsp?id=34-609226>
- "Dinner dialogue" to gather community visions within George Floyd Square: **The City of Minneapolis and engagement team (4RM+ULA and the Cultural Wellness Center) are hosting a "dinner dialogue."**
  - **Date and Time:** Thursday March 28 from 6:00-8:00pm
  - **Location:** Sabathani Community Center, 310 E. 38th Street, Minneapolis, MN, 55409
- Upper Harbor Redevelopment Community Meeting: Free and Open to the Public
  - Join us for a project update and to hear about a proposal for the Health & Wellness Hub.
  - **Date and Time:** Tuesday March 26, 2024 at 5:30-7:30pm
  - **Location:** Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC) 2001 Plymouth Avenue N, Minneapolis
  - [Upper Harbor Community Update Meeting Tickets, Tue, Mar 26, 2024 at 5:30 PM | Eventbrite](#)
- The CECLC recognizes the observance of Ramadan for staff, members, and neighbors who observe.
  - [Ramadan | Fasting, Traditions, & Facts | Britannica](#)
- The CECLC recognizes Women's History Month: [Women's History Month 2024 - Dates, Facts & Quotes | HISTORY.](#)



## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

In its meetings, the workgroup is working to determine the CECLC's funding needs in the coming years to build its infrastructure, to move toward its guiding principle of collaboration, and to plan more professional development opportunities and retreats. The workgroup discussed a draft proposal to help the council support community-based organizations by offering incentives in the form of a stipend for community partners who attend council meetings to offer their expertise.

Foua-Choua Khang thanked Tonia Lofton for attending today's legislative hearing on the African American Family Preservation Act, which is one of the workgroup's legislative priorities. She invited council members to elevate other priorities for the workgroup to consider and move forward.

Liz Banini volunteered to co-lead with Joanna Rosa, starting after April 2024.

### Topics and Issues Workgroup

Manuel Zuniga shared the workgroup and the Department of Children Youth and Family (DCYF) have discussed how the Equity Analysis Tool is being utilized to help embed equity into the new division using the whole system family approach.

The workgroup and DCYF also discussed their plan to address potential biases within the hiring process by lifting equity in its hiring processes and providing opportunities for professional development and advancement for employees of diverse background.

Furthermore, the workgroup seeks to build a strong relationship with the DCYF Implementation Team and selected a workgroup member to serve as liaison at Implementation meetings.

### Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Foua-Choua Khang said the workgroup seeks to change its name. These five were offered for voting by the CECLC:

1. Equitable Outcomes (EO) Workgroup – ***the council voted on this name***
2. Equity & Inclusion Policies and Procedures Workgroup
3. Transformative Policies and Procedures Workgroup
4. Cultivating Equity Workgroup
5. Cultivating Transformation Workgroup

In addition, the workgroup continues to look at data metrics around equity within DHS operations.

### Administrative Updates

Helen Ghebre shared Commissioner Harpstead will be joining the council at today's meeting. Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago is also in attendance. Helen highlighted this as an opportunity for council members to directly engage with DHS leadership at these meetings.

The [2024 CECLC Legislative Report](#) has been finalized and posted on the CECLC website.

Foua-Choua Khang gave a shoutout to the Communications Team for their DHS Today article on the 2024 CECLC Legislative Meet and Greet. The article will be sent in the post-meeting update.

The CECLC is seeking a new meeting space for its monthly meetings. Please share any suggestions with the Community Relations team.

## Planning for 2025 Legislative Meet & Greet

The 2025 legislative session begins on January 24 and will be a budget year. The CECLC will likely reserve the Vault Room again for its Meet & Greet.

Foua-Choua Khang shared some lessons learned from the 2024 Legislative Meet & Greet:

- Do not hold it the second day of legislative session.
- A script was helpful, but we did not stick to it. Consider reworking it for next time.
- Implement a small committee to plan the 2025 Legislative Meet & Greet.

## Introductory Remarks from DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead

Commissioner Jodi Harpstead introduced herself and provided some updates.

### ***2024 Legislative Session***

The February legislative forecast was released on February 29, 2024. The state budget and economic outlook has improved since November, but caution is still urged. Spending targets will be quite low. The Governor's supplemental budget is expected soon, and more status updates will be provided in future meetings. The DHS policy bills received hearings this week and are moving forward in the process. The deadline for bills to be heard in both the House and Senate occurs next week; as such, the calendar is filling up with committee hearings. The Human Services committees have continued to focus on DHS restructuring, acute care transitions, child welfare, health care reform, mental health, particularly children's mental health, and program integrity, grant oversight, and government accountability.

### ***DHS Strategic Plan, Transitions, and Considerations for the 'New DHS'***

The CECLC was a major partner in the development of the DHS agency strategic plan, and the agency is now moving toward implementation. As part of agency transitions there will be a "new DHS." This is an opportunity for DHS to live out its Strategic Plan Guiding Principles by having early and ongoing engagement with the CECLC.

DHS seeks to rework certain language, such as "basic needs" and "living in dignity," in the new department's mission and vision to include "thriving." In a recent management meeting, participants were asked to contribute to a word cloud: what would you like to see as part of the restructuring? Four words stood out: equity, Medicaid, justice, and well-being.

Commissioner Harpstead feels the transition is going well and is on track. It is still a question whether the CECLC will be restructured. DHS leadership remains open to the council's input.

It was asked how we get to justice through an unjust and biased system. Can you provide some concrete examples/plans that you have to reform the current unjust system so that true justice can be embodied? Commissioner Harpstead replied that being able to declare it is a huge step, and it is still aspirational. The next steps are determining how to live into it. She provided examples of how partner organizations and workgroups are taking concrete steps.

Dr. Karen McKinney added she hired a new policy analyst on her team who will apply an equity and antiracist lens to policy, and who will equip and train staff to evaluate internal and external policies.

Foua-Choua Khang added the Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup (now called the Equitable Outcomes Workgroup) will help departments share their wins and create metrics around equity and outcomes.

Shawn Sorrell emphasized the CECLC seeks to participate in ongoing transition planning and implementation and can add value.

## DHS Strategic Plan, Transitions, and Considerations for the 'New DHS'

Liz Scherber, Planning Director in the DHS Office of Strategy and Performance, introduced herself and presented the draft 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, which includes guiding principles and outcomes and goals. The slide deck will be shared with the council following today's meeting.

Liz invited comment around what aspects resonated with this group and what should be a top priority for DHS.

- People at DHS thrive in an inclusive environment. The people who work here and do the work matter. We need the right people in the right seats who have the power to pull the right levers and understand the barriers that need removing – and actively advocate for and remove them.
- I see there is a strategy to provide ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion training; to support employee well-being programs; and to promote career development opportunities – what are the specific, quantifiable outcomes?
- DHS seeks to normalize the diversity that we have on staff. Dr. Karen McKinney and De Anna Conover offered examples of positive movement.
- DHS should not *aspire* to achieve these guiding principles. The CECLC *lives* these principles and calls DHS to do the same.
- It is okay to be comfortable to set the bar for where we want to be and to be okay with not being at that bar (yet), while also continually holding ourselves accountable to these outcomes.
- The different business areas' strategic plans were informed by this Strategic Plan. There is an emphasis on what is measurable.
- Will these practices be implemented for hiring managers? Answer: Yes. They already are.

Liz concluded by asking the council how it wishes to engage in the "New DHS" process.

- It would be helpful to have a better picture of the different agency timelines and rollouts, including benchmarks.

- Advocate for adequate resources for council members who are committing more time and capacity.
- Have meaningful, consistent participation in activities that support and improve upon the social well-being of the CECLC.

## **2025 Budget/Strategize for Legislative Session**

Due to the time constraints, this item was tabled for a future meeting.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:41 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: April 19, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (Hybrid)

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Paul Slack, Lolita Davis-Carter, Nelly Torori, Philip Gaye-Bai, Farhia Said, Lashalle Campbell, Kimetha Johnson, Chris Green, Alex Abraha, Joanna Rosa, Lizzette Banini, Tonia Lofton, Cratè Darden, Micaela Schuneman, Josefina Geronimo, Mozana Ebrahim, Opalina Peralta
- **DHS Staff:** Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Nina Harris, Kelly Barnebey, Nikki Farago, De Anna Conover, Jerad Green, Malissa Adams, Gaosheng Thao, Nicole Urbatch, Liz Scherber, Nathan Chomilo, Angie DeLille
- **Public Attendees:** Alfred Solis, Rena Moran, Anita Fineday

### Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:20	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:25	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative &amp; External Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Equitable Outcomes Workgroup</li><li>• CECLC Updates – Legislative Report / Administrative</li></ul>
1:55	IDI Overview Presentation
2:15	Break

2:25	Reflections from the 2024 Medicaid Equity Forum
3:00	CECLC SST Retreat Planning Team Meeting Invite
3:15	2025 Budget/Strategize for 2025 Legislative Session [Large Group Discussion]
4:00	Closing

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell welcomed everyone and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve March minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and March minutes: Paul Slack
- Second: Lashalle Campbell
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Nina Harris gave a shoutout to Pachua Vang for her leadership with the Hmong Nurses Association. There will be a free health clinic targeted toward the Hmong community on Saturday, April 20 in St. Paul. Organizers believe it is [the first of its kind in the nation](#). Nina also gave a shoutout to Foua-Choua Khang for her expertise and service to Southeast Asian residents. She offers [business training at no cost](#) to Southeast Asian businesses and operators (employees of a business/nonprofit/organizations) throughout Minnesota.
- Kimetha Johnson shared the Residents of Color Collective (ROCC) and Dakota Parks 2024 Community Wellness and Resource Fair on Saturday, April 27 from 11am-3pm at Thompson County Park in West St. Paul.
- De Anna Conover shared DHS is a sponsor of the [People of Color Career Fair](#) on Wednesday, April 24 from 9am-2pm at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Gaosheng Thao added to let her know if you plan to attend so that you can receive a DHS t-shirt to wear.
- Mozana Ebrahim shared the Twin Cities Rise presents L.I.V.E. Empowered event on Wednesday, May 22 from 2-4pm at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis.
- Nikki Farago shared on Wednesday, May 1 from 11:30am-9pm is [the grand reopening](#) of the Minneapolis American Indian Center (MAIC). It will include a parade, open house, and powwow.
- Shawn Sorrell acknowledged and expressed gratitude for Nina Harris' many contributions to the CECLC. Nina accepted another opportunity within DHS, and we wish her well. To that, Nina said it has been a true delight working with the council.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

Joanna Rosa shared the workgroup met with the Council of Minnesotans for African Heritage (CMAH) who provided information on ways the CECLC can support the African American Family Preservation Act. Tikki Brown, Assistant Commissioner for Children and Family Services, and Jennifer Sommerfeld, Director of Legislative and External Affairs, presented and shared DHS's position on the proposed legislation and provided status updates. Tikki shared the bill has broadened its scope to be inclusive of all ethnicities, to provide greater leverage for it to pass.

Rena Moran, Ramsey County Commissioner and original co-author of the African American Family Preservation Act, indicated Senator Bobby Joe Champion added an amendment to the bill to make Ramsey and Hennepin Counties a pilot, with implementation across the state in 2026-2027. She is heartened to see the CECLC has robust engagement and diverse representation. She encouraged council members to continue its progress and keep the fight.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

At its last meeting, the workgroup heard an update of the Department of Children Youth and Family (DCYF) transition from its Implementation team. The workgroup expressed concerns with them about siloing. It has invited Elizabeth Ebot, Assistant Transition Director, and Anita Fineday, Transition Director, to present new initiatives, outreach, and strategic implementation for the new agency.

The workgroup has also invited staff from the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy to share some of the upcoming newly implemented trainings within the child protection/mandated reporter trainings, and Shaneen Moore, State Director of Child Support, to present on the Whole Family Systems Framework that will be reflected within the equity priorities of the new agency.

### **Equitable Outcomes Workgroup**

At its last meeting, Cratè Darden shared the workgroup did a deeper dive into the metrics in the Equity Analysis toolkit and Operations Dashboard with Ashley Oolman, DHS Equity Director for Operations. It is hoping to have more equity-focused presentations from DHS staff in future meetings.

The workgroup is seeking two CECLC members to volunteer as co-leads, starting in early autumn. They can shadow the current co-leads as they transition toward that role. Lashalle Campbell expressed interest in shadowing.

The workgroup is also seeking subject matter experts to discuss inequities within the Senior Waivers program and will connect with staff from the Aging & Disability Services Administration (ADSA).

### **Administrative Updates**

Helen Ghebre emphasized Community Relations wishes to be thoughtful in managing its email communication to the council; therefore, her team will limit email updates to two times per week unless there are urgent items.

Please send community events, flyers, job opportunities, etc. by noon on Monday following these monthly meetings for inclusion in the post-meeting email update.

Shawn Sorrell is seeking a CECLC co-chair as Foua-Choua Khang transitions out of that role. He invited interested council members to shadow the current co-chairs to learn more.

## IDI Overview Presentation

Shawn Sorrell introduced Nicole Urbatch, an Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) facilitator at DHS who provided an overview of the assessment, including how it is administered and how results are shared with users. Her slide deck will be distributed after today's meeting.

The CECLC is interested in this tool in order to understand and track how DHS continues to advance its Intercultural Development Plan (IDP); how it has implemented ongoing action steps to its IDI findings. The Healthcare Administration leadership recently took the IDI. They were in "Minimization" when they first took it and are now at the very tip of "Acceptance" – so there has been progress and commitment to improvement. This is true across DHS. There is the expectation leaders engage with the IDI every 2-3 years.

It was asked if those who have had a recent individual assessment should take it again. Answer: No, not necessary. However, the only way to be included in a CECLC group debrief is to take an iteration of the assessment or if there is an existing assessment in the enterprise database, which can be incorporated. The council will have further discussion on this and will be given steps to arrange an individual IDI with Nicole.

## Reflections from the 2024 Medicaid Equity Forum

Shawn Sorrell introduced Dr. Nathan Chomilo, DHS Medical Director for Medicare and MinnesotaCare, who presented some reflections on the 2024 Medicaid Equity Forum as well as data shared with forum participants. His slide deck will be shared after today's meeting.

Dr. Chomilo also presented on the progress of the *Pathways to Racial Equity in Medicaid: Improving the Health and Opportunities for American Indians in Minnesota* report. The draft is slated to be released in July, with publication in July/August 2024. DHS staff leading this project have gathered a group of American Indian policy makers, tribal leaders, tribal researchers, and providers together to inform the report's data interpretation. These sessions will also inform Calls to Action in the report. There is a commitment to have at least three sessions between March and May that will build upon one another. His slide deck will be shared after today's meeting.

Shawn encouraged council members to share this opportunity for engagement within their various networks to ensure broad participation.

## CECLC SST Retreat Planning Team Meeting Invite

Shawn Sorrell introduced Liz Scherber, Planning Director in the DHS Office of Strategy and Performance, who worked with Community Relations to add a CECLC Meet & Greet to the April 24th SST Retreat agenda. This



would afford the council an opportunity to engage with all 63 senior leaders and equity directors. More information will be shared in the post-meeting email update. Attendance is strongly encouraged.

## **2025 Budget/Strategize for Legislative Session**

Due to the time, this item was tabled. Some of the work will likely occur in advance, then brought to the council for discussion at a future meeting.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:38 PM**

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: May 17, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (Hybrid)

## Attendance

**CECLC Members:** Kimetha Johnson, Philip Gaye-Bai, Foua-Choua Khang, Abdirahman Ali-Mumin, Alex Abraha, Pachua Vang, Shawn Sorrell, Sheila Lipsco, Paul Slack, Chris Green, Tonia Lofton, Joanna Rosa, Mozana Ebrahim, Crate Darden, Lizette Banini, Josefina Geronimo, Lashalle Campbell, Farhia Said, Muriel Gubasta

**DHS Staff:** Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Steven Wilson, Dr. Karen McKinney, Kelly Barnebey, Malissa Adams

**Public Attendees:** Misty Coonce, Dr. Richard Oni, Angela Fields

## Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:20	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:25	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	High-level Overview of DHS Conversation
2:05	Break
2:10	Workgroup Updates & Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Equitable Outcomes Workgroup</li></ul>
3:10	CECLC Strategic Planning (Part 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2024-2025 CECLC Priorities</li></ul>
3:40	Administrative Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upcoming Appointments</li><li>• Training Development Opportunity</li></ul> Leadership Updates
3:50	Closing

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell welcomed everyone and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve April minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and April minutes: Foua-Choua Khang
- Second: Paul Slack
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Shawn Sorrell called out the various acknowledgements on today's agenda: Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, National Mental Health Awareness Month, Minnesota American Indian Month, and National Foster Care Awareness Month.
- Kimetha Johnson thanked Josefina Geronimo for supporting her Residents of Color Collective (ROCC) community event in April. She highlighted [two ROCC Juneteenth events](#):
  - BBQ Kick-Off on June 9 from 2:00-5:00pm at West St. Paul Sports Complex
  - Juneteenth Celebration on June 19 from 5:00-8:00pm at Dodge Nature Center
- Misty Coonce shared the [Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson](#) officially opened last week and is available to respond to inquiries, investigate complaints, and write reports. Tonia Lofton is now an investigator in that office.
- Foua-Choua Khang shared the [Hmong International Freedom Festival](#) at McMurray Field at Como Park on June 29-30. Free admission this year. Also, on Friday, July 12 from 9am-4pm is the [African Mental Health Summit](#) at the Heritage Center of Brooklyn Center. If anyone is able to sponsor, please reach out to Foua-Choua. The event is open to everyone. Registration details will be shared in the post-meeting email update.
- Shawn Sorrell gave a shoutout to Liz Banini and Cratè Darden for their participation and engagement on the council as representatives of DHS.
- Dr. Karen McKinney is happy to announce her team in the DHS Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) is finally fully staffed.

## High-level Overview of DHS

Cratè Darden provided a current overview of DHS major programs: income assistance, food assistance, health care, and child services. She described the programs and divisions moving to the new Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) and what will remain at DHS. Cratè also presented on the council workgroup process flow. Her slide deck was shared with the CECLC prior to this meeting and will be included in the post-meeting email update.

This agenda item will aid ongoing conversation around alignment of council priorities and where its work lives within workgroups/CECLC and DHS.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

Joanna Rosa shared the workgroup met regarding recent developments on the African American Family Preservation Act. The workgroup sent an email to the council to vote on adding the CECLC to the letter of support of the bill, for which there was consensus to add it. The bill passed in the Senate and then was passed in the House this past week.

Foua-Choua Khang added the 2025 Legislative Meet & Greet is scheduled for the second week of session: January 23 from 9am-4pm in the Vault. DHS Community Relations will send a calendar hold. The workgroup seeks volunteers for next year's planning.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Paul Slack shared the workgroup continues to focus on child protection/mandated reporter trainings. Renee Armstrong and Erin Klumper from the MN Child Welfare Training Academy and the Child Safety and Permanency (CSP) Division presented on recent outreach efforts around the mandated reporter training.

At its next meeting, the workgroup will discuss creating equitable hiring practices; how do we ensure HR managers are being equitable; and moving past perpetuating systemic barriers.

### **Equitable Outcomes Workgroup**

At its last meeting, Foua-Choua Khang noted participation has increased, which has been a goal of the workgroup. Liz Banini shared an overview of her division at DHS, Fiscal Analysis and Results Management (FARM) which oversees the county implementation of aging and disability services waiver programs. She supervises a team of program evaluators. Her presentation included two public dashboards that display data and metrics on waiver programs: Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Performance Measures and Long-Term Services (LTSS) Demographic Dashboard. The FARM team uses those dashboards to compare county census data with dashboard data for trends or gaps in program implementation and to inform outreach strategies.

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The council then transitioned to small breakout groups to discuss the following three questions related to workgroups and reported out their responses.

1. Where are you seeing alignment with CECLC 2024-2025 priorities and workgroup activities?
2. What opportunities do you see? What do you see as immediate next steps?
3. How to bring along more community to get involved in this work?

## **CECLC Strategic Planning (Part 1)**

Due to the time, this agenda item was tabled for a future meeting.

## **Administrative Updates**

### **Upcoming Appointments**

Beginning in June, DHS Community Relations and council leadership will begin seeking nominations for co-chair to replace Foua-Choua Khang who is transitioning out of that role.

### **Training Development Opportunities**

Helen Ghebre said funding is still available for those who wish to register for the 16th Annual Community Empowerment Through Black Men Healing Conference on June 20-21. A survey will be sent after today's meeting to gauge interest. If there is sufficient interest, the council could potentially adjust its June meeting. More to come.

The CECLC has the opportunity to showcase its work on Thursday, August 22 as part of DHS Office of Employee Culture's Employee Engagement Day. Details will be shared in the post-meeting email update.

### **Meeting adjourned at 3:26 PM**

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: June 21, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (Hybrid)

## Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Foua-Choua Khang, Josefina Geronimo, Chris Green, Paul Slack, Philip Gaye-Bai, Farhia Said, Tonia Lofton, Lolita Davis-Carter, Lizette Banini, Cratè Darden, Alex Abraha, Abdirahman Ali-Mumin, Micaela Schuneman
- **DHS Staff:** Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Kelly Barnebey, Hli Vang, Malissa Adams, Daisy Mairura, Steven Wilson, Alexander Walker, De Anna Conover
- **Public Attendees:** Angela Fields, Amina Mumin

## Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:20	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:25	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	Workgroup Updates & Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Equitable Outcomes Workgroup</li></ul>
2:05	CECLC Leadership Update: Co-chair Appointment Process
2:30	DHS High-Level Overview Continued
2:50	Break
3:00	DHS Updates & Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reform 2020 Waiver Extension Request</li><li>• Cultural and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Development Grant Program (CEMIG) Overview &amp; Q/A</li></ul>
3:30	2025 Legislative Session Engagement Prep
3:50	Closing

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell welcomed everyone and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve May minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and May minutes: Micaela Schuneman
- Second: Lolita Davis-Carter
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Shawn Sorrell called out the various acknowledgements on today's agenda: Refugee Awareness Month, Pride Month, and Immigrant Heritage Month.
- Chris Green shared the [Fiesta de Crookston](#) on Tuesday, July 9 from 4:00-8:30pm.
- Hli Vang wished to remind everyone this weekend is the [Hmong International Freedom Festival](#) at McMurray Field at Como Park. Free admission this year.
- Paul Slack shared Lutheran Social Services is hosting a [World Refugee Day Celebration and Fundraiser](#) Friday, June 21 from 6:30-8:30pm at the Center for Changing Lives, 2400 Park Avenue South, Minneapolis.
- Helen Ghebre highlighted two events: the Black Men Healing Conference which is underway. Tikki Brown, the new Commissioner for the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), spoke at that conference. The [Healthy Churches 2030 Roadmap Tour](#) takes place on Saturday, June 22 at the Capri Theater in North Minneapolis from 10am-2pm. DHS will have a booth there. Registration is required and admission is free.
- Lolita Davis-Carter shared the [Juneteenth Minnesota 2024](#) event at the State Capitol on Saturday, June 22 from 12:00-5:00pm. The Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage (CMAH) will have a booth – come say hello.
- Cate Dymit shared the DHS Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) is hosting a learning session on Capacity Building for Restorative Practice on Wednesday, June 26 from 12-2pm. More details will be shared in the post-meeting email update.

## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

At its last meeting, the workgroup heard from Theo Rose, Policy Director from Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage about the African American Family Preservation Act (AAFPA), noting its passage and the phased implementation model. Bill implementation starts July 1st and is ongoing.

The workgroup discussed concerns about the role of CECLC in the new Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Council members emphasized the council's support for the bill and expressed concern about being left out of the transition process to the new agency. They discussed concerns with how the DCYF split will impact the role the CECLC plays in advising around the AAFPA.

## **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Paul Slack shared the workgroup spent more time discussing community outreach, possibly using Cratè Darden's presentation on DHS High-Level Overview. Workgroup members shared their personal goal statements for advancing priorities of the workgroup, which included bringing the council to the people we represent; engage with members' faith institutions; hear more from DHS about its services; develop collateral to share with communities about the CECLC and its work.

Helen Ghebre added there may opportunities to create printed material and video around these topics, as part of future outreach. Council members may be asked to participate and offer input.

## **Equitable Outcomes Workgroup**

Foua-Choua Khang's co-chair appointment will be ending in August at which time she will participate on CECLC as a community member. She is more than willing to provide mentorship to anyone interested in this leadership opportunity.

In addition, the workgroup is looking for two new co-leads.

## **CECLC Leadership Update: Co-chair Appointment Process**

DHS Community Relations and council leadership have begun seeking nominations for co-chair. Helen Ghebre gave a presentation on the CECLC co-chair appointment process, including co-chair duties and responsibilities; meetings with DHS leadership; and timeline from June through October 2024. July 31 is the deadline to submit co-chair nominations.

Helen indicated four positions on the CECLC currently open for appointment: American Indian Community Representative (1), Community Member Representing Cultural and Ethnic Communities (2), and DHS Employee (1). The Secretary of State postings will open in early July with review by committee in mid-August. An onboarding and new member orientation is planned for early October. We aim to have newly appointed members attend their first council meeting on October 18, 2024.

## **DHS Updates & Discussion**

Liz Banini provided updates on the Reform 2020 Waiver Extension Request and the Olmstead Oversight Group's survey specifically around disability inclusion and choice. Details will be shared in the post-meeting email update.

Farhia Said and Abdi Ali-Mumin also shared their experiences and concerns around access to services due to cultural barriers, language barriers, mental health struggles, and for those with disabilities. Shawn Sorrell asked



the Topics and Issues Workgroup to further explore this conversation to bring to the CECLC at large, going forward.

Shawn briefly touched on the Cultural and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Development Grant Program (CEMIG) Overview, which Nelly Torori planned for today's meeting but will be tabled for a future meeting.

## **2025 Legislative Session Engagement Prep**

Helen Ghebre presented a high-level overview on preparations for the 2025 legislative session engagement. The DHS Legislative team will present more information at the council's July meeting.

Foua-Choua Khang added the CECLC is currently generously funded through the DHS Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI); however, that is not sustainable. The council needs to be intentional and strategic in devising and championing for its budget as we look ahead to session.

## **DHS High-Level Overview Continued**

Since the last council meeting, Cratè Darden highlighted recent organizational changes within DHS. First, DHS will be separating the Behavioral Health, Housing, and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Administration into two separate administrations, creating the Behavioral Health Administration and the Homelessness, Housing, and Support Services Administration to allow for greater focus on these two important program areas. Also, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division will move to the Aging and Disabilities Services Administration.

The Homelessness, Housing, and Support Services Administration will be responsible for policy and grant-making for all adults and youth experiencing homelessness in Minnesota, and they will administer adult income support services. The Shelter/Housing Programs team from the Office of Economic Opportunity in Children and Family Services will remain in DHS on July 1 and will report to this Administration as will the Housing and Support Services team currently in BHDH.

There were questions [about publicly available data](#); more information will be shared in the post-meeting email update.

## **Meeting adjourned at 3:37 PM**

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: July 19, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and International Institute of Minnesota (Hybrid)

## Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Foua-Choua Khang, Paul Slack, Philip Gaye-Bai, Farhia Said, Tonia Lofton, Lolita Davis-Carter, Cratè Darden, Alex Abraha, Abdirahman Ali-Mumin, Kimetha Johnson, Micaela Schuneman, Nelly Torori, Manuel Zuniga, Pa Chua Vang, Shannon Geshick, Josefina Geronimo, Lizette Banini
- **DHS & DCYF Staff:** Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Steven Wilson, Kelly Barnebey, Nikki Farago, Malissa Adams, Alexander Walker, Elyse Bailey, Nicole Juan, Matt Burdick, Kristy Graume, Leigh Grauman, Jennifer Sommerfeld, Liz Scherber, Peter Butler, Daisy Mairura, Sarah Florman, Gaosheng Thao, Dr. Karen McKinney, Patrick Holman, Paige Anderson, Jerad Green, Deondra Avery, De Anna Conover, Micah Tran, Jessica Williams, Justin Wu
- **Public Attendees:** Dr. Richard Oni

## Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:20	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:25	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	Workgroup Updates & Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Equitable Outcomes Workgroup</li></ul>
2:00	Re-introduce disability and elderly waiver programs access as key priority for CECLC
2:25	Break
2:30	Conversation with DHS Legislative Team: 2024 Session Review & Priorities for 2025
3:50	Administrative Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Co-Chair Nominations Open</li><li>• Appointment Review Panel Opportunity</li></ul>
4:00	Closing

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell called the meeting to order and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions. Micaela Schuneman gave a warm welcome to the International Institute of Minnesota and a brief summary of its history and programming.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve June minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and June minutes: Kimetha Johnson
- Second: Lolita Davis-Carter
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Manuel Zuniga invited everyone to the Cultural Society of Filipino-Americans (CSFA)'s 36th Annual [Philippine Day](#) on Saturday, July 10 from 3:00-8:00 pm at Ojibway Park in Woodbury.
- [60th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Special Event](#), Wednesday, July 24, from 1:00-2:30 pm (Eastern Time)
- US Census Bureau [Understanding the Differences Between Statistics Webinar](#), Thursday, July 25 at 2:00 pm (Eastern Time).
- [AA and NHPI Mental Health Convening](#) on Wednesday, July 24.
- Fahan Organization [Back to School Drive/IEP Educational Event](#) on Saturday, August 17
  - Accepting donations for a school supplies drive.
- Dr. Richard Oni shared about the success of the 10th African Mental Health Summit that took place on Friday, July 12.
- Shawn Sorrell recognized the July monthly observances shared on the meeting agenda including National Disability Independence Day, National Grilling Month, and BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month.

## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

At its last meeting, the workgroup discussed aligning its goals with the priorities of the full council. The workgroup is narrowing in on its legislative priorities for the upcoming session and identifying actionable items to follow up on. The workgroup is interested in increasing community engagement with the council and the legislative process.

Shawn Sorrell provided an update on the council's process of engaging with Tribal communities and clarified the council is to work through the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) and the DHS Office of Indian Policy (OIP) regarding Tribal priorities and Tribal engagement.

## **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

At its last meeting, the workgroup continued planning for CECLC Community Engagement Sessions. The workgroup discussed presentation materials providing an overview of DHS programs and services, and these questions: What is the intent of the community engagement sessions? What can community members attending expect? What are the intended outcomes of these sessions? What do you hope to see as the impact or outcome from outreaching to these communities?

## **Equitable Outcomes Workgroup**

Shawn Sorrell announced Nelly Torori will be stepping into the co-lead role for the Equitable Outcomes workgroup.

At its last meeting, Barb Ness from the DHS Strategic Planning team provided an update on key themes that have emerged from the 'Reimagining the New DHS Roadshow.' Barb noted the timeline for 'New DHS' was planned around the Commissioner's Forum on August 8 and DHS Day in the Park on August 14 to solidify who DHS is (e.g. mission & vision) and its priorities.

There are a number of upcoming opportunities for engagement: DHS Managers Conference, DHS staff survey, and two virtual coffee chats: July 19 and July 24 (open to everyone).

## **Re-introduce Disability and Elderly Waiver Programs Access as Key Priority for CECLC**

Abdi Ali-Mumin and Farhia Said shared they have been leading engagements with families and mothers who are struggling with accessing disability services for their children. They have been attending spaces with community members to hear more about the barriers families face and identify where there are gaps. They are hoping for greater engagement and collaboration with DHS around solutions for improving access to Disability and Elderly Waiver Programs. There are community-based events where parents/caregivers/relatives are able to meet and plan their participation in potential DHS listening sessions or roundtables and at future CECLC workgroup meetings.

Lizette Banini in the DHS Aging and Disability Services Administration (ADSA) responded that waiver applicants are waiting 3-6 months for an assessment while in the midst of experiencing great need for services. In addition, the ADSA received feedback the pieces of the assessment are unnecessarily duplicative, i.e. applicants must repeat their story at each step of the process. The ADSA has had internal conversations with Community Relations to expand community engagement around this topic.

## **Conversation with DHS Legislative Team: 2024 Session Review & Priorities for 2025**

Shawn Sorrell introduced Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago who introduced Matt Burdick, DHS Legislative Relations Director, who provided some updates from the DHS Legislative team. After 10 years of service, he recently announced his last day at DHS will be August 13. Matt is confident his team is committed and more

than capable to carry on this work. Kristy Graume will serve as interim director. Shawn thanked Matt for his service and his work with the CECLC.

Matt presented a 2024 legislative session recap, a description of the DHS proposal process, the 2025 legislative picture, and DHS's budget priorities. The slide deck was emailed to the CECLC prior to today's meeting.

It was asked whether the Legislative team constructs a narrative around DHS guiding principles and whether they are reshaped for each legislative session. Elyse Bailey responded a narrative format would be a good idea to explore going forward.

There was a comment to remember that staff are community members and that community engagement can occur within agency teams, not only in external outreach efforts. Staff as community members bring their perspective and expertise to this work.

Helen Ghebre asked the CECLC to consider getting engaged in internal processes. The Equity Analysis Toolkit may be a good place to start, and council leadership will have internal discussion about this.

## Administrative Updates

Helen Ghebre indicated DHS Community Relations is now officially accepting nominations for council co-chair. A nomination questionnaire was sent out with the meeting materials this month and is due by July 31, 2024. For more information about the co-chair role, please reach out to Foua-Choua Khang.

In addition, Community Relations is preparing for the upcoming 2024 CECLC appointment process and is seeking 3-4 CECLC members to serve on the review committee.

The review committee will be tasked with reviewing the applicant materials, scoring applicants based on criteria/scorecard provided by Community Relations, convening to determine recommendations for the Commissioner, and potentially participating in brief applicant interviews. The time commitment would be approximately a total of 6 hours between August 12-19. Please reach out to Cate Dymit if interested and to indicate availability.

Community Relations invited council members to participate in an upcoming DHS Engagement Month Session to increase visibility of the council and build relationships across DHS. It occurs on Thursday, August 15 from 9:30-11:30am (hybrid), 11:30am-12:30pm (in-person only networking) at the Elmer L. Andersen Human Services Building, Room C2370-2380, in St. Paul and via WebEx. Contact Cate Dymit if interested in participating.

The MMB Management Analysis and Development (MAD) team members Jenna Laine, Josh Hill, and Trevor Frey are working with DHS on an environmental scan to assist them with a legislative report related to recommendations on preserving the SSI, RSDI, Veterans, or other federal cash benefits paid to a child in foster care. It is hosting listening sessions with individuals who identify with the following populations:

- Youth with lived experience
- Parents whose children were placed in foster care
- Relatives and kinship caregivers, which may include relatives who provide foster care
- Foster parents who are unrelated to the foster youth
- Adoptive parents who are not relatives or kinship caregivers
- Foster care and permanency organizations

- Organizations working with families in voluntary placements or children with disabilities
- Advocates or advocate organizations for children and parents in the child welfare system including:
  - Child advocates
  - Parent advocates
  - Tribal advocates
  - Ombudsperson offices
  - General advocates
- Children's Justice Initiative

**Meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM**

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: August 16, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and International Institute of Minnesota (Hybrid)

## Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Foua-Choua Khang, Paul Slack, Philip Gaye-Bai, Farhia Said, Tonia Lofton, Lolita Davis-Carter, Cratè Darden, Alex Abraha, Abdirahman Ali-Mumin, Micaela Schuneman, Nelly Torori, Manuel Zuniga, Pa Chua Vang, Chris Green, Lizzette Banini, Joanna Rosa, Josefina Geronimo
- **DHS & DCYF Staff:** Commissioner Jodi Harpstead, Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Steven Wilson, Dr. Karen McKinney, Kelly Barnebey, Deqa Sayid, Heidi Hamilton, Miriam Hirman, Jazlyn Bradley, Chue Zha Thao, Reena Shetty
- **Public Attendees:** Angela Fields, Meaghan Hunt, Jared Sawyer, Simran Chugani, Dr. Richard Oni

## Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:20	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:25	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	Workgroup Updates & Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Equitable Outcomes Workgroup</li></ul>
2:00	CECLC Co-Chair Nominations & Vote
2:30	Break
2:40	Commissioner Jodi Harpstead: Welcome & Agency Update
3:00	Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Evaluation of the Assessment for Racial and Ethnic Disparities (HEARD) Project: Presentation & Discussion
3:50	Administrative Updates
4:00	Closing

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell called the meeting to order and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve July minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and July minutes: Paul Slack
- Second: Manuel Zuniga
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Everyone was encouraged to share upcoming events and give shoutouts.

- Shawn Sorrell recognized the August observances on today's agenda: Child Support Awareness Month, Black August, and Lao American Artist Heritage Month. He gave shoutouts to Micaela Schuneman and the International Institute for providing today's amazing meeting space, and to the DHS Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) for the invite to its presentation at Metro State University. Shawn also shared the [Small Businesses Resource Fair](#) on Friday, September 13 from 9:30am-1:00pm at the International Institute of MN.
- Cate Dymit encouraged everyone on behalf of Hli Vang to participate in the 2024 DHS Equity Week on September 23-27. More details will be shared in the post-meeting email update.
- Dr. Karen McKinney shared the Nexus Foundation's [ROOT Sabbatical Fellowship](#) opportunity. The fellowship offers three-month-long sabbaticals to ten BIPOC movement leaders in Minnesota. Applications open Monday, August 5 and close Monday, August 26. More details on their website.
- Manuel Zuniga shared Ignite the Vote: Empowering Asian Pacific Islander Voices, a civic engagement session on Thursday, September 12, 2:00-3:30 pm at Xia Gallery and Café in St. Paul. Please come for an insightful event focusing on the key issues facing API communities in Minnesota and the vital role of civic engagement. Discover how your vote can make a difference and learn from the leaders shaping our community.

## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

The workgroup has enlisted Community Relations' help to craft a survey to the CECLC for the purpose of gathering input, prioritizing its working list of priorities, and identifying topic areas to further explore.



## Topics and Issues Workgroup

The workgroup continues to discuss strategies to increase community engagement and is planning CECLC Community Engagement Sessions. Foua-Choua Khang invited council members to join those sessions if interested.

## Equitable Outcomes Workgroup

Foua-Choua Khang shared the workgroup is currently refining its Charter to solidify its objectives. Members discussed these three topics: what we need to be successful; what we want to see happen; and what we can do.

She encouraged council members to take DHS's Orientation to Anti-Racism, which is scheduled on an ongoing basis. Gaosheng Thao from DHS's Employee Culture Human Resources division has been sharing their equity dashboard so that the workgroup remains informed and can advise the agency. One item from the last discussion was the need to attract and retain Latinx job applicants.

The workgroup is also looking at the Aging & Disability Services programs and their equity measures including reviewing the Home and Community-Based Service (HCBS) provider capacity building grants implementation.

## CECLC Co-Chair Nominations & Vote

Community Relations received three nominations for council co-chair, one of which was withdrawn prior to today's meeting, leaving two nominations for consideration. Their nominations were distributed to the council in advance of today's meeting.

- Chris Green
- Philip Gaye-Bai

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor to any council members who wish to self nominate. There were none.

Chris and Philip shared their respective backgrounds and remarks with the council prior to an open vote. After deliberation and tabulation, council leadership congratulated Chris Green for the most number of votes. Community Relations will notify the Commissioner of the council's nominee for co-chair, with the intention to have the new co-chair seated for the October council meeting.

## Commissioner Jodi Harpstead: Welcome & Agency Update

Helen Ghebre introduced DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead who presented council members Cratè Darden and Foua-Choua Khang with certificates of recognition for their work.

She shared DHS's [new mission and vision](#), a current agency transition timeline, and other updates.

### DHS's New Mission:

In collaboration with community and partners, DHS supports people to thrive in community and live their healthiest and fullest lives.

### DHS's New Vision:

All people in Minnesota have what they need to thrive in community with no disparities.

## **Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Evaluation of the Assessment for Racial and Ethnic Disparities (HEARD) Project: Presentation & Discussion**

Due to the time, this agenda item will be moved to the Equity Outcomes Workgroup or to a future council meeting.

### **Administrative Updates**

Helen Ghebre encouraged council members to fully engage in DHS Equity Week offerings.

She indicated the 2024 CECLC appointment process is underway. The review committee spent time between August 12-19 reviewing applicant materials, scoring applicants based on criteria/scorecard provided by Community Relations, and convening to determine recommendations for the Commissioner.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:32 PM**

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: September 20, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and International Institute of Minnesota (Hybrid)

## Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Foua-Choua Khang, Paul Slack, Philip Gaye-Bai, Farhia Said, Tonia Lofton, Alex Abraha, Micaela Schuneman, Nelly Torori, Manuel Zuniga, Pa Chua Vang, Chris Green, Joanna Rosa, Kimetha Johnson, Josefina Geronimo, Senator John Hoffman
- **DHS & DCYF Staff:** Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago, Cate Dymit, Laura Villarreal, Daisy Mairura, Dr. Karen McKinney, Kelly Barnebey, Christine Renville, Gaosheng Thao, Nate Carter, Hli Vang, Micah Tran
- **Public Attendees:** Dr. Richard Oni

## Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:20	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:25	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	Workgroup Updates & Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Equitable Outcomes Workgroup</li></ul>
2:00	Break
2:10	Update on Tribal-State Relations Training
2:20	Update on DHS Equity Week
2:30	CECLC Legislative Summit Overview & Discussion
2:50	Administrative Updates
3:00	Adjourn Full Council Meeting

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell called the meeting to order and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions. He invited Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago to introduce two new additions to DHS Community Relations: Laura Villarreal, Communication and Community Outreach Project Coordinator, and Daisy Mairura, Executive Pathways Program intern. Welcome!

## Decisions Made

Review and approve August minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and August minutes: Paul Slack
- Second: Philip Gaye-Bai
- The motion passed

Review and approve 2024 CECLC Legislative Priorities:

- A roll call vote was taken to adopt these legislative priorities.
- The motion passed unanimously.

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Shawn recognized the September observances on the agenda: National Recovery Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Honoring National Deaf Awareness Month. He stated the Eliminating Racism in Substance Use & Community Care ECHO Fellowship application is currently open and closes on Friday, September 27. On Saturday, October 19 from 1:00-4:30 pm, an Immigration Resource Fair will be held at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church. More information will be shared in the post-meeting email update.
- Cate Dymit shared the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage (CMAH) offered two tickets for council members to attend [the 2024 Asian Pacific Minnesotans Leadership Awards Dinner](#) hosted by the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans on Friday, October 18 from 6:00-8:30 pm at the Heritage Center of Brooklyn Center. The deadline to register is today, September 20. Anyone interested should contact Community Relations. Cate also mentioned The Welcome Fund is launching its 3rd [All for Us grant opportunity](#). More information will be shared in the post-meeting email update.
- Paul Slack and Philip Gaye-Bai invited everyone a community engagement event on Wednesday, October 2 from 6:00-8:00 pm at Ebenezer Community Church in Brooklyn Park.
- Kimetha Johnson invited everyone to the Residents of Color Collective (ROCC) Climbers event on Friday, September 27 at Thompson County Park on West St. Paul.
- Joanna Rosa shared a flyer about Healing in Practice (HIP's) fall program for youth, which takes place every Tuesday from October 1 to December 17 in Minneapolis. This program highlights identity, health, community, and conflict resolution as developmental focus areas when working with youth. Programming structure will consist of a combination working in both one-on-one and group settings. HIP has a total of three mentors and will be accepting 12-15 youth (ages 13-18 Black and Brown). Anyone interested should [register here](#).

- The Legislative Coordinating Commission (LCC) is seeking a contractor to develop and conduct Anti-Harassment & Discrimination/Respect in the Workplace presentation materials for group trainings. The contract term will be effective January 1, 2025 through either December 31, 2026, or March 31, 2027. More information will be shared in the post-meeting email update.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

At its last meeting, the workgroup invited Elyse Bailey, DHS Budget Director, to participate. There were technical issues, so she will be invited to a future workgroup meeting. The workgroup continues to discuss how to better align its work with the new DHS structure.

Shawn Sorrell added the council has not yet voted on its eight legislative priorities. He invited the council to discuss them and take a vote today, in anticipation of the October 1st CECLC Legislative Summit.

1. Promote equitable DHS investments in marginalized communities of color and Tribal Governments and people. (Ex. CEMIG, Opioid Epidemic Response Grant (OERAC), etc.)
2. Housing and Homelessness
3. MinnesotaCare expansion to undocumented immigrants' implementation
4. Disability Waiver Services: Increasing access
5. Elderly Waiver Services
6. Community Health Workers Systems Navigation
7. LGBTQIA+ Community Health Care Access
8. Resettlement Services for New Americans

Foua-Choua Khang suggested combining Elderly Waiver and Disability Waiver Services; however, Senator Hoffman recommended keeping them separate.

A roll call vote was taken to adopt these legislative priorities as written. There were no nays, and the motion passed unanimously.

The CECLC Legislative Summit will be an opportunity to take a deeper dive into these topics with agency staff – all council members are strongly encouraged to attend.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

The workgroup has been working to expand community outreach to different communities and is pleased to announce it secured a date for its first outreach session, which will take place on Wednesday, October 2 from 6:00-8:00 pm at Ebenezer Community Church in Brooklyn Park. Council members are invited to attend. Community members' ongoing engagement and collaboration can help inform policies and services that reflect their community's needs.

### **Equitable Outcomes Workgroup**

At its last meeting, the workgroup heard from the DHS Fiscal Analysis & Results Management (FARM) Division and members of the University of Chicago National Opinion Research Center (NORC) Research Team on findings

from the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Evaluation of the Assessment for Racial and Ethnic Disparities (HEARD) Project.

The workgroup identified opportunities for community representatives on the council to provide guidance on further community engagement in the HEARD Project. To that, Shawn Sorrell invited the council to read the report findings and participate in the conversation.

The October workgroup meeting will be rescheduled to October 8 at 2:00-3:00 pm due to schedule conflict with the CECLC Legislative Summit.

The workgroup is seeking a co-lead.

## **Update on Tribal-State Relations Training**

The DHS Office of Indian Policy is offering the CECLC an opportunity to participate in [Tribal-State Relations Training](#) (TSRT). It is a 2-day immersive in-person training scheduled throughout the year at various tribal locations. Minnesota state employees learn about American Indian tribal governments, histories, cultures, and traditions in order to empower themselves to work effectively with American Indians and to promote authentic and respectful relationships between state agencies and tribes.

Community Relations held 15 spots for council members to attend. The next session occurs on October 23-24 at Treasure Island Resort & Casino in Welch, MN, hosted by the Prairie Island Indian Community. The November session has filled, and the October session is expected to fill soon.

Please contact Community Relations by Monday, September 23 if you wish to attend, and check the [TSRT website](#) for the 2025 dates, locations, and lodging details. Council members are responsible for arranging lodging and will be fully reimbursed for that.

## **Update on DHS Equity Week**

Hli Vang, DHS Engagement Coordinator, gave details on next week's DHS Equity Week and invited everyone to engage in the vast array of sessions. More information will be shared in the post-meeting email update.

## **CECLC Legislative Summit Overview and Discussion**

Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago provided an overview of the CECLC Legislative Summit on Tuesday, October 1 from 12:00-4:00 pm, and invited everyone to RSVP. DHS staff consider this to be a valuable time to hear from council members and community prior to the next legislative session.

## **Administrative Updates**

Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago indicated the 2024 CECLC appointment process is wrapping up. In October, the council looks forward to officially welcoming its new co-chair and new members. She commended the caliber of nominees and their commitment to service.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:55 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: October 18, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and International Institute of Minnesota (Hybrid)

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Chris Green, Philip Gaye-Bai, Farhia Said, Micaela Schuneman, Nelly Torori, Josefina Geronimo, Liz Banini, Christine Renville, MJ Lansana (CMAH), Tonia Lofton, Lolita Davis-Carter, Nina Vongphath, Makram El-Amin, Paul Slack, Manuel Zuniga, Angela Fields, Mozana Ebrahim
- **DHS & DCYF Staff:** Cate Dymit, Laura Villarreal, Steven Wilson, Angie DeLille, Kelly Barnebey, Nate Carter, Craté Darden
- **Public Attendees:** Dr. Richard Oni

### Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:20	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:25	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	Co-Chair Update & New Member Introductions
2:15	CECLC Legislative Summit Update
2:30	Workgroup Updates & Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Equitable Outcomes Workgroup</li></ul>
	Administrative Updates
2:50	Break
3:00	New Member Orientation & Onboarding
4:00	Adjourn Full Council Meeting



## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell called the meeting to order and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions. He welcomed Chris Green as new co-chair.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve September minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and September minutes: Micaela Schuneman
- Second: Manuel Zuniga
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Shawn recognized the October observances on the agenda: National Indigenous Peoples Month, National Coming Out Day October 11, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, ADHD Awareness Month, Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Filipino American History Month, German American Heritage Month, and Italian American Heritage Month. He added National Disability Employment Awareness Month, around which his employer Hennepin County has developed learning and development opportunities.
- Nate Carter gave a shoutout to Phillis Wheatley Community Center in North Minneapolis for having their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary yesterday.
- Josefina Geronimo shared the [2024 Minnesota East Africa Banquet](#) will be held at the Norway House on Saturday, October 26 from 6:00-7:45 pm. There is a link to register on their website.
- Please join the Indigenous People's Day Community Family Event on Saturday, October 19 from 12:00-2:15 pm at the Minneapolis American Indian Center (MAIC) to meet and learn about Lac La Croix Indian Ponies, also known as The Ojibwe Pony, which was nearly driven to the brink of extinction. These ponies are presented by The Humble Horse. In addition, come create an Ojibwe Bandolier shoulder bag (while supplies last) and connect with valuable educational resources. Registration encouraged, no required.
- Manuel Zuniga celebrated [the 2024 Asian Pacific Minnesotans Leadership Awards Dinner](#) hosted by the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans happening tonight, October 18 from 6:00-8:30 pm at the Heritage Center of Brooklyn Center.
- Chris Green wished Philip Gaye-Bai a happy birthday.

## Co-Chair Update and New Member Introductions

Shawn Sorrell welcomed the following new members and invited those present to share a brief bio.

- Alex Abraha
- Angela Fields
- Christine Renville

- Makram El-Amin
- Nina Vongphath

## CECLC Legislative Summit Update

Shawn Sorrell provided a brief summary of the October 1st CECLC Legislative Summit. Materials from that meeting were shared with the CECLC prior to today's council meeting.

He identified next steps:

- 2025 CECLC Legislative Meet & Greet on January 23
- Co-chairs will continue to meet with the DHS Director of Legislative Relations on a recurring basis
- Create space for consistent legislative updates at CECLC monthly and Legislative workgroup meetings
- Develop and establish a sustainable feedback loop for continuous community engagement within the DHS Legislative process and timeline
- Identify additional opportunities to track and monitor progress on CECLC legislative priorities (ongoing engagement)
- Continue to invest in CECLC's development around the legislative process and technical skills to maximize council advocacy and leadership role

A new council member asked for background on the CECLC's work with legislative activity. The council has made strides in building greater influence in the legislative space, and its voice can elevate legislative priorities. DHS staff are invited to workgroup meetings and full council meetings to present on legislative topics. In addition to that, the Commissioner attends council meetings on a quarterly basis, and Deputy Commissioner Farago attends monthly.

## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

At its last meeting, the workgroup focused on legislative priorities. It sent a survey to the CECLC and asked participants to rank priorities. This resulted in more conversation with DHS staff.

There continues to be discussion on how to better align with the new DHS structure.

### Topics and Issues Workgroup

The workgroup's first outreach session on October 2 at Ebenezer Community Church in Brooklyn Park was a success and had good turnout. There is a tentative date for its first follow-up meeting. Beyond that, the workgroup will focus on digesting what happened and where the CECLC and/or state entities can provide further assistance.

The workgroup will continue to focus on community outreach and how many businesses it wishes to engage and will set goals around attendance. It is important community members know what the CECLC is and how it can be a bridge to DHS.

## **Equitable Outcomes Workgroup**

The workgroup is seeking a co-lead.

## **Administrative Update**

Laura Villarreal invited council members to the 2024 Fall CLAS Conference, themed “ReCLASifying Sustainability – Legislative Strategies and Community Practices.” Attendees will explore why it is important for public health workers and healthcare professional to understand Minnesota’s legislative process and opportunities to provide input. More information will be shared in the post-meeting email update.

Shawn Sorrell reminded the council of an ongoing opportunity to participate in [Tribal-State Relations Training](#) (TSRT). It is a 2-day immersive in-person training scheduled throughout the year at various tribal locations. Minnesota state employees learn about American Indian tribal governments, histories, cultures, and traditions in order to empower themselves to work effectively with American Indians and to promote authentic and respectful relationships between state agencies and tribes.

The October and November sessions are full and have a waitlist. Please contact Community Relations if you wish to be added to a waitlist. Check the [TSRT website](#) for the 2025 dates, locations, and lodging details. Council members are responsible for arranging lodging and will be fully reimbursed for that.

## **New Member Orientation and Onboarding**

New council members were led through an orientation and onboarding.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:58 PM**

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: November 15, 2024

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and International Institute of Minnesota (Hybrid)

## Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Sorrell, Chris Green, Philip Gaye-Bai, Micaela Schuneman, Nelly Torori, Josefina Geronimo, Tonia Lofton, Lolita Davis-Carter, Pachua Vang, Abdi Ali-Mumin, Alex Abraha, Kimetha Johnson, Paul Slack, Angela Fields, Craté Darden, Farhia Said, Makrem Al-Amin
- **DHS & DCYF Staff:** Commissioner Jodi Harpstead, Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Laura Villarreal, Kristy Graume, De Anna Conover, Steven Wilson, Kelly Barnebey, Redwan Hamza, Victor Gonzalez, Dr. Karen McKinney, Shelly Diaz, Hli Vang, Abdullahi Soyan, Yeeleng Vue
- **Public Attendees:** Janeth Nicandro, Pa Dao Yang, Victor Obisakin

## Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:20	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:25	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	Update from DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead
2:00	Workgroup Updates & Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Equitable Outcomes Workgroup</li></ul>
	Administrative Updates
2:20	Plan for 2025 Legislative Meet & Greet
2:50	DHS Legislative Update
3:10	Break
3:20	CECLC and Community Relations Partnership on Community Engagement
4:00	Adjourn Full Council Meeting

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell called the meeting to order and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve October minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and October minutes: Abdirahman Ali-Mumin
- Second: Kimetha Johnson
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Shawn recognized the November observances on the agenda: National Native American Heritage Month, National Family Caregivers Month, Diwali, and Veterans Day.
- Redwan Hamza from the DHS Grants, Equity, Access, and Research (GEAR) Division shared an update on a new funding opportunity to connect people to culturally responsive Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS), and explained the eligibility requirements and eligible grant activities. More information will be shared in the post-meeting email update.
- Laura Villarreal gave details on an opportunity to partner with TPT Now to be featured in videos increasing awareness of MinnesotaCare public health insurance. Those videos are scheduled to be released in January 2025. More information will be shared in the post-meeting email update.
- Kimetha Johnson invited everyone to the ROCC & Dakota County Parks Resource Fair and Live Music event on Saturday, November 23 from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Dakota County Lodge at Thompson County Park. More information will be sent in the post-meeting email update.
- Lolita Davis-Carter mentioned an upcoming event “Exploring Reparations for Economic Equity: Minnesota Migration Act” on Tuesday, December 10 from 5:00-8:00 pm at the NorthPoint Conference Center in Minneapolis. [Register here.](#)

## Update from DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead

Commissioner Harpstead congratulated the newly-appointed and reappointed council members and Chris Green who as appointed co-chair of the CECLC.

DHS is preparing for the upcoming Legislative Session. In the past several months, it has been conducting intentional engagement with county, Tribal, and community partners to gather their input and feedback on legislative proposals. Commissioner Harpstead congratulated the council on holding its first ever CECLC Legislative Summit on October 1st. The summit was an important step in DHS’s effort to engage community in the development of its legislative proposals. She also offered some insight into the potential impact of the recent election results.

To better support meaningful access to programs and services, the Central Communications team is adding capacity to translate information. DHS recently approved hiring for three new translation and communication specialist positions in Spanish, Somali, and Hmong to ensure translations are linguistically correct, culturally relevant, equitably meaningful, and accessible to the diverse communities we serve.

Commissioner Harpstead was asked if she has any insight which legislators will be assigned to the CECLC, given pending split chambers in the Legislature. That is still to be determined. We are not that far along.

Abdi Al-Mumin raised the issue he brought forth at the June CECLC meeting about Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). Since then, there have been two incidents of child drownings and ongoing community conversations around inequity in service provision, language barriers, and fear among parents. Commissioner Harpstead responded HCBS is a top priority at DHS and is on the agenda in upcoming key meetings.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

At its last meeting, the DHS Budget Director and DHS Legislative team presented on potential proposals for the 2025 legislative session. Discussion is underway to narrow the scope of emerging legislative priorities and their alignment with the CECLC priorities. The proposed list is extensive. The workgroup may narrow it to a number of areas that align with the CECLC's top priorities and identify council members who are passionate about those particular areas and willing to take the lead on moving those efforts forward.

The workgroup is forming a sub-planning group for the 2025 Legislative Meet and Greet and is seeking volunteers. The first planning meeting takes place the week of December 2nd (tentatively on Thursday, December 5). If anyone would like to be a part of the planning subgroup, please contact Community Relations.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Following the success of its first outreach session on October 2, the workgroup is discussing how the council will follow up with Ebenezer Community Church and further engage DHS around the needs and feedback gathered from that listening session. The topics raised included increasing mental health crisis and resource needs; health literacy needs; and supports for faith leaders and small community-based organizations.

The workgroup is also considering how the CECLC can develop a community engagement framework to engage other community groups moving forward.

### **Equitable Outcomes Workgroup**

The workgroup has been working on developing a workgroup charter to define its purpose and scope.

The workgroup co-leads and CECLC co-chairs recently met with the DHS HCBS Evaluation of the Assessment Process for Racial and Ethnic Disparities (HEARD) Project team to discuss opportunities for collaboration with the CECLC around outreach and engagement for phase III of the HEARD project. This meeting was follow-up from when the HEARD Project team presented at the September workgroup meeting.

Finally, the workgroup is pleased to announce Alex Abraha as co-lead with Nelly Torori.

## Administrative Update

Shannon Geshick, Executive Director of Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC), has invited the council to attend the next quarterly MIAC Board meeting on Thursday and Friday, November 21-22, hosted by the Minneapolis American Indian Center. Meeting agendas are posted on the [MIAC website](#). Community Relations will send more information in the post-meeting email update.

This is a friendly reminder if any council member has not registered as a state vendor to receive council compensation and reimbursements, please work with Community Relations to complete your W9 form.

Council members are invited to participate in the Tribal-State Relations Training (TSRT), a 2-day immersive in-person training about American Indian tribal governments, histories, cultures, and traditions. It aims to empower state employees to work effectively with American Indians and promote authentic and respectful relationships between state agencies and American Indian tribes.

If anyone was unable to register for the October training but would still like to attend the training, the next opportunity will be January 29-30, 2025 in Mahanomen, MN, hosted by White Earth Nation. Please email Community Relations if you would like to be added to the registration list.

## Plan for 2025 Legislative Meet & Greet

On January 23, 2025, the CECLC will host its annual Legislative Meet & Greet at the Minnesota State Capitol (Vault room) to engage state legislators and representatives on the CECLC's legislative priorities. This annual event provides an opportunity for council members to interact and build relationships with state legislators and representatives.

## DHS Legislative Update

Shawn Sorrell welcomed Kristy Graume, DHS Director of Legislative Relations, to provide a legislative update. Her team is working on forecasting as a result of recent election results. Policy proposals will be coming in the next couple weeks; budget proposals will be ongoing in the next month. Draft proposals are now with the Governor's office for review.

At the federal level, President-elect Trump will have a legislative trifecta which will impact the Minnesota Legislature's proposals and initiatives. There is concern at the federal level what this will mean for Medicaid and other DHS-administered programs.

Kristy also provided a brief overview of concerns at the state level which her team will continue to track. There is a lot of work ahead, and the CECLC will receive regular updates.

Shawn reiterated the council's legislative priorities to keep on the DHS Legislative team's radar:

- Promote equitable DHS investments in marginalized communities of color and Tribal Governments and people., e.g. CEMIG, Opioid Epidemic Response Grant (OERAC), etc.
- Housing and Homelessness
- Disability Waiver Services: Increasing Access

- Elderly Waiver Services
- Community Health Workers Systems Navigation
- LGBTQIA+ Community Health Care Access
- Resettlement Services for New Americans

Nicole Juan will provide support to the council in advance of the January 23rd CECLC Legislative Meet & Greet. Kristy plans to attend and offer support.

## **CECLC and Community Relations Partnership on Community Engagement**

Helen Ghebre led discussion on ways to build understanding and alignment with how the CECLC approaches community engagement to advance the vision and mission of the council. The discussion included how the council can be a pathway by which communities can elevate its priorities to DHS; shared principles around community engagement; and what will partnership look like between the CECLC and Community Relations in future community engagement efforts.

A council member added the council should formalize a process so that when information is gathered and questions are asked, we can respond and follow through.

Helen suggested honing in on trusted community messengers who can be resources/conduits for DHS staff in these endeavors.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:58 PM**