Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 17, 2017
11:30 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

WILDER FOUNDATION

COUNCIL CHAIR
Vayong Moua

ACTING CHAIR IN COUNCIL CHAIR’S ABSENCE

TYPE OF MEETING
Regular monthly

NOTE TAKER
Dawn Duffy, Sarah Thompson

ATTENDEES
Titilayo Bediako, Michael Birchard, Beverly Bushyhead, Dave Haley, Anjuli Mishra, Vayong Moua, Brendabell Njee, Adesola Oni, Rosa Tock, Antonia Wilcoxon, Aaron Wittnebel (phone), Pahoua Yang, Steve Yang

NOT IN ATTENDANCE

DHS STAFF
Santo Cruz, Dawn Duffy, Sarah Thompson

SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTERS:
Elizabeth Rusinak Mowers

PUBLIC:
Lisa Larges (DEED), Jean Lee, Gaonou Vang

Agenda topics

4 MINUTES MEETING OPENED VAYONG MOUA

DISCUSSION

Meeting was opened and attendees were welcomed

ACTION ITEMS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE
DEADLINE

24 MINUTES OPENING REMARKS VAYONG MOUA

DISCUSSION

Vayong shared that, on the day after the election, Antonia and he were at the Advancing Racial Equity: The Role of Government conference in Atlanta and the two of them went to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s home and grave site. It was a place of great healing and celebration. Antonia brought back a series of quotes on sticky notes and these were passed around, read and feelings/thoughts shared.

Vayong and the Council discussed President Trump’s recent comment to a female African American journalist/White House correspondent for American Urban Radio April Ryan about the Black Caucus – “Do you want to set up the meeting? Are they friends of yours?”

ACTION ITEMS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE
DEADLINE
### 7 MINUTES  
**DHS EQUITY POLICY**  
**VAYONG MOUA**

**DISCUSSION**

Vayong updated the Council that the DHS Equity Policy has been ratified and that we need to now make sure that it has teeth and accountability. He added that Ramsey County (Public Health and the city of St. Paul) are working towards strong works like this, too.

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### 12 MINUTES  
**DHS UPDATE**  
**SANTO CRUZ**

**DISCUSSION**

Like Vayong just said, DHS instituted the Equity Policy. Santo worked with Brian Ambuel and, at the time, he didn’t realize the full importance of bringing it to the Council. That process helped. The Equity Policy was rolled out at the Council’s December 2016 meeting at the Science Museum.

Assistant Commissioner Santo Cruz stated that this is no time for DHS to take the words on the page for granted. He said that it is for every employee, top to bottom. With an agency as big as DHS, there can be hostilities, but the policy is a tool to be used to start conversations and forge change.

He agrees with Vayong that getting the policy perfect isn’t as important as getting it propagated. Antonia is an engine at DHS to getting this work done. Santo is open to having conversations with other agencies about equity and our policy. He doesn’t want to tell other agencies what to do, but he wants to share with them how to take equity seriously and keep the conversation ongoing and open.

Vayong asked if Santo had any thoughts about which agencies would be open to these discussions. Santo says it is a discussion of strategy, starting with those agencies in which we are friendly. He highlighted the DNR as an example.

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### 24 MINUTES  
**UPDATE AND REVIEW OF PLANNING SESSION 2017**  
**ANTONIA WILCOXON**

**DISCUSSION**

Antonia was appointed to the Region 5 Health Equity Council, part of the national Office of Minority Health. She learned today, in the first orientation, that they have resources the Council could use. So, that brings up the question – “Where do we want to expand?”

She received a call and email from Minnesota Department of Health. They are looking to make a Council like our CECLC. They are looking for ideas and Antonia is in discussions with them. She has suggested to them to hold meetings both with the Council and with the community.

She also updated that the DHS Human Services Performance Measures will talk about equity outcomes for counties in April.

In today’s hand-outs is a rough draft of a business card. Please direct any feedback to Dawn or Antonia.
Notes from the January planning meeting have been summarized in a table. This will help us determine our schedule for the rest of the year. Let Antonia know if there are specific areas in DHS that we should work on in the next few months.

Titi Bediako asked Santo if the Council could work with DHS and help strategize work for the legislative session? Santo shared that Rep. Rod Hamilton is an ally and went to the rally against President Trump’s travel ban. Santo talked with him yesterday about a woman who has had challenges with DHS’s child protection system and White Privilege. Santo said that Rep. Hamilton should be our first and best ally. Deadlines on when bills are heard are coming up quickly. Look at the bills and see what we can do to influence DHs.

Antonia mentioned that a handout of the DHS current proposals were available at today’s meeting.

Dawn Duffy and DHS Legislative Liaison Chris Orr are setting up an open house/Meet and Greet with the Council members and legislators.

CECLC is set to expire in 2020. Titi asked if there are things we could do and work strategically with the legislators now to be in constant conversation with them? Dave Haley said when we are engaging in conversations re: renewal or expansion, we should also include how the legislature also can have a Council for their own work and how equity measures can be in place for their policy making work.

Vayong said that this is for the long run and says that we need to organize outside of our meetings, like with an ad hoc committee. Let’s talk more offline about this. Antonia sent around a sign-up sheet for this ad hoc group

**ACTION ITEMS**

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<td>45 MINUTES</td>
<td>CHILD SUPPORT TASK FORCE</td>
<td>ELIZABETH RUSINAK MOWERS</td>
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**DISCUSSION**

- DHS Administrator, Elizabeth Rusinak Mowers, shared the development of the Child Support Task Force for the Department of Human Services beginning in 2016, and stemming from the Parenting Expense Adjustment Work Group. The Task Force was mandated during the 2016 legislative session and held its first meeting in September.
- Minnesota Statute 518A.79 Subd. 6 mandates annual consultation with the CECLC. Elizabeth expressed the task force is interested in developing an ongoing relationship with the CECLC. The task force is also committed to incorporating various perspectives from the communities they serve into the task force and guidelines.
- The Task Force is interested in evaluating all costs of raising a child. Over the next several months, the Task Force will be reviewing various economists in order to contract on an evaluation on costs. This expertise will support the task force updating recommendations and changing guidelines in child support.
- Beverly Bushyhead asked about more demographic information on clients. Who receives services? What is the return of everyone in the system? How are these demographics reflected on the task force? Elizabeth directed council members to the annual report and fact sheet published online. Antonia requested that Elizabeth send her the information for distribution to the council membership.
- Beverly also mentioned that what is mandated does not always align with how it is viewed culturally. The sharing of resources in different communities influences child support and does not always match mandates. Elizabeth agreed with this.
- Michael Birchard inquired on the development of the task force. How is the makeup determined? Who develops the rules for membership? Vayong recommended an equity analysis be completed on the task force and how it is set up. Vayong also suggested defining what feedback and consultation with the council looks like, through use of a liaison, Council member serving on the task force, or continuous relationship. Elizabeth expressed interest in developing an ongoing relationship and invited council members to upcoming task force meetings.
- Titilayo Bediako expressed concern that council members must be seen as an expert in relation to their community.
- Council members inquired what advice to the Commissioner looks like. Elizabeth said that the task force is an advisory body; they do not have a decision making role at this time.
- Guest, Marisa Hinnenkamp, of DHS County Performance said race and ethnicity data is not tracked in a way to analyze by county. Only aggregate data is available; she said it is critical to evaluate these data by county.
- Pahoua Yang asked how the task force approaches communities in relation to the big picture. What needs to be done for the children? What stake would everyone bring to the task force? Elizabeth agreed the task force does not want to be dominated by one perspective. Every story is worthy to be heard by the task force.
- Vayong asked for more context of the task force - more context on authors or legislators, membership profile of the task force, baseline racial and equity analysis of families supported by programs.

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**DISCUSSION**

- Guest, Lisa Larges of State Services for the Blind, reports the variety of services available for anyone with vision loss. She wants more people to become aware of the services offered and continue building a network across the state. Lisa said outreach to different populations is important. It is important for people to have a level playing field – anyone can use services with the goal of allowing people to stay in their communities.
- Michael Birchard noted there is a community forum and job fair on Tuesday, February 21, at North Hennepin Community College. The discussion will focus on inequity during hiring and increasing the number of teachers of color in the Minnesota state system.
- Rosa Tock reported Latino Day at the capitol will be on March 6.

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