

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: January 20, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Foua-Choua Khang, Shawn Sorrell, Becca Graves, Lolita Davis Carter, Manuel Zuniga, Miguel Garate, Paul Slack, Satasha Green-Stephen, Kia Moua, Rosalva Hernandez
- **DHS Staff:** Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Nicole Juan, Hli Vang, Helen Ghebre, De Anna Conover, Ashley Oolman, Seth Kaempfer, Dr. Nathan Chomilo, Kelly Barnebey, Richard Coleman
- **Public Attendees:** Laura Bohlen, Amirillis Vang

Agenda

12:00	Lunch
12:55	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	CECLC Member Share-outs and Community Updates
1:30	CECLC Legislative Priorities Introduction and Discussion
1:50	Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies• Leadership Updates
2:00	Adjourn Public Meeting

For CECLC Members:

2:05	CECLC Guiding Principles – Laura Bohlen
4:00	Closing

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua-Choua Khang and Shawn Sorrell welcomed members as newly appointed co-chairs, and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

Decisions Made

A quorum was not reached. There were no changes to the agenda.

CECLC Member Share-outs and Community Updates

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

- Helen Ghebre gave a shoutout to Paul Slack and Jerad Green who were on the Governor's council for the 37th Annual State of Minnesota Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day event which took place at the Ordway Center.
- Rosalva Hernandez gave a shoutout to Shawn Sorrell for offering help to community participants at the DHS Community Engagement Summit.
- De Anna Conover gave a shoutout to the DHS Community Relations team who put on a wonderful Community Engagement Summit.
- Shawn Sorrell shared there is a collaboration effort between the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County on Black History Month events, and he will share those as he receives details. The theme this year is Resistance.
- Manuel Zuniga said today is a day of note: the State of Minnesota has not had an API and Allies ERG for all employees across all Departments. Effective today, however, the State has an API ERG!
- Foua-Choua Khang said Blue Cross Blue Shield is seeking community advisors. Feel free to reach out to her if you are interested in participating.

CECLC Legislative Priorities Introduction and Discussion

Shawn Sorrell shared a draft document the CECLC Legislative and Policy Workgroup has been discussing for proposed strategic legislative priorities:

- Modify mandatory reporters and child protection investigators training content and requirements
- Support family reunification strategies
- Support access to health care for undocumented individuals and families
- Pass African American Families Preservation Act
- Strengthen Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act
- Increase harm reduction strategies – needle exchange, Narcan, and fentanyl test strips distribution
- Modify membership of the Opioid Epidemic Response Advisory Council (OERAC) to add a member from each sovereign tribal nation and two members representing American Indians who reside in urban areas of the state
- Extend CECLC sunset
- Extend Cultural and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Grant (CEMIG)

Related DHS Priorities under Development:

- Child Welfare
- Access to Health Care
- Addressing the Opioid Crisis
- Economic Assistance
- Child Care
- Housing and Homelessness
- Services for People with Disabilities and Older Adults

There will be ongoing discussion and opportunity for the CECLC to weigh in on these priorities; this is a living document.

The next Legislative and Policy Workgroup meeting takes place on Thursday, February 2 at 9:00am, for those who wish to participate. Nicole Juan accepted a position on DHS's Legislative team and will be reviewing the Governor's budget proposal to determine which of these CECLC legislative priorities were included. More to come.

Workgroup Updates

Due to time constraints, workgroup updates will be shared in the post-meeting email update.

Public meeting adjourned at 2:18 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: February 17, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Becca Graves, Lolita Davis Carter, Manuel Zuniga, Paul Slack, Satasha Green-Stephen, Rosalva Hernandez, Tonia Lofton, Cratè Darden, MacDonald Metzger, Larry Yang, Meagan Hernandez, Shannon Geshick, Wesley Farrow, Jensina Rosen, Rosa Tock,
- **DHS Staff:** Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Hli Vang, Helen Ghebre, Nikki Farago, Seth Kaempfer, Kelly Barnebey, James Cooper, Dr. Karen McKinney, Arantxa Hernandez-Chaire
- **Public Attendees:** Laura Bohlen

Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:25	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:30	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies• Administrative Updates
2:00	Adjourn Public Meeting

For CECLC Members:

2:05	CECLC Guiding Principles – Laura Bohlen
4:00	Closing

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

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

Decisions Made

Review and approve December and January minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve December and January minutes and meeting agenda: Tonia Lofton
- Second: Paul Slack
- The motion passed

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Manuel Zuniga shared a link to the Twin Cities JAFL Day of Remembrance on Saturday, February 18 at 3:00-5:00pm at the East Side Freedom Library in Saint Paul. This hybrid event is free to the public.
- Shawn Sorrell shared the following upcoming events:
 - African Heritage Day on the Hill – Friday, February 24 from 9:30-11:00am
 - Asian Minnesotans at the Capitol – Monday, February 27 from 9:00-10:30am
 - YMCA Day at the Capitol – Monday, February 27 from 9:00am-3:30pm
 - Free Hybrid Legal Clinic for relative and kin families hoping to be a permanency resource for a child in foster care on Tuesday, March 14 from 12:00-1:30pm
- Shawn Sorrell gave a shoutout to the DHS Community Relations team and Rosalva Hernandez and her team, who created an opportunity for better engagement between Hennepin County and People Serving People.
- Rosa Tock shared Latine Day at the Capitol on Monday, April 17 from 9:30am – 2:30pm.
- MacDonald Metzger provided a link for a Northrup King new art exhibition “Art Glow” from February 2-March 30 that features a diverse mix of art by artists with disabilities. In addition, on Thursday, April 6 from 7:00-9:00pm, Cow Tipping Press will host a book release and author reading at MIDB in Minneapolis.
- MacDonald Metzger shared a link to the Direct Care Resilience (DSP) ECHO Series every other Wednesday from January 18 to March 29. This is the second training series, which is built upon the highly effective virtual ECHO model to connect community providers and content experts to build the capacity of Direct Support Professionals' resilience in the workplace.
- Shannon Geshick said planning is underway for Sovereignty Day at the State Capitol on Monday, March 13. More information will be shared in the post-meeting email update.
- Dr. Karen McKinney celebrated that Governor Walz signed Juneteenth into law as a state holiday and that the Crown Act was signed into law. She also mentioned the three leadership openings at DHS: Director of Equity and Inclusion in BHDH; Deputy Director for Behavioral Health Division; and Deputy Assistant Commissioner for the BHDH Administration.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Shawn Sorrell said the workgroup is still seeking a chair or co-chair.

At its February meeting, there was continued discussion about the 2023 strategic priorities, which were shared with the CECLC prior to today's meeting. Though the priorities are tiered, they carry equal weight. The workgroup is seeking the council's approval of these priorities as written.

A motion was made:

- Motion to approve the CECLC 2023 Strategic Priorities: Paul Slack
- Second: Lolita Davis Carter
- The motion passed

The workgroup decided to hold off on the proposed Meet and Greet with legislators due to scheduling conflicts. Instead, the workgroup is working on a one-pager for council members to meet with elected officials in their respective communities in order to inform them of these strategic priorities and the council's ongoing work.

Topics and Issues Workgroup

Paul Slack shared the proposed language for MN Statute Sec. 260E.065 regarding mandated reporter training and invited comment.

A motion was made:

- Motion to approve the proposed revisions to 260E.065 Training For Reporters: Shawn Sorrell
- Second: Rosalva Hernandez
- The motion passed

In addition, the workgroup was approached by the DHS Foster Care Unit to recommend language around equity in its guidelines.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Cratè Darden shared a Mentimeter link for feedback on the question "What internal DHS operations and policies would you like CECLC to focus on?" The link will remain active for the next few days, and it will be used to inform priorities for the workgroup going forward.

Administrative Updates

Shawn Sorrell asked council members to consider attending the various workgroup meetings.

The Per Diem process will be shared in the post-meeting email update.

Dr. Karen McKinney and Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago informed the council of proposed legislative changes to DHS:

- Direct Care and Treatment (DCT) to split apart from DHS to become a specialized behavioral health care system as a standalone agency
- A new Department of Children, Youth, and Families which will be comprised of Children and Family Services (CFS), portions of the Office of Inspector General (OIG), approximately 450 staff from DHS, and approximately 200 staff from Department of Education, Department of Health, and Department of Corrections. This is as an opportunity to lift up children's and whole families' issues in a way we have not seen.

In the interest of time, any further questions about these proposed changes may be sent to the Community Relations team following this meeting.

Public meeting adjourned at 2:08 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: March 17, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Foua-Choua Khang, Becca Graves, Lolita Davis Carter, Paul Slack, Satasha Green-Stephen, Tonia Lofton, Cratè Darden, Miguel Garate, Florkime Paye, Jackie Thomas-Hall, Kia Moua, Rosa Tock
- **DHS Staff:** Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Hli Vang, Helen Ghebre, Nikki Farago, Kelly Barnebey, James Cooper, Dr. Karen McKinney, Victor Gonzalez
- **Public Attendees:** Julie Yang

Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:25	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:30	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:35	Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies• Administrative Updates
2:00	Adjourn Public Meeting

For CECLC Members:

2:05	CECLC Guiding Principles Activity
2:25	Review CECLC One-Pager
2:50	Review CECLC Engagement Request Form
3:30	Discussion: DHS Equity Review
4:00	Closing

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua-Choua Khang noted some council members may be attending the Minnesota Social Service Association (MSSA) Annual Training Conference and Expo. Attendance is reported to be record-breaking this year. She welcomed members and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

Decisions Made

Review and approve February minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve December and January minutes and meeting agenda: Lolita Davis Carter
- Second: Cratè Darden
- The motion passed

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

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

- Shawn Sorrell recognized those who are coming into this space for the first time or who have not attended in person for a while.
- Lolita Davis Carter shared that Aldi's and Walgreens in North Minneapolis closed, but none of the employees lost their jobs. Lolita expressed that these employers are committed to supporting BIPOC communities.
- Foua-Choua Khang shared the Hmong community has lost another loved one to domestic violence. She leaves behind three children. There will be a vigil at Shoreview Community Center tonight at 7:00 pm.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Shawn Sorrell expressed gratitude to those who regularly attend workgroup meetings, and recognized Sheila Lipsco and Lolita Davis Carter who have expressed interest in co-chair positions.

At its March meeting, the workgroup finalized drafts of a CECLC 2023 One-Pager and Legislator Visit Script for council members to meet with elected officials in their respective communities in order to inform them of these strategic priorities and the council's ongoing work. Both documents were shared in advance of today's meeting.

The workgroup is seeking the council's approval of both documents as written.

A motion was made to approve both the CECLC 2023 One-Pager and Legislator Visit Script.

- Motion to approve: Foua-Choua Khang
- Second: Lolita Davis Carter
- The motion passed unanimously

Foua-Choua discussed the CECLC sunset in statute for 2025 and shared the DHS Legislative team identified a bill this session that proposes to eliminate the sunsets for several DHS councils including the CECLC. Hearing on the bill will be next week and Foua-Choua is hopeful that the council's sunset will be eliminated with the passing of the bill.

Topics and Issues Workgroup

Paul Slack shared the workgroup was given the opportunity to submit equity questions to the DHS Child Foster Care Licensing Unit as an opportunity to create more awareness around staff's own bias in their work and to examine perception around kinship care. The workgroup also plans to discuss additional opportunities with the DHS Foster Care Licensing team to elevate the workgroup's priorities.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

At its March meeting, Cratè Darden shared the workgroup focused on the CECLC Legislative Report and the equity review that is part of that report. The report was shared with the council in advance of today's meeting, and she invited feedback and questions. Shawn Sorrell added the report does not provide a summary of the CECLC's work but rather reports how DHS is incorporating the council's input in its work and policies.

Council members would like to see an alignment of CECLC and DHS priorities in future legislative reports. They also felt it is important to emphasize the CECLC's value in the agency's work, in anticipation of a 2025 sunset discussion.

Administrative Updates

Helen Ghebre acknowledged the Per Diem Invoice process has been challenging. The Community Relations team is learning it alongside council members. A guidance document will be included in the post-meeting email update.

A motion was made to end the public meeting.

- Motion to adjourn: Kia Moua
- Second: Shawn Sorrell
- The motion passed unanimously

Public meeting adjourned at 2:21 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: April 21, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Becca Graves, Lolita Davis Carter, Paul Slack, Tonia Lofton, Cratè Darden, Miguel Garate, Jackie Thomas-Hall, Larry Yang, Jensina Rosen, Shannon Geshick, Rosalva Hernandez, Kia Moua, Rosa Tock, Wesley Farrow, Opalina Peralta (MIAC), Florkime Paye (CMAH)
- **DHS Staff:** Commissioner Jodi Harpstead, Cate Dymit, Nicole Juan, Rebeca Sedarski, Helen Ghebre, Steven Wilson, Kelly Barnebey, Nikki Farago, Dr. Karen McKinney, Victor Gonzalez, Marcela Goldschmidt, Liz Scherber, Hli Vang, James Cooper
- **Public Attendees:** Derek Emery

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	DHS Updates with Commissioner Harpstead
1:55	Agency-wide Strategic Plan Loop Back Conversation
2:35	Break
2:45	Revisit CECLC Development Plan
3:15	Discussion: CECLC Partnership with DHS Equity Leaders
3:45	Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies• Administrative Updates
4:00	Adjourn

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 approve meeting agenda:

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

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Commissioner Harpstead encouraged everyone to watch the Governor's State of the State Address, if they have not already.
- Rosa Tock celebrated Latine Day at the Capitol this past Monday, April 17, which recognized and celebrated leaders and organizations in the community.
- The entire council celebrates the passing of Drivers Licenses for All; the Crown Act; and the Executive Order 23-03 to protect and support the rights of Minnesota's LGBTQIA+ community to receive gender affirming health care services.
- Opalina Peralta from MIAC invited everyone to the American Indian Day on the Hill on Wednesday, May 10 from 9:30am-2:00pm.
- Shawn Sorrell shared Hennepin County will host a presentation on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women on Friday, April 28 by guest speaker Tawnee Smith Savage. Red Dress Day, also known as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People, is observed on May 5. In addition, Ramadan ends at sundown today April 21.
- Cate Dymit shared Community Relations released a new episode of the Loopback Podcast about community-led healing and wellness.
- The TRUTH Project released a new report on the systemic mistreatment of Indigenous peoples by the University of Minnesota. Council members are encouraged to read the report and its recommendations to consider how the council can offer support.

DHS Updates with Commissioner Harpstead

Commissioner Harpstead recognized the CECLC's newly adopted Guiding Principles and provided some examples of how three of the principles – antiracism, person-centered, and collaboration – have become more embedded in DHS practices.

Antiracism:

- DHS recently completed a cultural assessment by a third party and has held meetings with leadership to address its finding and recommendations.
- DHS was invited to a national convening of Administration for Children and Families to talk about the agency's antiracism work. The convening featured a policy group from Georgetown University to discuss racism in the TANIF program.
- Vayong Moua, a founder of CECLC, invited Commissioner Harpstead to Blue Cross Blue Shield to present DHS's anti-racism work before its executive team.

Person-Centered:

- DHS has been working on practicing co-creation. The Interagency Council on Homelessness has been compensating individuals for sharing their lived experiences as consultants. One consultant has been working with the agency on the homelessness strategy.

Collaboration:

- DHS elected to opt out of a federal demonstration with CCBHC clinics, but given community response, DHS returned to the demo.
- There was back-and-forth deliberation as to whether the MnCHOICES Assessment 2.0 launch for disability community was ready. With community input, DHS decided to conduct a beta test before the launch.

Legislators will be heading into conference committees to negotiate the House Health and Senate HHS Omnibus bills. Among the topics: extending Cultural and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Grant (CEMIG); supporting health care access for undocumented families; increasing harm reduction strategies; modifying membership on OERAC; supporting family reunification strategies; supporting community resource centers; and a kinship navigator program are included in at least one of the omnibus bills. The Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA) has been strengthened and signed into law on March 9. The African American Family Preservation Act will likely come up in the next legislative session.

Shawn Sorrell expressed encouragement to hear these CECLC initiatives and priorities are advancing. He noted the House seems to have found more funding versus the Senate, which more aligns to the Governor's budget, and asked whether DHS is leaning toward how the Senate is laying it out. The Commissioner responded the targets given to DHS have increased, and DHS is prepared to listen to the Senate committee chairs' logic and calibrate accordingly.

Rosa Tock asked what the CECLC can do at this time to support these legislative priorities. Commissioner Harpstead noted this is a perfect time to contact legislators as they head into negotiations.

Jackie Thomas-Hall asked the Commissioner's take on distribution of funding among the bills, to which the Commissioner replied the proposed investments are far reaching and progressive.

Tonia Lofton asked Commissioner Harpstead to speak to the DHS cultural assessment's finding of a toxic work environment for people of color. DHS is working to change that internally as much as it is working to change that externally. Employees of color were able to share their experiences and elevate their voices in this process. Cratè Darden is working with leadership to champion a cultural change of this magnitude and develop

workgroups around the recommendations. Culture changes bit by bit, and DHS is in the early phase. Cratè will update the council at a future council meeting.

Nicole Juan added that this afternoon the House passed the conversion therapy ban and reproductive defense act passed and will go to the Governor for signature. The Human Services Budget omnibus and Human Services Policy omnibus hearings occur Tuesday, April 25. The Health (HHS) budget omnibus hearing occurs Wednesday, April 26.

Agency-wide Strategic Plan Loop Back Discussion

Marcela Goldschmidt and Liz Scherber presented on progress with DHS's draft Strategic Plan. The CECLC brought a number of initiatives forward in the early phase of development, which the council will see reflected in this draft plan. The plan will be finalized this summer and released in alignment with the Governors' One Minnesota Plan. The Strategic Plan will be a living, aspirational document and will continue to evolve over the next four years. The council asked how specific terms are defined in the Strategic Plan. Liz shared the terms are defined by the DHS Equity Policy.

Shawn Sorrell posed these questions to be discussed in breakout groups: what is one thing that stands out; where do you see challenges in this plan; and what gives you hope in this plan?

Feedback shared by the council included:

- Comment that some of the goals are very ambitious and question whether there was more data that could be shared around specific goals.
- It is surprising that because DHS has been around for decades, this is only its 3rd strategic plan.
- It is encouraging we can be definitive about the metrics and milestones, and explicitly call out the communities we serve.
- The thing about a plan is people have to carry it out. The culture may not be prepared for this type of aspiration. Implementation at individual team levels can be challenging. The people who have to carry this out are not prepared to do so.
- It is exciting to see what can come out of the goal for capacity building and community.
- When it comes to implementation, it may become murkier as to what gets the most attention.
- Where are the deliverables and action items for these different goals and outcomes?
- Looming question of what it will look like if/when CFS and DCT separate from DHS.

Liz and Marcela will send a survey to the CECLC for an opportunity to provide more feedback on the plan's proposed outcomes and goals. They will attend a future meeting to discuss plan implementation.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Shawn Sorrell recognized Lolita Davis Carter who has stepped into the role of workgroup co-chair.

They reported the workgroup continues to work on proposed changes to language in the mandated reporter training and will work with the Topics and Issues Workgroup to refine them and move them forward.

Topics and Issues Workgroup

Jensina Rosen shared there has been a lot of training around mandated reporter training. The workgroup is riding the excitement of wrapping up mandated reporter language. The workgroup developed equity reflection questions for the DHS Foster Care Unit guidelines, and is finalizing four questions before sending them back to the Unit. This has been a good opportunity to foster a long-term collaborative relationship.

Paul Slack added the home study assessment guide is out of date, and the workgroup was invited to collaborate on that.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Cratè Darden said the workgroup sent a scheduling poll in order to enhance attendance. It landed on Tuesdays from 3:00-4:00 pm. The CECLC should look for an invitation.

Administrative Updates

Helen Ghebre acknowledged the Per Diem Invoice process has been challenging. A guidance document was distributed in advance of this meeting. She encouraged members who are eligible to submit their Per Diem.

In looking ahead to the next legislative session, Helen indicated Nicole Juan proposed next March or early April 2024 for the CECLC to schedule a “meet and greet” at the Capitol. There was concern at that timing; however, Shawn felt it may be prudent to secure a date and space if Nicole identified an opening. Nikki Farago said session starts later during a non-budget year. To that, Nicole was asked to find availability in February, no later than March.

Revisit CECLC Development Plan

The DHS Office of Equity and Inclusion set aside funds for developing the CECLC, and there is approximately \$5,000 to be used by May 14 for FY23. The council discussed using the funds to engage speakers around community engagement and strategies. The Community Relations team will gather more information and distribute it for feedback, following this meeting.

Helen Ghebre noted the FY24 Development Plan will incorporate CECLC Guiding Principles, and more time will be devoted to determining how those funds are spent.

Kia Moua offered to coordinate outstate locations for future CECLC meetings.

Discussion: CECLC Partnership with DHS Equity Leaders

Due to the time, this item was tabled.

Meeting adjourned at 3:44 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: May 19, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Foua-Choua Khang, Becca Graves, Lolita Davis Carter, Paul Slack, Cratè Darden, Larry Yang, Jensina Rosen, Satasha Green-Stephen, Florkime Paye, Miguel Garate, Rosalva Hernandez, Jackie Thomas-Hall, Cratè Darden
- **DHS Staff:** Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Helen Ghebre, Kelly Barnebey, Nikki Farago, Dr. Karen McKinney, Arantxa Hernandez, James Cooper, De Anna Conover, Victor Gonzalez, Nathan Chomilo
- **Public Attendees:** Derek Emery, Vanessa Southworth, Amirillis Vang

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	CECLC Guiding Principles Evaluation and Metrics
1:50	CECLC Development Plan 2023-2024
2:20	Update on PHE Unwind Community Outreach and Engagement
2:40	Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies• Administrative Updates
2:50	Adjourn

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua-Choua Khang welcomed everyone and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

Decisions Made

Review and approve April minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve March minutes and meeting agenda: Cratè Darden
- Second: Lolita Davis Carter
- The motion passed

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

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

- Foua-Choua Khang gave a shoutout to Nicole Juan because the bill that removes the CECLC sunset is on its way to the Governor for signature. Also, the Asian Street Food Night Market takes place today and tomorrow in Maplewood.
- Rebeca Sedarski shared the Alliance of Chicanos, Hispanics, and Latin Americans (ACHLA) in the Rochester area received a \$500,000 grant to ensure children and families receive access to educational supports. This is the first time ACHLA has received this type of funding.
- Vanessa Southworth is pleased to announce the MDH received a Labor Education Advancement Program (LEAP) grant to allow apprenticeship opportunities for community health workers.
- Shawn Sorrell attended American Indian Day on the Hill on May 10 and said it was a great event. Africa Day, also known as Africa Liberation Day, takes place on May 24. Hennepin County will be hosting a virtual event to celebrate Africa Day. Details will be shared in the post-meeting update.

CECLC Guiding Principles Evaluation and Metrics

Foua-Choua Khang asked council members to reflect on and describe ways they have implemented the Guiding Principles into their work. The CECLC will have opportunity to report out in future meetings.

In addition, Foua-Choua hopes to work with Cratè Darden to establish a tool to measure and evaluate how they have been operationalized. More details to come.

CECLC Development Plan 2023-2024

Shawn Sorrell thanked DHS's Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) for setting aside funds for CECLC training and development. The remaining FY23 funds will allow council members and community members to participate in the Black Men Healing Conference on June 22-23.

The council reviewed a list of potential opportunities for FY24 fund utilization. The Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup will discuss this and bring it back to the council at a future meeting.

In addition, Dr. Karen McKinney offered attendance to OEI's various internal trainings free of charge to the CECLC. More information will be shared in the post-meeting update.

Update on PHE Unwind Community Outreach and Engagement

Helen Ghebre welcomed Dr. Nathan Chomilo who presented on DHS's large-scale renewal efforts for Medicaid and Medicare recipients. He asked the CECLC what it needs to help spread the word; what it is hearing from community members about renewals; and whether there are any points of consistent confusion.

The written materials are translated in several languages; however, the outreach videos are only translated in two languages. Has there been consideration around a Hmong video, for example? Dr. Chomilo answered those two videos were offered as a free resource to the State. The outreach team is aware of the need for Hmong, Somali, Karen, and a number of other languages, and is working with community partners on that.

A member asked what DHS is doing around working with community and trusted partners. Dr. Chomilo replied there have been presentations to the MN Housing Finance Agency, MDH, and PICA Head Start, to name a few. If there are other community spaces to consider, please reach out to him. The outreach team continues to monitor gaps and has already identified the need for more collateral.

A member asked if the State provides any signage. Dr. Chomilo indicated DHS has limited inventory and instead has provided links for community partners to print their own. What about counties? That piece is being coordinated with DHS County Relations. What about undocumented immigrants to receive healthcare? That provision is in the HHS bill which will be taken up this weekend. DHS staff will know more after that.

Helen encouraged council members to share potential resources with the Community Relations team.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Cate Dymit shared the DHS legislative team is working with the workgroup on proposed changes to language in the mandated reporter training.

Lolita Davis Carter added that Nicole Juan provided an update to the workgroup on the legislative session, and the DHS legislative team has been invited to present on outcomes and give a summary of session to the CECLC in June. The 2024 CECLC Meet and Greet at the Capitol has been confirmed for Tuesday, February 13 – please mark your calendars.

Topics and Issues Workgroup

There were no updates.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Cratè Darden said the workgroup convened at its new meeting time which improved attendance. The workgroup used that time to provide background on DHS's recruitment and retention plan and on the Office of Equity and Inclusion's antiracism work. Those conversations will continue.

The workgroup will also take up metrics around the Guiding Principles, as mentioned earlier in the agenda.

Administrative Updates

A friendly reminder to register for the upcoming Black Men Healing Conference on June 22-23 and to inform the Community Relations team. An email with the conference code was sent to the CECLC prior to this meeting.

Nikki Farago said the pieces in the DHS budget are traveling in two bills. The Human Services bill is on the Senate floor today and should make its way to the House floor soon. She is optimistic about the outcomes and believes they will be transformative. She would like the council to take time to celebrate those at a later date.

Helen Ghebre announced the Community Relations is welcoming a team member Nina Harris who comes from the Ramsey County Attorney's Office. Her first day will be Monday, May 22. Helen thanked Cate Dymit and Rebeca Sedarski for providing coverage until the position was filled.

Dr. Karen McKinney said the Office of Equity and Inclusion has four job openings. Direct Care and Treatment's (DCT) Orientation to Antiracism is on pause while OEI revamps some content.

De Anna Conover reported the Office of Employee Culture is still developing its office and rounding out its team. Cratè Darden's team has greatly expanded. New Employee Orientation (NEO) was revamped and now includes a graduation for cohorts. There is ongoing programming to engage and inform the cohorts. NEO's new format has been very well received. The mentoring program has also been revamped. DHS will hold its Employee Engagement Week this coming July. DHS seeks to hire a conflict resolution and mediation role as well as a mental health and wellness director.

Public Meeting adjourned at 3:09 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: June 16, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Foua-Choua Khang, Becca Graves, Larry Yang, Satasha Green-Stephen, Miguel Garate, Shannon Geshick, Wesley Farrow, Kia Moua, Rosalva Hernandez, Lolita Davis Carter, Cratè Darden, Manuel Zuniga
- **DHS Staff:** Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Nina Harris, Nicole Juan, Kelly Barnebey, Nikki Farago, Dr. Karen McKinney, James Cooper, Steven Wilson, Matt Burdick, Maria Villalvazo
- **Public Attendees:** Angela Fields, Rachel Stoll, Anne Ganey, Vanessa Southworth, Jaclyn Frank, Richard Coleman, Jihan Rashid

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	DHS Legislative Session Outcomes
2:10	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
2:20	Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies• Administrative Updates
2:35	CECLC Guiding Principles Evaluation
2:50	Adjourn Public 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 May meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve May minutes and meeting agenda: Shawn Sorrell
- Second: Rosalva Hernandez
- The motion passed

Review and approve May meeting minutes:

- Motion to approve May minutes and meeting agenda: Shawn Sorrell
- Second: Rosalva Hernandez
- The motion passed

DHS Legislative Session Outcomes

Foua-Choua Khang introduced Matt Burdick, Director of Legislative Relations, and Nicole Juan, Legislative Coordinator at DHS who presented a high-level overview of the One Minnesota Budget.

At a glance, this legislative session was a budget setting year which had a historic budget surplus (nearly \$18 billion), a political “trifecta,” many new legislators, a historically diverse legislature, and a return to in-person session. There were challenges to weigh ongoing funding needs versus allocation of the one-time surplus.

Within Health and Human Services, there were historic investments across human services and three budget areas: Children and Families, Health and Human Services, Human Services.

Highlights of the Health and Human Services Omnibus Budget Bill:

- Expanded and improved access to health care coverage
- Improving and protecting access to reproductive health care
- Expanded benefits covered by Medical Assistance
- Investments in mental health
- Historic anti-poverty investments
- Background studies reforms
- IT and DHS infrastructure

Highlights of the Children and Families Omnibus Budget Bill:

- Access to childcare
- Addressing homelessness
- Food security
- Addressing disparities in the child welfare system

- Creation of new Department of Children Youth & Families

Highlights of the Human Services Omnibus Budget Bill:

- Historic investment in the long-term care workforce, emphasis on in-home services
- Addressing substance use disorder and overdose disparities
- Making health care coverage more accessible for people with disabilities
- First ever state investment in refugee services
- Creation of new Department of Direct Care and Treatment (DCT)
- Establishes an electronic medical record (EMR) system for DCT
- Funds critical resources for DHS licensing

Other Session Outcomes:

- HHS Legislative Outcomes
 - MN Indian Family Protection Act (MIFPA)
 - Conversion therapy ban
 - Gender affirming health care
 - Eliminated sunset for several DHS councils including CECLC
- Other Equity-Focused Outcomes
 - Juneteenth as a state holiday
 - CROWN Act
 - Drivers' licenses for all
 - Adult use cannabis
 - Paid Family and Medical Leave
 - Universal school meals
 - Expanding access to higher education
 - Criminal justice reforms

The 2023 CECLC legislative priorities found in the One Minnesota Budget: the CECLC sunset elimination; extending the Cultural and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Grant (CEMIG); supporting access to health care for undocumented Minnesotans; increasing harm reduction strategies; and supporting family reunification strategies. Two outstanding priorities – OERAC membership and the African American Family Preservation Act – will likely be brought forward in the next session.

Session summaries and fact sheet(s) will be released in July. DHS is in the planning and development stages for the 2024 legislative session, which begins February 12, 2024, and will be a policy-focused session. The 2025 budget session planning will soon get underway.

A member asked whether funds were set aside for planning a council member retreat. Foua-Choua requested that Nina Harris secure budget logistics of location, lodging, and food in regard to planning for the retreat for fall. It was asked where the public can find the session summaries when they are released in July. They will be posted on the DHS website; feel free to reach out to Matt Burdick directly.

A member expressed excitement the CEMIG will be continuing but is concerned about other areas. As they recently checked on the percentage of BIPOC providers across all mental health licenses, the growth has been stagnant. Recruitment across the board has been difficult and even more so when BIPOC specific.

Shawn and Foua-Choua expressed gratitude on behalf of the CECLC for the legislative team's work and to Nicole for elevating the CECLC sunset elimination in this session. They also welcomed Nina Harris, Community Relations Specialist, who joined the DHS Community Relations team in May.

Several meeting participants put a plug in for statute changes and expansion to Community Health Workers (CHWs) programs.

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

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

- Cratè Darden provided a link for Juneteenth events including the West Broadway Block Party, which DHS is sponsoring.
- Lolita Davis Carter celebrated that Nexus Community Partners announced the \$50 million Open Road Fund. Eligible Black residents in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota will have access to apply for the fund starting on Juneteenth.
- Nicole Juan wished everyone Happy Pride. DHS's enterprise-wide Employee Resource Group will have a booth at the Twin Cities Pride Festival.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Lolita Davis Carter thanked Nina Harris for taking notes at the last workgroup meeting. The workgroup discussed the 2024 legislative priorities and focused on proposed statute changes for Community Health Workers (CHWs).

Foua-Choua Khang added there was also discussion around budget, CECLC funding utilization, and whether a portion should be set aside for this workgroup.

Topics and Issues Workgroup

Shawn Sorrell shared the workgroup met with DHS's Child Safety and Permanency team to discuss proposed changes to language in the mandated reporter training. The meeting was well attended, and the proposed changes were well received. The workgroup continues to move that forward.

In addition, the workgroup finalized the equity reflection questions for the DHS Foster Care Unit guidelines and sent them for the unit's review. At its July workgroup meeting, there will be discussion about child welfare investigations and how the CECLC can support that business area.

The next workgroup meeting will be rescheduled to July 12 at 12:00-1:00 pm due to the July 4 holiday.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Cratè Darden thanked Nina Harris for taking notes at the last workgroup meeting. The workgroup invited James Cooper, DHS Diversity Equity, and Inclusion Program Lead, to talk about workforce recruitment. She encouraged council members to continue to spread the word about open positions. Eight interns started at DHS 8 executive pathways started this week.

and will engage with the CECLC soon.

Development opportunities for the CECLC within DHS:

- Black Men Healing Conference on June 22-23
- Tribal State Relations Training, coordinated through the Office of Indian Policy
- Orientation to Antiracism
- Holding Difficult Conversations training

There will be ongoing discussion of a CECLC retreat; the council's role when Direct Care and Treatment (DCT) and Children and Family Services (CFS) separate from DHS; and metrics around the Guiding Principles.

The next workgroup meeting will be rescheduled to July 11 at 3:00-4:00 pm due to the July 4 holiday.

Administrative Updates

Cate Dymit shared on behalf of Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago that nominations opened June 12 for the [2023 Commissioner's Circle of Excellence Awards](#). If council members know of an organization that demonstrates significant initiative and innovation, they should complete the nomination form by Friday, June 30. The Commissioner's Awards recognize excellence among human services providers, counties, Tribes, advocacy groups, and other organizations that work in partnership with DHS to help people meet their basic needs so they can live in dignity and achieve their highest potential.

Nina Harris shared there are 19 reappointment slots on the CECLC. If a council member's term is coming to an end in 2023, they will receive an email reminder to reapply for their seat.

Shannon Geshick shared there is one vacancy on the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) and asked about the recruitment process. Nicole Juan replied the DHS Community Relations team will be advertising that position along with the other openings. Once the team has a group of applicants, it will create a packet for MIAC's review.

A friendly reminder to register for the upcoming Black Men Healing Conference on June 22-23 and to inform the Community Relations team.

CECLC Guiding Principles Evaluation

Foua Choua-Khang mentioned the handout with the Guiding Principles and asked council members to describe ways they have implemented the Guiding Principles into their work. The CECLC will have opportunity to report out in future meetings.

Public Meeting adjourned at 3:01 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: July 21, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Foua-Choua Khang, Paul Slack, Manuel Zuniga, Larry Yang, Satasha Green-Stephen, Kia Moua, Florkime Paye, Lolita Davis Carter, Jensina Rosen
- **DHS Staff:** Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Nina Harris, Kelly Barnebey, Nikki Farrago, James Cooper, De Anna Conover, Natividad Herrera, Ben Hogan, Jensina Rosen
- **Public Attendees:** Vanessa Southworth, Marquetta Ryan,

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">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies• Administrative Updates
2:10	CECLC Guiding Principles Evaluation
2:30	Fall Retreat Planning Discussion
4:00	Adjourn Public Meeting

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

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

Decisions Made

A quorum was not reached. The council will review and approve minutes for June at its August meeting. There were no changes to the agenda.

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Shawn noted the July observances listed in the agenda – National Ice Cream Month and National Black Family Month – and gave a shoutout to the Community Relations team and to Rebeca Sedarski for her work at the July 20 HACER virtual forum to educate the Latinx community on Medicaid renewals. He also thanked the team for recognizing his birthday.
- Shawn shared the Woodbury Racial Equity Collaborative’s upcoming event “[How We Got Here - A Historic Perspective on Discriminatory Housing Practices](#)” which is part of its Racial Equity and Affordable Housing Series. It takes place Wednesday, August 2 at 6:00-7:30 pm.
- Manuel Zuniga shared the Cultural Society of Filipino-Americans’ [Philippine Day](#) in Woodbury on Sunday, July 23 at 12:00-5:00 pm. He also mentioned [Buhay Na Buhay](#), a free social event at the Walker on Thursday, July 27 at 5:00-9:00 pm to celebrate Minnesota’s Filipinx community.
- Rebeca Sedarski invited everyone to the virtual Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (MCLA) Town Hall on Tuesday, July 25 at 3:30-5:00 pm to learn about legislation that impacts Latinx communities. Hear directly from the departments managing the NorthStar Promise, Increase Teachers of Color Act, ITIN Homestead Classification, ITIN Working Family Tax Credit, MN Child Tax Credit, Office of New Americans, and Paid Medical and Family Leave. The registration link will be shared in the post-meeting update.
- Natividad Herrera shared the Latino Conservation Week Festival occurs on Friday, July 21 from 1:00-5:00 pm in Bloomington. There will be music, art, dancing, and food trucks.
- Helen Ghebre gave a shoutout to De Anna Conover, Assistant Commissioner in the DHS Office of Employee Culture, who was honored by the Minneapolis City Council during its [Black Girl Magic resolution](#). Other DHS staff were honored including Shaneen Moore, Deputy Assistant Commissioner in Children and Family Services, and Deondra Avery in the Office of Employee Culture.
- James Cooper shared that DHS interns selected an area of focus in the Strategic Plan and are currently working on those. He introduced interns Ben Hogan and Natividad Herrera at today’s meeting. The interns will present their findings in August; details will be shared in the post-meeting update for council members who wish to attend.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Lolita Davis Carter shared that Theo Rose presented on the African American Family Preservation Act and discussed ways in which the workgroup can support the bill in the 2024 legislative session. The workgroup addressed critical problems with the random removal of Black children from Black families.

Florkime Paye added the African American Family Preservation Act is part of the priorities for the next legislative session, particularly within light of DHS restructuring. Theo and Florkime will keep the council updated on this item.

Topics and Issues Workgroup

Paul Slack reported the workgroup celebrated its recent accomplishments and decided to focus on child welfare investigation training and ways to advise the newly created Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

Most programs in DHS's Children and Family Services Administration and some in the Office of the Inspector General, as well as some operational functions, will be folded into DCYF. In addition, a provision in the Human Services Omnibus Budget bill separated Direct Care and Treatment (DCT) from DHS and established the specialized behavioral health care system as a standalone department. Paul asked De Anna Conover to provide an update on preparations for this transition.

De Anna indicated planning has been underway, and there are project managers who hold certain pieces. The Equity positions and equity tools and analysis already embedded at DHS will be mirrored at DCYF and DCT. De Anna provided bios for four key roles on Minnesota Management and Budget's (MMB) implementation team: Anita Fineday, Transition Director for Equity and Engagement; Jessica Page, Human Resources Director; Hannah Quinn, Assistant Transition Director; and Ngo Imbu, Assistant Transition Director.

A council member asked how equity is being implemented as DHS plans this restructuring, and who is designated to ensure that. De Anna specifically named Jerad Green and Ashley Oolman, DHS Equity and Inclusion Directors; the Governor's Chief Inclusion Officer; the MMB Chief Inclusion Officer; and Deputy Commissioners Nikki Farrago and Shireen Gandhi, among others. To that, the council member felt it is important to identify a point of contact for the workgroup, which perhaps would be Anita Fineday. He emphasized the significance of embedding equity at the start of planning rather than trying to add it along the way. This is a unique opportunity to think about what it looks like on the front end. De Anna offered to provide updates at future council meetings.

The workgroup will begin searching for a co-chair to fill Jensina Rosen's seat.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

At its July meeting, Kia Moua shared the workgroup discussed training and development opportunities for council members as well as the option to bring in facilitators and trainers. The remaining 2023 dates for DHS antiracism training will be released soon and shared with the council.

Shawn Sorrell noted today is Kia's last day of participation on the council and expressed gratitude for her service and contribution. The workgroup will begin a search for a new co-chair.

Administrative Updates

Helen Ghebre stated there are 19 reappointment slots on the CECLC. The application period has closed, and the deadline to submit supplemental application materials is July 26. Nina Harris will be putting final touches on the application packets and coordinating the review panel. Please respond to Nina if you received correspondence from her.

CECLC Guiding Principles Evaluation

Shawn Sorrell asked council members to describe ways they have implemented the Guiding Principles into their work. The CECLC will have opportunity to report out in future meetings.

Fall Retreat Planning Session

During the last CECLC leadership check-in, there was discussion around timing, location, and budget for a fall retreat. Duluth was suggested, and Children and Family Services (CFS) has a satellite office of the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy in downtown Duluth. Unless there are strong objections, the Community Relations team will plan for that location.

It was proposed that council members arrive on a Thursday for a meet & greet, hold the all-day retreat on Friday to coincide with a monthly council meeting, then convene for a half day on Saturday. Specific time will be devoted at the August council meeting to perform strategic planning and developed an agenda.

In the meantime, the Community Relations team will identify internal resources to inform this planning, including an option to bring in a facilitator. Feel free to send ideas to Nina Harris.

Public Meeting adjourned at 2:54 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: August 18, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Foua-Choua Khang, Paul Slack, Manuel Zuniga, Larry Yang, Satasha Green-Stephen, Lolita Davis Carter, Becca Graves, Rosa Tock, Sheila Lipsco, Lolita Davis-Carter
- **DHS Staff:** Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Nina Harris, Kelly Barnebey, Dr. Karen McKinney, Hli Vang, Steven Wilson, De Anna Conover, Nikki Farago, Marcela Goldschmidt, Elizabeth Liz Scherber, Shelly Diaz, Jensina Rosen
- **Public Attendees:** Amirillis Vang

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">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies• Administrative Updates
2:00	CECLC Guiding Principles Evaluation
2:20	Updates from Commissioner Harpstead
2:55	Adjourn Public Meeting

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua-Choua Khang welcomed everyone and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

Decisions Made

Review and approve July and August minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve July and August minutes and meeting agenda: Shawn Sorrell
- Second: Rose Tock
- The motion passed

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Shawn Sorrell gave a shoutout to staff who organized the DHS Day in the Park. As a new employee, it was great to gather in person.
- Larry Yang shared on Sunday, August 20 from 1:00-5:00 pm the annual [Central Honors Philando](#) event takes place, honoring Philando Castile. Larry will have a table there.
- Helen Ghebre mentioned two events this coming weekend in which DHS is doing community outreach: Saturday, August 19 from 11am-5pm [3rd Annual Harvest a New North](#) at Franklin Middle School in Minneapolis, and Sunday, August 20 from 11:00 am-5:00 pm [Open Streets Cedar-Riverside](#).
- Shawn also shared a link for [One Woodbury MN](#) event on Saturday, September 30 from 11am-4pm at Ojibway Park.
- Manuel Zuniga mentioned the Asian Street Food Night Market at the State Capitol this Saturday, August 19 from 1:00-11:00 pm as well as the [Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Wacipi](#) (powwow) this weekend.
- It was asked if any council member's organization is having a presence at the State Fair. The Community Relations team will share details in the post-meeting update.
- Foua-Choua Khang indicated her organization Blue Cross Blue Shield will have a booth at the State Fair on [Hmong MN Day](#), which is Labor Day and the last day of the State Fair, from 10am-6pm. They will provide outreach on the MA renewal effort. Foua also gave a shoutout to Dr. Karen McKinney, DHS Chief Equity Officer, for her many talents and contributions.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Sheila Lipsco shared the workgroup is working with the legislative directors for the DHS Health Care Administration and the Community Health Workers (CHW) proposal within Coordinated Family Support of the African American Families Preservation Act to uplift the council's strategic priorities. The workgroup is also focusing on developing strategies to help support the African American Families Preservation Act Bill with the

Council of Minnesota's African Heritage. Nicole Juan will be partnering with the workgroup on these various efforts.

Topics and Issues Workgroup

Paul Slack reported that at its last meeting, the workgroup continued discussion on child welfare investigation training and ways to advise the newly created Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

The workgroup is searching for a co-chair.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Shawn Sorrell stated the workgroup would love to see more participation at its monthly meetings and has begun a search for a new co-chair.

The workgroup has identified four interests of focus. The DHS Evaluation Team will review the Guiding Principles for the September workgroup meeting. In addition, the workgroup is getting a Change Management training designed for CECLC members. The training will be comprised of a 4-part series and provide a deeper insight of how and where the CECLC can provide the most influential change.

The DHS Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) is still offering antiracism training opportunities to council members. The question whether to participate as a cohort will be discussed via email or in a future meeting.

Administrative Updates

Nina Harris provided an update on the CECLC appointments process. DHS received 65 applications total and considered close to 60 (some applicants withdrew). Nina is receiving scoring sheets from the review panel, which meets next week to discuss the applications. More to come.

CECLC Guiding Principles Evaluation

Foua-Choua Khang asked council members to describe ways they have implemented the Guiding Principles into their work. The CECLC will have opportunity to report out in future meetings.

Updates from Commissioner Harpstead

Foua-Choua Khang welcomed DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead who shared key facets of DHS's [2023-2027 Strategic Plan](#).

The strategic plan began with a review of the previous plan and then evolved based on input from staff over multiple rounds of surveys and division meetings; external partners; existing input from community empowerment sessions; data from the BREW report and other strategic plan metrics; Tribal Consultations; and input received during the legislative proposal processes. This is the agency's third strategic plan and the first one with intentional engagement on the plan.

The early feedback highlighted “how” DHS does the work and led to the creation of what is now the Guiding Principles. The plan includes 14 high-level goals which center equity, justice, and stability for people in Minnesota to thrive. Its implementation will continue to evolve, but the plan will continue to be a critical framework.

It was asked whether the strategic plan incorporates the newly created Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) and Direct Care and Treatment’s (DCT) separation from DHS. The Commissioner said the plan was written as though DHS is still one agency, so somewhere over the course of the next two years, it will be updated. DCYF and DCT will create their own strategic plans.

A council member asked about the agency’s relationship with Tribal Nations to which the Commissioner responded DHS is deeply engaged and has ongoing government-to-government consultation with the Tribes. The Commissioner is attending the American Indian Substance Use Disorder Summit on August 22-23. DHS staff continue to be invigorated by the work with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC).

The Governor’s office will be meeting with the Commissioner quarterly to track metrics and milestones outlined in the plan.

Public Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: October 27th, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Shawn Sorrell, Manuel Zuniga, Abdirahman Ali-Mumin, Farhia Said, Josefina Geronimo, Lizette Banini, Philip Seton Gaye, Micaela Schuneman, Joanna Rosa, Alex Abraha, Becca Graves, Mozana Ebrahim, Rosa Tock, Lashalle Campbell, Nelly Torori, Kimetha Johnson, Chris Green,
- **DHS Staff:** Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Nina Harris, De Anna Conover, Nikki Farago, Opalina Peralta, Matt Burdick, Rebecca Sedarski, Rosa Tock, Sean McMoore, Shelly Diaz, Dr. Karen McKinney, Misty Coonce, Anita Fineday, Steven Wilson, Elyse Bailey, Jerad Green
- **Public Attendees:** Angela Fields, Macdonald Metzger, Marquis Armstrong

Agenda

- 12:00 Lunch & Community Networking / WebEx Opens
- 1:00 Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
- 1:05 Introductions, Welcome & Check-in Activity [Breakouts Sessions]
- 1:45 Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- 1:50 Community Celebrations & Shout Outs
- 2:00 Workgroup Updates
 - Legislative Workgroup
 - Topics & Issues Workgroup
 - Internal Operations Workgroup
 - CECLC Leadership Update
 - MDH Task Force on Pregnancy Health and Substance Use Disorders
- Administrative Updates
 - Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago
- DCYF Implementation team representation at CECLC full council monthly meetings
 - Helen Ghebre, Community Relations Director
- 2:40 DHS Legislative Process Overview/ Onboarding New CECLC appointed Legislators.
 - Matt Burdick, DHS Legislative Director

3:10	Break
3:15	Recap of 2023 CECLC Retreat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CECLC Retreat facilitator- Jason Yang
4:00	Closing

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Micaela Schuneman welcomed everyone and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

Decisions Made

Review and approve July and August minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve August minutes and meeting agenda: Manuel Zuniga
- Second: Alex Abraha
- The motion passed

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Shawn Sorrell skipped the Guiding Principles for today CECLC members are encouraged to review them more in depth as we discuss their impact within our lives monthly.
- Philip shared that event the Ebenezer Community Church will have a fellowship Dinner and fundraising dinner on November 11th at 6:00pm.
- Angela fields shared an opportunity to receive a Community Health Worker scholarship through the DHS The Minnesota Community Health Worker Alliance, in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health is offering scholarships to strengthen and diversify the public health workforce to better meet the needs of under resourced communities in Minnesota by training new Community Health Workers. providing A total of 95 scholarships to help people interested in becoming a CHW.
- Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) is hosting their board meeting at Mystic Lake for on November 22ND.
- Black men's Legacy event will be held in North Minneapolis at the North Point Health and Wellness Center on Saturday October 28th from 10:00-4:00pm.
- Residents of Color Collective (ROCC) will be feeding families at Thompson Park November 18th from 11:00-4:00pm. They will be serving free food, a movies and resources for families.
- Medicaid Community Renewal for events at the Neighborhood Health Resource center
- Cultural Society of Filipino Americans (CSFA) are facilitating the 52nd induction ball this weekend with a theme of Prom, this Saturday October 28th.
- Applications for the 2024-25 MNLEND cohort are open. Minnesota Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (MNLEND) Program is an interdisciplinary leadership

training program spanning 16+ disciplines across the University of Minnesota. Funded by the U. S. Maternal & Child Health Bureau (MCHB), MNLEND facilitates the development of leaders with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to allow them to take informed, committed action in the areas of neurodevelopmental and related disabilities. To apply or share the call for applications visit <https://lend.umn.edu/>.

- Shawn gave a special shoutout and thank you to the Community Relations Team for getting us through the appointment process to welcome this year's CECLC cohort of new members.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Legislative Workgroup discussed CMAH's (Council of Minnesota African Heritage) next step strategies for the African American Families Preservation Act (AAFPA). The workgroup discussed the history of the AAFPA in 2017, and its design to address racial inequities and adversity within Child Protection. We discussed the need for the bill, as Black families are three times more likely to be reported to Child Protection, and have their children removed from the home, and get placed in the Foster Care to prison pipeline.

- The African American Preservation Act is seeking active efforts to build support from the government and community agencies with hopes to reduce the racial inequities of higher parental rights termination rates within the African American Community.
- Legislative workgroup discussed some of the challenges that CMAH has faced with getting the bill passed thus far.
 - House representatives want to pass the bill, but the Senate has not provided a hearing for CMAH to present the bill.
 - An example of support that the CECLC will provide once the bill passes, was educating the community on the bill and language change.

Topics and Issues Workgroup

Topics and Issues workgroup met with the Child Welfare Training Academy Child Safety Permanency team to discuss Mandatory Reporter Legislative Language changes to launch new mandatory reporter training. The workgroup discussed strategies for expanding DEI content and addressing systems of control around content within the mandated reported training. We discussed the frequency of training content for mandated reporters to incorporate resources. The Child Welfare team discussed their desire to partner with the CECLC to develop a communication plan proposal to increase impact within various areas of the Child Welfare System.

- Topics and Issues will continue to develop a proposal that will address the content and frequency of mandatory reported trainings.
- Develop Communication strategies with the CECLC to implement, inform and advance some of our legislative goals. Invite someone from our research data team to discuss how we use and collect data within DHS.
- DCYF Presentation discuss if establishing a community advisory council parallel to CECLC and ensures diverse community representation within the new council.

- Topics and issues discussed seeking clarity of how the Equity Analysis Tool is being used with DHS and will be utilized within DCYF.
- Topics and Issues discussed leveraging CECLC influence to obtain login access for the Office of Ombudspersons for Families within DHS Social Service Information System (SSIS) scheduling a follow-up conversation with Commissioner Jodi Harpstead to discuss requirements for granting access into the SSIS.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Foua-Choua has volunteered to co-lead Internal Operations and Policies workgroup with Crate. CECLC will plan a retreat every two years to help with within accordance of onboarding new members. Internal Operations discussed defining their goals of building equitable outcomes and practicing intentionality DHS become more inclusive of the community outreach of hiring, retention, recruitment, and engagement.

- Diversity, Equity recruitment and accountability is one of the main focuses of what will help this workgroup thrive and move to the next level.
- Internal Operations discussed if an additional workgroup is needed to take time to focus on CECLC's internal operations, to discuss the following goals:
 - How we function as a council How do all three workgroups connect their work and promote CECLC moving work goals and priorities together.
 - Workgroup expressed concerns with ensuring that the DCYF community advisory council is comprised of people from cultural and linguistically communities of color to represent. Internal Operations discussed how we want to interact with new DCYF community advisory council once it is comprised.
 - Workgroup is seeking more clarity on what CECLC's advisory will look like within this new council. Discuss building strategy and relationships with key transition leaders.

CECLC Leadership Update

MDH Task Force on Pregnancy Health and Substance Use Disorders-

Shawn shared an opportunity for the council to recommend two persons to participate within the MDH Task Force on Pregnancy Health and Substance Use Disorders.

- MDH are seeking recommendations for African American women who have struggled with chemical dependency/ have lived experiences to share their knowledge to provide recommendations that help the Task Force on Pregnancy Health and Substance Use disorders to increase equity within the system of biased testing for pregnant women, from diverse communities of color.
- Elected officials informed the MDH task force that the CECLC will make two recommendations for persons to participate within this task force.
- Even though the anticipated start date has passed, the CECLC is charged with sending two referrals to be appointed to this task force.
- Nina will follow up with Mary Ottoman to provide recommendations of two persons who may be interested in participating within this task force upon receipt.
- Please submit your interest to the Community Relations Team and Nina will submit the names of any recommended persons who are interested.

Update from Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago

Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago shared slides that identify DHS leadership to assist the new CECLC members to help them become more acclimated with the organizational infrastructure.

- Commissioner Jodi Harpstead attends CECLC meetings on a quarterly basis.
- Deputy Commissioner Farago shared that a Star Tribune article will be released soon, and it will highlight the adverse effect of reuniting children with their families and how children have died after being reunified with their families as result from continued abuse and neglect. She stated that we need equitable policy changes within the Child Protection system and want disparities to be addressed that adversely impact families from diverse and ethnic communities.
- Deputy Commissioner Farago shared that she will be in attendance of CECLC monthly meetings and that is committed to engaging in the work that CECLC performs.

DCYF Implementation team representation at CECLC full council monthly meeting

- Anita Fineday is the Director for Equity and Engagement for the DCYF implementation team. She shared a PowerPoint slide deck to discuss the Implementation of the new agency that will be formed from DHS.
- Anita shared that there will be a shift within DHS as this new agency (DCYF) Department of Children Youth and Families is introduced and that we will have ongoing representation from their Equity Engagement Lead at the CECLC full monthly meetings.
- DCYF will elevate the priorities and needs of children, youth and families and designing goals of focusing on the whole Family unit
- On July 21st of 2024 DCYF will officially open its doors, and there will be a new commissioner in addition to interagency partners.
 - In July 2025, the office of Implementation team will end as the agency will be up and fully running.
 - They will consolidate early childhood programs by making services easily accessible, to help improve and achieve equitable outcomes for all.
 - There is a website from the implementation team and we can receive updates.
- On July 1st 2024, the following divisions are moving to the Department of Children and Family Services: Child Support, Child Care Services, Child Safety and Permanency, Economic Assistance and Employment Supports Division, Some Central Operating Functions, MDE early Learning Services Programs, MDH Help me Connect, DHS office of Inspector General and Licensing and Program Integrity, Department of Educations, Programs from the Department of Public Safety.
- Submit all questions and comments to the Community Relations Team to help us prepare them for the next month when DCYF team.

DHS Legislative Process Overview Presentation

- DHS Legislative Director, Matt Burdick shared a Power Point Slide deck with an overview of the Legislative Process to provide grounding of how DHS and legislative processes all fit together with the CECLC.
- The presentation described the three different Legislative Executive Branches.

- Described the legislative process on paper, and how bills are introduced.
- All legislation are presented as bills and bills are allowed to stay alive for two years with over 4,000 bills being shared within each legislature.
- Shared that most bills that get introduced don't always make it through the process.
- All legislation actively tracking 500-700 bills each session.
- People can attend the sessions and learn which bills are being introduced.
- The state Legislative website are one of the best websites to discuss what bills are being heard.
- Some bills must through more committees than others depending on what is being asked.
- The Legislators set internal deadlines to help them process all bills that need to be presented.
- All assembled bills have to pass through a first, second and third deadline.
- Conference committee is formulated to develop which bills need to be voted on the house and senate floor.
- Once a bill is passed it is sent to the governor. The governor may sign, veto or line-item veto all presented bills.
- The presentation described What the legislature do at DHS?
 - The Legislature can appropriate funding.
 - Modify, eliminate and create agencies and programs.
 - Set policy.
 - Direct agencies to take certain actions.
 - Mandate changes
 - Provide technical assistance of ensuring that the author's intent is what is directed within the purpose and directive of the bill.
- DHS legislative activities
 - Consultation w/ Committee Chairs on major developments and decisions.
 - Expert testimony
 - Legislative Reports
 - Constituent Support
- Matt encourages people to contact their local legislators when they have problems that need to be addressed and the legislative team will triage their issues to the team.
 - Matt shared that the bulk of our work occurs between June-December to prepare for each legislative session.
 - Each session is held every two years, this legislative session will be much shorter because this is not the budget year.

Recap of 2023 CECLC Retreat

Shawn Sorrell provided a high-level overview of the 2023 CECLC Retreat.

- CECLC council completed a SWOT analysis to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.
 - Shawn described some of objectives developed from each category of the Swot analysis, through engaging community and support.
 - Shawn discussed drafting a CECLC workplan to create a comprehensive blueprint for the current and future work as leadership and participation changes throughout the years.

- We will need a new co-facilitator next year within our appointment process, once Foua-Choua's term ends.
- This month and for the next two months the CECLC council can help us determine where the themes will be placed to help us move this work forward.

Public Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: November 17, 2023

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

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

Attendance

CECLC Members: Foua-Choua Khang, Abdirahman Mumin, Tonia Lofton, Becca Graves, Lizette Banini, Micaela Schuneman, Nelly Torori, Lashalle Campbell, Lolita Davis-Carter, Crate Darden, Philip Gaye Bai, Manuel Zuniga, Farhia Said, Josefina Geronimo, Kimetha Johnson

DHS Staff: Helen Ghebre, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Nina Harris, Steven Wilson, Kelly Barnebey, Hli Vang, Nikki Farago, Dr. Karen McKinney, Liz Banini, Nathan Abernathy, James Cooper, Ann Bobst, Elyse Bailey, Nicole Juan, Jennifer Sommerfeld, Nick Demm, Autumn Baum, Commissioner Jodi Harpstead

BWLG Legislative team:

Marina Balleria, Kasim Laggi, Autumn Baum, Nic Demm, Kristy Graume, Ari Didion, Jennifer Sommerfeld, Fartun Ahmed, Ann, Bobst

Public Attendees: Sunday Olayinka, Derek Emery, Elizabeth Abbott

Clues Behavioral Health Director for Latino Community- Benjamin Feigal and Ruby Lee

Agenda

12:00	Lunch and Community Networking / WebEx Opens
1:00	Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement
1:05	Introductions and Welcome
1:25	Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
1:30	Community Celebrations and Shoutouts
1:40	CECLC 2023 Retreat Actions and Priorities
1:55	CECLC Legislative Report Overview & Discussion
2:20	Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies

- Administrative Updates
- 2:30 Introductory Remarks from DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead
- 2:40 Break
- 2:45 DHS Legislative Proposals for 2024 Session Review with DHS Legislative Team
 - Small Group Discussion and Reflection
 - Large Group Share Out
- 4:00 Adjourn Meeting

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Helen Ghebre welcomed everyone and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

Decisions Made

Review and approve October minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve October minutes and meeting agenda: Manuel Zuniga
- Second: Paul Slack

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Helen Ghebre opened the floor for members to share.

- Lolita Davis-Carter mentioned the Minnesota Historical Society’s silent film exhibit “[Before the Mayflowers Landed](#)” which is free to the public, starting this Saturday, November 18. Details will be shared in the post-meeting email update.
- Foua-Choua Khang shared the upcoming [Hmong New Year](#) on November 25-26. She will have a table on behalf of Blue Cross Blue Shield.
- Manuel Zuniga shared upcoming Filipino events, and those details will be included in the post-meeting email update.
- Lashalle Campbell shared that Shiloh Temple in Minneapolis is holding a [Women’s Conference](#) on November 16-19.
- Nikki Farago encouraged people to attend the new MIA exhibit [In Our Hands: Native Photography, 1890 to Now](#).
- Hli Vang gave a shoutout for National Native American Heritage Month – get out and support local events and native business as the holidays approach.

CECLC 2023 Retreat Actions and Priorities

Paul Slack and Manuel Zuniga led discussion on the CECLC September retreat in Duluth. The draft executive summary was sent to the council prior to this meeting.

There were small breakout sessions to discuss the following questions:

- What resonated with you during the CECLC retreat if you attended?
- What questions do you still have about the report?

CECLC Legislative Report Overview & Discussion

Helen Ghebre indicated the CECLC legislative report is due every two years, by February 15 in the second year biennium, and will be due in February 2024. She shared a presentation that included background, timeline, an outline of legislative report, and next steps.

Some feedback from the CECLC retreat was to develop a structure so that council members can engage with these deliverables in a meaningful and deliberate way.

Nicole Juan emphasized the report is an effective tool to highlight the council's ongoing work and progress in legislative circles.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Lolita Davis-Carter shared the workgroup is coordinating dates and times for the DHS Legislative team to come and provide more detailed information about the 2024 legislative proposals.

At its last meeting, the workgroup discussed the council's assistance to the Council of Minnesota African Heritage (CMAH) with providing education within the community on the importance of the African American Families Preservation Act and how it will be implemented once it passes with revision of the language process.

Topics & Issues Workgroup

At its last meeting, Paul Slack provided a recap of Department of Children Youth and Family (DCYF) presentation, and the workgroup discussed the importance of incorporating an equity analysis tool. At its next meeting, the workgroup will discuss next steps to building a formalized relationship with the DCYF implementation team to help increase equity that is embedded in the new Department.

In addition, the workgroup plans to invite staff from the Equity and Engagement team to a future meeting to review the plan.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Cratè Darden reported the workgroup acclimated new council members on its work and gave them an overview of DHS's Diversity, Equity, Recruitment, and Retention plan.

Introductory Remarks from DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead

Commissioner Jodi Harpstead introduced herself and provided some updates. She acknowledged that over the past quarter, the CECLC has expressed a vested interest in partnering with the Department Children Youth and Families (DCYF) implementation team with hopes to provide recommendations.

At last month's CECLC meeting, Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago shared the Star Tribune was planning a series highlighting the adverse effect of reuniting children with their families and how some deaths have occurred after children were reunified with their families, resulting from continued abuse and neglect. The articles have been published. DHS is interested in engaging with community to discuss the topics raised and in opportunities for these conversations with the CECLC.

Ben Feigal, Senior Director of Behavioral Health Clinics at CLUES, invited Assistant Commissioner Eric Grumdahl to speak to CLUES staff around the Cultural and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Grant (CEMIG) program and asked for some follow-up to the letter CLUES recently sent to DHS. Ruby Lee, CLUES President & CEO, echoed Ben's request for an audience with AC Grumdahl and/or the Commissioner. Many immigrant communities need to participate in the conversation around those services.

DHS Legislative Proposals for 2024 Session Review with DHS Legislative Team

Elyse Bailey, DHS Budget Director, provided an overview of the proposal process for the 2024 session. The Governor has asked for ideas that are emergent or high priority; therefore, the list is quite short. DHS will know more next year when the budget is released.

Going forward, the DHS Legislative team would like to come to the CECLC earlier in the process for input, probably in summer. The Legislative team will be sending infographics and other materials to bring newly appointed council members up to speed.

In addition, the Legislative team provided a condensed summary of each proposal and fielded questions.

Meeting adjourned at 4:06 PM

Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: December 15, 2023

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, Mozana Ebrahim, Rebecca Graves, Josefina Geronimo, Chris Green, Foua-Choua Khang, Kimetha Johnson, Tonia Lofton, Abdirahman Mumin, Joanna Rosa, Paul Slack, Farhia Said, Nelly Torori, Manuel Zuniga, Senator John Hoffman
- **DHS Staff:** Elyse Bailey, Kelly Barneby, DeAnna Conover, Misty Coonce, Angie Delille, Cate Dymit, Helen Ghebre, Leigh Grauman, Nina Harris, Dana McDowell, Dr. Karen McKinney, Opalina Peralta, Oni Richard, Steven Wilson, Hli Vang
- **Public Attendees:** Akinyele Akinsanya, Angela Fields, Jason Yang,

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">• Legislative & External Workgroup• Topics & Issues Workgroup• Internal Operations & Policies• Administrative Updates
1:45	CECLC 2023 Retreat Actions and Priorities w/Jason Yang
3:00	Break

3:05 CECLC Legislative Priorities
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 November minutes and approve meeting agenda:

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

Shawn Sorrell noted the agenda item at 3:05 pm will be the *CECLC Legislative Priorities* instead of Legislative Report.

Review and approve November minutes:

- Motion to approve November minutes: Kimetha Johnson
- Second: Paul Slack
- The motion passed

Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Foua-Choua Khang gave a shoutout to Helen Ghebre and her Community Relations team. The co-chairs invited council members to attend the CELC Legislative Meet and Greet on Tuesday, February 13 from 1:00-5:00 pm. More details to come.
- Shawn Sorrell gave a shoutout to Lolita Davis-Carter for her leadership in the Legislative Workgroup.
- Lolita shared with the Legislative workgroup that she was stepping down as the one of the Workgroup co-leads as other priorities have taken precedence over her ability to lead, even though she will continue to be in attendance for workgroup meetings.
- Lolita Davis-Carter shared the City of Minneapolis [Community Connections Conference](#) on Saturday, February 17 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. It is a free event offering many resources and opportunities to network. Metro Transit will offer free rides to/from the venue. Volunteers are greatly needed.
- Helen Ghebre said Community Relations will be at the Brooklyn Park Library on Saturday, December 16 from 1:00-5:00 pm for the [Legacy Family Center Resource Fair](#) to provide MA renewal outreach.
- Shawn Sorrell welcomed Senator John Hoffman, Chair of the Human Services Committee who represents District 34.

Workgroup Updates

Legislative and Policy Workgroup

At its last meeting, Shawn Sorrell said the workgroup discussed the upcoming CECLC Legislative Meet and Greet and will continue planning for that. The workgroup is seeking a new co-chair which will help inform the 2024 meeting recurrence.

Topics & Issues Workgroup

At its last meeting, Paul Slack said the workgroup welcomed several new members who gave feedback on the workgroup's current slate of priorities.

A representative from the Department of Children Youth and Family (DCYF) implementation team provided a status update. The workgroup requested that team's draft equity documents for review and comment. Manuel Zuniga added the workgroup made it clear equity needs to be centered in the team's work.

Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Foua-Choua Khang is helping Cratè Darden co-lead and said they are in discussion to rename the workgroup and review its scope of work. They would like to work with DHS on its equity policies and how it is meeting its goals. The workgroup is also focused on antiracism training, change management training, and new member acclimation.

Administrative Updates

Three council members participated in DHS's Art of Hosting event on December 5-7: Josefina Geronimo, Kimetha Johnson, and Sheila Lipsco. The training is designed for learning simple yet powerful practices that enable authentic engagement that builds community, activates collective intelligence, and motivates collective leadership for meaningful and equitable change.

Josefina commented it was nice to see intersectional work and have a snapshot into the future where this work will lead. She felt energized.

Kimetha felt it was a worthwhile experience that helped her better understand her contribution to the CECLC. She shared the content with friends and encouraged them to attend. Helen replied the plan is to offer the Art of Hosting more regularly.

CECLC 2023 Retreat Actions and Priorities with Jason Yang

Shawn Sorrell introduced Jason Yang who facilitated the 2023 CECLC Retreat. Copies of the draft executive summary were provided prior to today's meeting, which includes themes identified during the retreat. Jason gave the council some time to review the draft summary then provided questions for small breakout group discussion:

- What interests you about your section?

- What needs more clarity?
- Is there anything else you would like add to your section?

Jason invited each group to share what patterns it noticed when discussing these questions.

- Participants felt safe in the space to bring their whole selves
- The council is mission driven
- Transparency is crucial
- Appreciate how responsive the Community Relations team has been to new council members
- A consensus there should be longer Appointment times
- Power dynamics
- People have the same concerns as the community
- Not enough time to discuss these topics
- Supporting laws that address deep rooted disparities, e.g. African American Families Preservation Act
- How do we go about deconstructing the current system?
- Owning relationships around the political climate and identifying who owns them
- Agency transition's impact on the CECLC
- The intersection between threats and opportunities is interesting. Some threats can be addressed by opportunities, specifically mission-driven partnerships (legislative, community members, collaboration with other councils).

A public participant (Yele Akinsanya) brought up the Cultural and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Grant (CEMIG) program grant that was discussed in the November CECLC meeting. Nelly and Yele exclaimed how members of the CEMIG group are unable to lobby the Legislature but the people that represent the minority groups are not championing within the best interest of CEMIG members. Foua-Choua Khang requested for the Topics and Issues workgroup to invite him to a workgroup meeting for further discussion and follow up.

Jason then invited each group to share if there are other ideas or topics to add to other sections.

- Interest in participation by non-appointed members; how to continue to engage and include them.
- May need to develop collateral about the CECLC to share with the public.
- Advocacy on behalf of small organizations who are not at the table or whose voices are not elevated. Consider space for public input at council meetings.
- Analyze existing policies for potential discriminatory impacts and actively work to dismantle them. This could involve reviewing practices, data collection methods, and community engagement protocols.
- One weakness has been the commitment to participate and fully engage in meetings.
- The hybrid option and duration of these meetings are a weakness. It may contribute to lack of participation.
- How do we bridge our work in this space to the community at large?
- A better understanding of the work and how it affects department and community.
- Understanding the intent and action behind existing policies, missions, etc. actually impacting our communities
- Members of the CEMIG group cannot lobby the Legislature, but the people who supposedly represent the minority group is not championing the interest of CEMIG members.

- Ensuring BIPOC agencies in the community are getting the same ability to contract with DHS to serve BIPOC communities.

CECLC Legislative Priorities-

- Shawn led the activity to help the CECLC define their priorities through utilization of the TOPs (Technology of Participation) Facilitation methods.
- Shawn Sorrell led the discussion around these key questions for the council:
- What is one word, action, or thought you bring with you from the conversation around the retreat with Jason Yang?
 - Passive
 - Compassion
 - Energy
 - Commitment
 - Partnership
 - Intentionality
 - Purpose
 - Connection
 - Clarity
 - Direct engagement
 - Interconnectedness
 - Passion
 - Outreach
 - Strategic
 - Joy
 - Receptiveness
 - Motivation
 - Actions
 - Empowerment
- What did you hear in the discussion that was challenging?
 - As a new member, jumping into the current of the work and getting up to speed. There are a lot of moving parts. Recognition of staff's time involved to onboard new council members.
 - Appointment time
- What did you hear in the discussion that was positive or uplifting?
 - I am excited to get the word out about the power of our collective
 - Being fired up about the community of advocates
 - The power of our collective; leveraging our voices
- What high level priorities does CECLC need to focus on in 2024-2025 that will advance our purpose, mission, and vision?

- Ensuring our voices are heard during the agency's transition and buildout.
- Disproportionality

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 PM