

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: October 24, 2025

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: Webex and International Institute of Minnesota (Hybrid)

## Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Chris Green, Shawn Sorrell, Philip Gaye-Bai, Josefina Geronimo, Micaela Schuneman, Joanna Rosa, Angela Fields, Farhia Said, Alex Abraha, Paul Slack, Victor Obisakin, Tonia Lofton, Lolita Davis Carter
- **State Agency Staff:** Helen Ghebre, Lola Muhammad, Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago, Hli Vang, Yvette Kanzler, De Anna Conover, Sophia Mai, Yasmin Yahye, Jewelly Lee, Leigh Grauman, Kristy Graume, Micah Tran, Bahea Manasra, Julia Stumpf, Bilqis Amatus-Salaam, Haile Tegegne, Angie DeLille, Temporary Commissioner Shireen Gandhi,
- **Public Attendees:** Keemarr McKinney-Van Buren, Lisa Xiong, Farhiya Ali, Ahmed Mussa, Imaan Hassan, Asma Abdille

## Agenda

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|-------|---|
| 12:00 | Lunch & Community Networking / Webex Opens  |
| 1:00  | Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement  |
| 1:05  | DHS Commissioner Shireen Gandhi   |
| 1:30  | Introductions, Welcome & Check-in Activity [Breakout Sessions] <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduce new community members and guests</li><li>• How have you lived one of the Guiding Principles this week?</li></ul>   |
| 1:45  | Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes   |
| 1:50  | Community Celebrations & Shout Outs   |
| 2:00  | Break   |
| 2:10  | Workgroup Updates & Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Equitable Outcomes Workgroup<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ HEARD Program</li></ul></li><li>• Topics and Issues Workgroup<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ New Administration Impact: CECLC Response</li></ul></li><li>• Legislative Workgroup<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Legislative Summit Update</li><li>○ CHW Update</li></ul></li></ul> |
| 3:20  | CECLC Workplan  |
| 4:00  | Adjourn Full Council Meeting  |

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

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

Shawn Sorrell reminded council members about the Tribal-State Relations Training opportunity to more effectively engage the DHS Office of Tribal and Urban Indian Relations and the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) around Tribal Relations and addressing the needs of Urban Indian communities. Please contact Community Relations to register.

The remaining 2025 sessions have been posted.

- **November 5-6, 2025, Grand Portage Lodge in Grand Portage, MN**
  - Hosted by the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
  - Registration opens on September 3, 2025
- **January 28-29, 2026, Black Bear Casino Resort in Carlton, MN**
  - Hosted by the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
  - Registration is open.

Temporary Commissioner Shireen Gandhi addressed the group:

- Thank you for your work
- Applauded the CECLC Legislative Summit
- Discussed the Fraud with HSSA & OIG Investigation
- Federal Grants
- Medicaid stops
- Housing benefits
- Federal shutdown
- Accountability of grantees & programs
- Executive Order 25-10 Empowering State Agencies to Continue Combatting Fraud: [EO 25-10 Combatting Fraud tcm1055-706055.pdf](#)

The following community attendees introduced themselves:

- Mia Thor, Chief Program Officer, Value Village, <https://arcsvaluevillage.org/>
- Asma Abdille, Assistant Director, Deaf Muslim Organization, <https://mndeafmuslims.org>

## Decisions Made

Review and approve September minutes and meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and September minutes: Micaela Schuneman,
- Second: Joanna Rosa
- The motion passed

## Community Celebrations and Shoutouts

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Shout out regarding the Legislative summit, was very powerful and meaningful

- Shout out to Helen's team and the Legislative team for sharing their information
- October 4, 2025 - Northpoint Health & Wellness Center to discuss bridging the gap uniting African Immigrants and African Americans in MN
- Program to increase cancer prevention capacity among East African CHWs  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bmIRHy-sVrbYUXOPTjkAo2hftj9zu2b/view?usp=sharing>

## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

- Currently working finalized the legislative summit, last Wednesday at 2 pm
- Preparing documentation on some of the feedback and what is happening at the legislative level
- Requested feedback on the legislative summit
  - Members provide feedback of what they would like the workgroup to work on
- [Federal Medicaid changes / Minnesota Department of Human Services](#)

### Topics and Issues Workgroup

- Requesting new people to co-chair this workgroup
- Look at the social and political environment on service
- Look at the cost
  - What is the impact?

This workgroup meets the first Wednesday of the month from 12 - 1

### Equitable Outcomes Workgroup

The workgroup did find a new date and time; First Monday of the month 12 – 1. Introduction to a group we have been working with that will take our time to provide an update on a project.

HEARD Project Team will present for 15 minutes and open space for feedback for another 15 minutes. Team: Meaghan Hunt, Chue Zha Thao, Simran Chugani.

- Funded by Moving Home Minnesota
- Project began in 2019
- Wrapping up phase 2 currently
- Phase 3 approach
  - Community partnerships
  - State partnerships
  - Community Advisory Board (CAB)
  - Indigenous Evaluations Consultant
  - Community Based Organizations (CBOs)
- <https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/news-initiatives-reports-workgroups/long-term-services-and-supports/hcbs-racial-ethnic-disparities-evaluation/index.jsp>
- Developing two (2) dissemination products and information
- Discussion regarding Phase 2 findings
  - Reconnected with the phase 1 CAB

- Social media lead to fraudulent responses and passive recruitment
- Requested feedback regarding the presentation, recruitment and communities.

## **Administrative Update**

DHS is currently seeking nominations for 2 co-chairs for the Council. Please reach out to Helen if you have any question or nominations.

- Next CECLC Meeting on October 24<sup>th</sup>

## **CECLC Workplan**

- CECLC Executive Summary
- 30/60/90 Day Workplan
  - Discussed the division of tasks in the workplan to the current workgroups
  - Discussed collaboration between workgroups on the tasks when needed
  - Discussed next steps
- Vote on approval of workplan
  - Shawn Sorrell moved to approve the workplan
  - Paul Slack Seconded
  - Motion passed

## **Meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM**