

Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

MINUTES

OCTOBER 16, 2015

11:30AM

WILDER FOUNDATION

COUNCIL CHAIR	Vayong Moua
ACTING CHAIR IN COUNCIL CHAIR'S ABSENCE	
TYPE OF MEETING	Regular monthly
NOTE TAKER	Dawn Duffy
ATTENDEES	Mitchell Davis, Jr., Tenzin Dolkar (for Sia Her), LaRone Greer, Ann Hill, Vayong Moua, Susie Nanney, Maria Sarabia, Saciido Shaie, Nyagatare Valens
NOT IN ATTENDANCE	Titilayo Bediako, Annastacia Belladonna, Sen. Michelle Benson, Michael Birchard, Patricia Brady, Joni Buffalohead, Rep. Matt Dean, Jill Kehaulani Esch, Muriel Gubasta, Dave Haley, Kamaludin Hassan, Sen. Jeff Hayden (for Sen. Tony Lourey), Sia Her, Rev. Janet Johnson, Rep. Tina Liebling Rep. Diane Loeffler, Pa H. Lor, Sen. Tony Lourey, Rep. Tara Mack, Chelsea Magadance (for Sen. Sheran), Anna Mazig, Edward McDonald, Rep. Rena Moran, Ahmed Mullah, Rep. Joe Mullery, Bauz Nengchu Sen. Julie Rosen, Sen. Kathy Sheran, Pahoua Yang
DHS STAFF	Rong Cao, Dawn Duffy, Anyamele Jane Frances, Marisa Hinnenkamp, Jane Kennedy, Vicki Kunerth, Carrie Vogelsang
SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTERS:	Anne Barry, Katie Bauer, Jerry Kerber
PUBLIC:	Rothana Walbolt

Agenda topics

20 MINUTES

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND ROUNDTABLE

VAYONG MOUA

DISCUSSION		
<p>There is no quorum at today meeting.</p> <p>Council members have joined the CECLC for a number of reasons. What compelled you to apply?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vayong Moua – Equity can be fully integrated. I was/am a student of philosophy and public policy. This opportunity was interesting because I hadn't seen this bold of a step before. Maria Sarabia – I knew Antonia Wilcoxon and I wanted to make a social services impact in our communities. Susie Nanney, – In medical school, I worked with health disparities. I have a passion to use research to close gaps. I also like policy-level work. Ann Hill – I have been doing this work for a long time, with people of color and poor outcomes. I see that there needs to be a raised consciousness, improve outcomes and better policies. 		
MOTION TO APPROVE:		
MOTION 2ND:		
ACTION ITEMS (CHANGES TO MINUTES)	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

DISCUSSION		
<p>How do we strengthen the council and increase its durability?</p> <p>On a philosophical note, Vayong had a recent epiphany. With his baby daughter born just three weeks ago, he felt a new sense of urgency re: his work. He had guilt of doing work vs. being at home. His family life justifies what he is doing and what he is fighting for. This type of work is seen by him, and should be viewed by us, as a privilege and honor. We want to seize this opportunity to break the cycle of healthy skepticism.</p> <p>Vayong works on cardio vascular and cancer medical issues. He sees how health inequities are preventable. It is disturbing that we allow things to happen, like gaps in health and education. We have the power to change this This is not yet seen as a common good issue and this is wrong. The onus is on us for civic engagement and political work.</p> <p>With that in mind, Vayong wants to meet with each member one-on-one.</p> <p>Vayong also wants to create a sub-committee or steering committee or sub-set to focus on policy analysis and critical design of DHS programs. He doesn't want us to fall asleep at the wheel. He wants to have a group on-watch, building on each other's ideas and strengths. This probably will be an additional one hour per month of time and work. The function will be to dive deeper into policy review and focus on community engagement. The agenda will be set by council members so, if there is something you want to be reviewed and/or addressed, let us know. This also is time to offer praise. Please respond voluntarily about your interest to participate in this new endeavor to Vayong.</p>		
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MOTION 2ND:		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

DISCUSSION		
<p>The DHS equity policy landscape document is built on CECLC's recommendations. There are eight separate recommendations, which are assigned to DHS employees with tasks and outcomes due by the end of year. We want members of CECLC to meet with the DHS senior management team in January 2016, as well as the work that has been done.</p> <p>A question arose regarding who is responsible? Anne responded that DHS is drafting a policy that says all policies must have an equity component (use an equity lens). Not all policies will be able to be addressed, but there are some that stick out.</p> <p>We want to build on accountability and compliance. For example, we want DHs to ask, "Did we apply this policy to our actions and work?" We are keenly interested in feedback and getting this small group together. To clarify, this equity policy is not yet finished.</p> <p>Vayong Moua says that we want to make sure the Council has time to adequately review these DHS equity policy documents. He wants all Council members to review for transparency.</p> <p>Nyagatare Valens commented on the numbering of the items. As example, he thinks #8 ("Agency Equity Policy and Plan") should be #1. Ann commented that we are not tied to the current order presented in the document. Vayong Moua said that #8 can be an accountability measure for all the other ones.</p> <p>Anne said that hiring is a sub-set of the recommendations. Regarding contracts, DHS has a new department led by Alice Davis, who is working on equity in contracting to change some misunderstandings on how state can use its power. Also, grants to providers can be looked at.</p> <p>Anne said that another column could be added to the document that identifies barriers.</p>		

Ann Hill asked if there is an opportunity to meet some of these new hires for the bigger tasks? She met on one of the Governor's equity initiatives and she didn't think she had a complete understanding of the issues. She wonders if it got watered down? She says that it would be nice to meet new people in these "big" jobs. Anne says that the Governor has hired a lot of people and she would like to facilitate these scoping issues. Anne says we are on the "ground floor" and she would like to bring in some of these people to a CECLC meeting.

Ann Hill says that it is a problem when there is only one person in the room fighting for equity. It seems to her that these new hires are all over the place. Is there a bigger plan for them and do we fit in the plan? Vayong Moua says we should invite Department of Human Rights Kevin Lindsey to one of our CECLC meetings. He also added that every department should have a CECLC.

Anne said that the pieces of the equity plan and its participants should hear about Ann Hill's work, in a formal manner. Ann has pushed for this in the past, but it may be better done by Ann Hill herself. Katie Troyer of the Governor's office would be good to go along on this, too. Alice Robert Davis would be another good connection.

Anne updated that on Monday and Tuesday, senior management looks at policies. There are two proposals:

1. County measures – we want to change language on the way we report on disparities so we can hold counties accountable
2. Provide Antonia with more support (beyond the one FTE she can hire now)

Maria Sarabia commented that at the last CECLC meeting, we talked about silos. After the meeting, she provided information. Did this she distributed? Dawn Duffy confirmed that the link to the Health Care Task Force and information about the three workgroups was provided in the Oct. 9 email to Council members.

Maria Sarabia asked about the process of feedback. She suggested getting some Council members and DHS staff together, send out the draft to all Council members and then have the small group meet/discuss. Maria Sarabia and Susie Nanney will be in touch about this. Maria Sarabia added that she doesn't want technical issues to get in the way.

Ann Hill asked, if DHS looks at a better way to uniformly measure disparities, does this affect other departments? Is it in sync with federal guidelines? Ann Hill will talk more with Anne Barry about this. Anne Barry highlighted Antonia's work and the Department of health. Ann Hill added that she doesn't want us to defend methodology or statistics.

Vayong Moua summarized Ann Hill's comments by asking "What is our sphere of influence and alignment with other agencies?" Ann Hill said that it does matter that we do this at DHS, but we need to align this with other departments and state agencies.

Jerry Kerber said, at last year's session, he talked about this and about starting in one place.

Mitchell Davis asked if this news gets to the governor's cabinet. Anne said yes. Vayong Moua said communication is essential.

CONCLUSIONS		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

25 MINUTES

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN FOR CECLC

KATIE BAUER

DISCUSSION		
<p>Katie Bauer is a Public Information Officer. She explained the DHS Communications function and her role in it.</p> <p>DHS has a responsibility to communicate clearly to its clients, the Governor, providers, public, etc. via :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Affairs – gets positive news out and promotes good human services work that is being done • Media relations – communications liaisons throughout the department, in all areas (including DCT, HC CS, CCOA, etc.), Katie supports OPS • Community partnerships - a new area under Anne Barry • Web communications <p>Katie writes, edits, photographs/videos, does internal agency communications, plans the Commissioner's open forums, assists the Communications director, provides communications consulting, writes web site content, creates communications plans, develops documents (brochures, posters, forms), conducts media relations (drafts responses, works with others in agency, sets up interviews, writes news releases), organizes visits, coordinates special events, makes media pitch calls to media, writes newsletters (internal and external), coordinates emergency management work (drills, exercises), serves on a number of committees (web site, business</p>		

continuity), works with the Governor's office and other agencies, coordinates with DHS staff on policy issues, and writes speeches/talking points/advisories/opinion pieces/commissioner emails/fact sheets/one-page backgrounders/ads/PSAs.

A communications plan is important because it is a game plan. It defines your audience, sets goals, outlines strategies, refines messages, determines activities, creates timelines, and identifies who is responsible

Katie is a graduate of the University of Minnesota School of Journalism and has worked as a copy editor, newspaper reporter, freelance writer, and investigative reporter. She has spent 27 years in state government. She is a mentor to UofM journalism students and is trained to be an advanced PIO (FEMA certification).

Katie met with Antonia Wilcoxon and understands the goals of increasing Council visibility and, highlighting it as a resource.

Maria Sarabia mentioned that she's seen messages on DHS Today and heard people talking about equity and the Bush grant. A culture shift is needed so people understand our issues, but we are more on the radar because of communications like this.

Susie Nanney mentioned her department's role in message framing (doing training on the values of culturally appropriate terminology, framing stats, etc.). The UofM has a lot of expertise in this. She asks if DHS has thought of framing the message. Katie responded that language is important and they support people-first language. She is point person in her department re: obsolete language. Framing numbers would be an area to look at. Susie Nanney said there is an opportunity to partner on some items at UofM.

Nyagatare Valens asked if someone helps here. Katie said DHS is a leader in State government and often figures communications out for other agencies. Communications for the equity policy is something we can share with others.

Anne Barry said that MNDOT has done work on getting at issue of "Where am I?" language, which is about the multiple ways we use language. Having more people in the agency know about the work that the council is doing, helps change thoughts and behaviors. We have a responsibility and a statute to update the Commissioner.

Vayong Moua said that the CECLC wants to help Katie with communications, especially with ethnic media. Our council knows our communities. We may want to do some things, like joint news releases. We will need to work on strategic coordination with Katie.

CONCLUSIONS

ACTION ITEMS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE

DEADLINE

50 MINUTES

CCAP IN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

JERRY KERBER

DISCUSSION

The Inspector General's office works in three areas:

1. Fraud investigation
2. Licensing – child care
3. Background studies

DHS monitors and we need to be monitored.

We monitor for compliance. We aren't looking for covered outlets (as an example) and we are not focused on money. We are focused on what is important to agency – healthy people, families and communities. We make sure people are carrying out what they are doing correctly and responsibly, for kids and families. The media focuses on money. Jerry says that he and the department focus on outcomes. We will even help new Minnesotans get work and education training (and sometimes give child care while they achieve this).

A problem for DHS is that this population is being exploited. Families are getting recruited and then child care not being provided. Some people and places are recruiting those who may not understand what our programs are (due to common misunderstandings and confusion about the consequences). We at DHS need to do a better job of educating families re: what our programs are, what it means to be a participant in them and what to watch out for. We need to do better outreach. Some providers are operating in fear, and some of them, i.e., in the Somali community, think that we are going after them. Most media stories have been about Somali-American centers. We need to do better job reaching out to them because we don't want them to be fearful. That said, those people and centers exploiting the program need to abide by the law and rules. We can't control what the media broadcasts, but we still want to

tell our story. An example is the Minneapolis Star Tribune recently published a story that focused on what the program is doing to help families

Vayong Moua said that Jerry's need to frame the narrative re: compliance is same as Katie Bauer's message – your information has the power to shape the narrative

Jerry said the department wants to tell stories that aren't about fraudulent activities.

Mitchell Davis said that the main stream media is going to tell the story how they want to tell the story. How do we get in front of them with our information? Ethnic print media has very solid audiences. This is an area we should target.

Saciido Shaie said that media stories about the Somali day care issues have hit her community hard. This is the reality for the communities who came to this country 15-20 years ago. She says she is a community organizer and mother. What is happening between DHS and the Somali community is not fair in her opinion. When you have a community that is learning what to do in this country and you have families who are making babies (the Somali community doesn't believe in using birth control), the reality is that there are going to be mistakes. What are the next steps? We don't just want DHS to just listen to our community. We want action.

LaRone Greer is upset that DHS exploited a specific community. What should have happened before this issue happened?

Saciido Shaie said that in that community, there is no one in the day care area – no kids, no families, no cars. We need to obey the law, but how do we take care of our families? When this happens?

Nyagatare Valens said the Somali community has been trying to work with government agencies, but it is difficult. The agencies are not welcome because it is always "just talk" from the agencies.

Vayong Moua said there is immediate step that needs to be taken re: perception and misperception in the Somali day care fraud story. This is a relationship problem. If the relationship was good between DHS and the Somali community, this story wouldn't have been so hard-hitting. In addition, some in society have Islam-phobia. The word "outreach" needs to be used earlier, not just in the crisis communications or reactive mode.

Mitchell Davis said that urgency and speed are important. There is no activity right now so society thinks that this is true. Appearance is important. What happened shows that a relationship is needed.

Jerry agrees that relationships are important. Right now, DHS only has relationships and interactions with rule breakers. This is where DHS needs to have a cultural change.

Anne Barry said that Jerry was in meeting with a child care provider in Hopkins who said they are in fear and can't continue to live like this. DHS can put together a message for the Somali press. Vayong can work with Jerry and the DHS agencies.

Saciido Shaie said that she knows her community and how they respond to things. She doesn't know if media relations will help. This will make the greater communities talk more. She thinks there should be a family/parent/child care provider meeting and not have this in the media. There is fear in the Somali community.

Vayong Moua asked if immediate damage control is needed? Saciido Shaie reiterated she does not think this should be addressed in the media.

Nyagatare Valens said it is possible to do both – talk with media and with the Somali community.

Anne Barry said that Eden Prairie had meeting where DHS explained what is and is not going on. It was run by the community. There is another audience we also are trying to reach – the non-Somali community.

Vayong Moua said that Islama-phobes see no action/no communication as support of the perceived negative action.

Jane Kennedy said immediacy is needed. The Somali community has good providers and there are families who need quality child care.

Anne Barry said we should work with Saciido Shaie about outreach to the general public and the Somali community. We also should follow-up on where these meetings should be held and when.

Jerry asked about having an event to recognize and highlight a good Somali-run day care program? Saciido Shaie said this is an okay idea.

Maria Sarabia said there is opportunity to learn about fraud, teach about our programs and clear misunderstandings about compliancy. Engagement and education are needed. We don't just want to put on a horse-and-pony show that we can't do for other communities.

Jerry reminded the group that we are dealing with people committing criminal actions, not about people making mistakes. We all want high-quality child care. DHS supports the highest quality child care. But, make no mistake that there is criminal intent out there and that is what the investigations are about. Our support should be for families and parents so they are protected as users of our programs

LaRone Greer asked how we can bring in more child care so the parents are not limited in their choices.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:	
MOTION 2 ND :	