Community Involvement Committee

Community Involvement Committee
May 19 2020, 6:00-7:30 pm
Virtual Meeting
WebEx

Multnomah County

MEETING MINUTES

In Attendance: Richard Barker, Claire Carder, Desiree' Duboise, Rhiannon Martin, Marvin Peña, Emily Purry, Juanita Santana**,** Mike Savara, Amanda Squiemphen-Yazzie

Excused: Michelle Kosta, Sahar Yarjani Muranovic, Sachini Weerawardena

Staff: Dani Bernstein, Olivia Kilgore

Guests: Chair Deborah Kafoury, Kimberly Melton, Anna Marie Allen

Agenda Item	Action Item
Meeting Introduction from OCI Staff Oliva opened the meeting. Dani provided a quick WebEx tutorial and read out the meeting participants.	
Multnomah County's Response to COVID-19 *Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury, Kim Melton (Chief of Staff) & Anna Marie Allen (Policy & Engagement Advisor)* Chair Kafoury shared what her office has been doing around outreach and community engagement in response to COVID-19. There is more and more evidence that certain communities continue to be affected more than others by this crisis and will continue to be negatively impacted as we move forward with lifting restrictions. She shared that it's important to start this conversation with how we at the County have been centering our conversations and policy decisions around a culturally specific framework. A critical way that the County has been able to lead with race in our response efforts has been to update how we define 'vulnerable populations' to include Black, Indigenous and people of color. This has allowed the County to prioritize communities of color in addition to older adults and individuals with health concerns. Some examples include: • Deploying personal protective equipment and other resources	

- Establishing culturally specific liaisons in our Emergency Operations Center, which hasn't been done before in the past
- Disaggregating race and ethnicity in data tracking (viewable on the County website)
- Allowing program managers to approve flexibility in contracting to respond to communities' needs. If community providers weren't able to fulfill requirements, rather than cutting funding, the County allowed them to expand how they use the dollars

Another way the County has been centering community voice is through strategic engagement. We know that community input in government actions has historically been a challenge for a number of reasons. This pandemic has only further proved that our traditional ways of local government employs civic engagement are limiting and often don't work.

One example being the fact that public testimony at the County's virtual board meetings has declined to nearly zero, showing us that people don't utilize that input option unless invited to do so, have capacity to attend a 9:30am meeting on a Thursday, or feel comfortable testifying in front of an audience and on public record.

To get public input and communicate with the community right now, the Chair's office has been holding a series of community roundtable conversations with culturally specific providers and leaders to hear what they are seeing, hearing and feeling as the highest needs in their communities at this time. The County has been working to be as responsive as possible to those needs through shifting funds and services.

These conversations have also been a way for the Chair to gather community input as we develop our reopening plan for Multnomah County. Three counties, Multnomah being one, have not submitted an application to reopen yet.

The Chair and the Board wants our reopening strategy to reflect strong community input because we know as restrictions are lifted, some communities will without a doubt be more impacted more than others.

Emily said she wished she could formulate questions at this point - there is so much uncertainty for everyone around reopening and the after effects, how we all survive this. The committee is focusing on houselessness, addiction, and those

things are being magnified in this environment. Emily would appreciate talking with the Chair in the future as we move forward. Chair Kafoury said she would be happy to come back at another time and talk. She also invited people to email questions to her, Anna, or Kim.

Chair Kafoury added that the County has a dashboard on their COVID-19 website that shows the criteria for reopening and where we are along the process. One of those criteria is around narratives, and describes our plans for dealing with outbreaks in various settings, shelters being one. That piece won't be up until tomorrow afternoon, but will be available.

If people have questions about the plans around people experiencing homelessness, how we've moved people into additional facilities, Chair Kafoury would be happy to talk about that as well.

Kim added that the issues Emily mentioned around mental and behavioral health and addiction, folks experiencing homelessness - those are two areas that have been particularly impacted by the pandemic. We're in a place where we're trying to understand what the new normal looks like, because we won't be able to go back to what was. That poses a lot of challenges logistically, and how we hold to the way of doing the services in a way that's respectful, treats people with integrity, and helps people on the path to housing. And we see an increase in need in a moment when revenue is declining. How will we make those decisions, and what will we use to make those decisions? The topics the committee has chosen are very important to what the next phase of life looks like for residents of Multnomah County and Multnomah County government.

Chair Kafoury added that there will be two virtual public hearings on the budget - tomorrow night (5/20) and next Wednesday (5/27) from 6-8pm.

Anna added some information on how to make the public hearings accessible. The two hearings are being held virtually. There are a couple of ways people can submit testimony. They can sign up to testify during the hearings, and they can submit written testimony. There is a testimony form, and it is translated into seven additional languages and is available on the website. A lot of invitations have been sent to community partners to ask them to support community members in submitting testimony. That will be closed a little before the budget is adopted so there is time to get those translated for leadership and staff.

Amanda has been asked by people in her community how local government is working to reach out to the BIPOC community. A lot of people are just trying to survive right now, and want to be able to submit testimony and different things. A lot of people in her circles have been feeling frustrated and left out, because their access for getting in touch was going to the library or going to families' homes to access the internet.

Chair Kafoury thinks that a lot of people are experiencing those challenges, especially people who have challenges connecting in the first place, whether lack of internet or odd work hours or family life, and COVID is being added on top. People are having feelings of isolation and aren't able to connect in traditional ways. It has been hard for local government to communicate with people as well - whether it's through churches, or libraries, traditional ways people gathered, we can't do anymore. We are trying to do different ways of reaching out, like through community providers. But even then it's difficult. We have been translating materials into different languages, but some languages are orally transmitted and not written. She would love to hear people's ideas on new ways to get the word out.

Kim said there are a dozen liaisons within the Emergency Operations Center that are connected to specific communities, like faith based organizations and different communities of color. Those liaisons are trying to find out the most critical needs right now, so the County can figure out how to respond. We're seeing needs flow up that way, but that only gets so many folks. It relies on a connectivity that may not meet everyone's needs. They've also held 10 or 11 roundtables with different leaders of communities of color. Providers have been able to say based on the people they are serving, where they are seeing the gaps. Information is coming to the County in those slices, but it doesn't mean we're getting a holistic picture. In terms of the County reopening, the way the County engages the community again will look different. With the libraries for example, with physical distancing access will be different. And the library is an important resource for things like finding jobs.

Mike added that when he was working with Central City Concern, he worked with the homeless services liaison and found that the attachment to the incident management team was really critical. Those liaisons have a big job and a lot of people to connect with. He was looking at the data dashboard and there's a lot of overrepresentation of Latinx community, so maybe that's a reason to add more liaisons to further connect with those communities. He also feels this is a great

reason why municipal broadband would make a ton of sense, connecting people to the internet without the nonsense of working with private corporations.
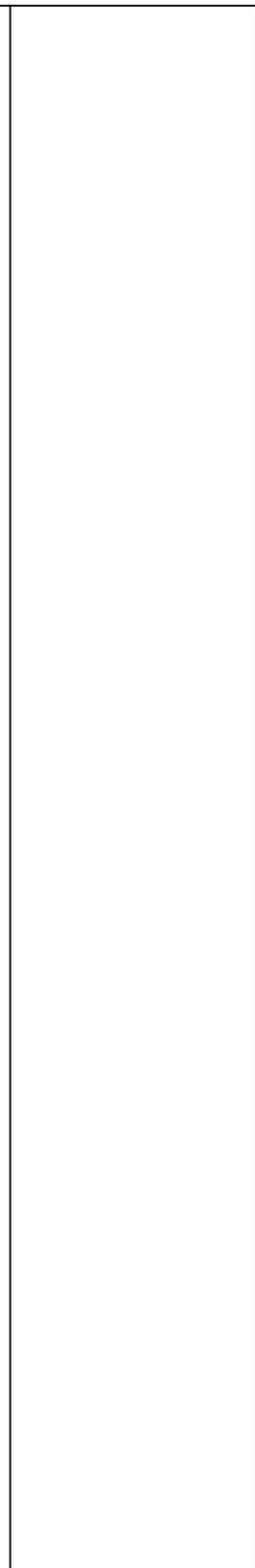
Chair Kafoury appreciated the broadband plug - it's been heartbreaking to hear stories of people sitting in the library parking lot to access the internet. The libraries did expand the capacity of the internet to allow people to access it in the parking lot. She also added that Multnomah County hasn't rushed to reopen because we know that people of color are overrepresented in public facing jobs, that because of historic inequities and racism they have higher rates of underlying conditions. So reopening business could put people in harm's way. We're putting together specific BIPOC plans so that each community has a checklist and people can ensure they are getting their needs met before there's a rush to open. So we're prepared with the supplies and testing in different parts of the community, contact tracers who are culturally and linguistically appropriate for communities.

Emily said she's been hearing from the dominant culture white community how certain populations have higher rates of COVID, and there's a big misunderstanding around why that's happening. She asked if there's a plan around education to raise awareness around why that is so it doesn't further stereotypes, assumptions and bias against these communities. Can we use this as a learning and educational tool?

Kim said that Emily is hitting on something that's a core request of leaders at almost every community roundtable. In addition to partnering with the County on engagement and communication, they also asked the County to focus on busting these lies and myths rooted in racism. They do have to go hand in hand. Chair Kafoury added that it's going to be a challenge - there are people who don't want to hear that message.

Dani shared that Claire dropped a question in the chat - libraries and schools are generally accessible safe places but are now closed. Can the remote teaching tools be expended to include outreach efforts in the remote learning bundle?

Chair Kafoury thinks that's a good idea, and really appreciates the ideas coming from communities about how to reach people. We're going to be in this a long time and need to change the way we do business.

Olivia thanked the Chair and her staff for joining, and reminded members they could email additional thoughts or questions to her and her staff, or routed through Olivia and Dani.	
Group Check-in, Review Agenda & Approve Minutes Marvin asked members to share how they've been doing and respond to a couple of check-in prompts. Marvin reviewed the meeting agenda. Members approved January's meeting minutes by consensus.	
Brainstorm what the CIC's work looks like moving forward Olivia shared that in the survey that went out to members, the top thing that people marked for discussion in this meeting was the CIC's work moving forward. Olivia said there are some considerations as the CIC thinks about how to move forward. This is an active and changing situation countywide and for people personally and their capacity. Most work has happened in subcommittees - one big question is how to finish the current priorities, hold a retreat, and welcome new members. Olivia also hopes that members who aren't at the meeting can weigh in as well. Olivia asked how members see the work of the committee evolving or reshaping during this time. Claire wonders how we broaden the ability to do outreach - this COVID-19 emergency has shown the opportunity for remote meetings and outreach. We need to figure out how we support policies and help implement access for people that generally would not have access. Things like internet access. That's the big divider, between families that can and can't do remote learning. How do we make that a higher priority? Juanita was surprised to hear the community didn't know where to go for information. The committee has been discussing very real concerns, and the pandemic has brought them up front. Maybe we can brainstorm how we can promote access. Emily wants to value the work that we've done, and some subcommittees could virtually come to their recommendations and wrap up the year. Moving forward, there are other areas of focus we may not have thought about prior. Like healthcare - a person of color needs to go to the hospital three times more than a white person to get COVID-19 care. How do we wrap up last year and look at the communities we serve in the different light that COVID-19 has highlighted? How can we wrap up and will it be heard in all of this?	

Olivia reviewed where each subcommittee left its work, and asked each subcommittee to think about what priorities could be wrapped up this year and what priorities feel more ongoing.

Housing & Homelessness
The trans housing and houselessness group had developed some initial recommendations, including the creation of some sort of trans community advisory board, dedicated FTE, and an increased collaboration of housing providers along the west coast focused on trans issues and housing. The subcommittee had wanted some feedback from staff like Scotty in the Office of Diversity & Equity, and folks in the Joint Office of Homeless Services. As of now, some staff are still redeployed so there might be some limited staff capacity to get feedback. Olivia did speak with Liam about the subcommittee and things are still feeling very topical.

Mike thinks the group is pretty close to being able to report out. Mike wondered what happened with the funding. He could see the group being able to formalize its recommendation in one meeting.

Emily agreed that the subcommittee is as close as it's going to get. There are still unknowns with the budget, but the recommendations feel solid.

Olivia said we do have information on funding, and it sounds like a meeting is in order to wrap up the work.

Mental Health & Addiction Subcommittee
For mental and health and addiction, Olivia provided the update that Mi had to step away from the CIC and there have been some scheduling challenges with this group. The subcommittee has met with Lynn Smith-Stott in the Office of Consumer Engagement, and she talked about the advisory council and the division's shift to getting peers into leadership roles.The subcommittee also looked at Commissioner Meieran's mental health system's analysis from 2018.

Rhiannon doesn't feel prepared to move forward with something yet - with the scheduling and COVID-19, the group would need more time and more people to come up with something. She felt like the work should be carried forward into next year instead of wrapping up.

Richard agreed. The group gathered some information, but hasn't been able to process it. The group did want to recommend that the advocacy person be hired, and he heard they did hire someone. So it would be great to carry on and get some additional people.

Community Outreach & Engagement

For the community outreach and engagement group, the subcommittee is working on a draft resolution on County community involvement. At the last meeting, the group was working towards a second draft and trying to decide which staff to seek input from.

Claire felt like the group made good progress towards updating the resolution. There's a draft resolution, with some issues that need to be worked on. She thinks it should be reviewed for more remote access issues, since that's become a more important tool to address. Claire thinks we might be able to get a draft resolution to forward to the Board within this year. But the commissioners are also involved in dealing with the emergency, so they may not think it's important right now. But it's still worth continuing on.

Juanita thinks it's a piece of work that's really critical because we can set some baselines around the role of the committee, and areas to incorporate such as support from the County of the department outreach. It's also important to develop a countywide and consistent plan for outreach, so it's not broken down in every department without a strategic plan. It's also important to have specific outcomes. Even though the resolution isn't a policy document, the commissioners approving it goes a long way towards achieving goals.

Marvin agreed with trying to finish the proposal of overall goals for outreach. And he wondered what we can do in terms of outreach due to COVID-19. It seems more critical than before that the County communicate with people in underrepresented communities.

Membership Subcommittee
Olivia reported that the membership subcommittee had reviewed applications and selected top 10 applicants. The process is currently on pause, but as we solidify the timeline, we can decide the best time to welcome new members - possibly at a retreat that's been pushed back. We still need to figure out interviews - applicants have been communicated with.

Desiree' is up to doing virtual interviews if needed. Richard said the same, noted that people are getting used to virtual interviews.

Olivia recapped that the housing and homelessness subcommittee can work to finalize their recommendations in a meeting and the outreach subcommittee can work towards finalizing a draft resolution. The CIC can hear from each subcommittee, approve recommendations, and then talk about having the annual retreat and welcome new members.They will reach out to each subcommittee to follow up. Staff will work with the membership subcommittee on a plan for interviews.

Olivia asked how members want to hold and recognize that the capacity of

members may be different and the disportionate due to COVID-19? Amanda appreciated the question, because she knows her mental capacity is limited now. She suggested appreciating those who can be here and remembering those who can't be here. Amanda asked about quorum requirements. Dani said it's currently seven for this group. Olivia suggested we surface the question each meeting. Emily hopes that the committee can be a resource to members, that if someone loses a job they can reach out to others for resources. We're all here for the same reason. She suggested we consider how we reach quorum, such as taking a vote in a meeting and then getting additional votes over email. Mike suggested suspending accountability for missing meetings. Olivia reminded the group that the involvement@multco.us reaches everyone, so people should feel free to reach out to each other and share resources.	
Next Steps & Closing Marvin said that Olivia will be reaching out to the group about scheduling the next CIC meeting for July.	

Chat Content:

from Claire Carder to Everyone: 6:00 PM

Did everyone turn in their ballot?

from rbark to Everyone: 6:01 PM

I did

from Emily Purry to Everyone: 6:06 PM

If anyone needs me specifically I am not able to follow the chat conversat to my vision disability, thank you!

from Anna Marie Allen to Everyone: 6:14 PM

For any questions. Feel free to work with Dani and Olivia. You can also email me directly at anna.marie.allen@multco.us

from Anna Marie Allen to Everyone: 6:17 PM

To submit written testimony:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1d2k1yUxHgvADVmUnPIRWw8JWqJMHYIpdg6hC4S MmeL0/edit

from Anna Marie Allen to Everyone: 6:19 PM

To sign up to testify at a budget hearing: n

https://multco.us/budget/fy-2021-chairs-proposed-budget-testimony-sign

from Claire Carder to Everyone: 6:27 PM

Libraries and schools are generally accessible safe places but are now closed. Can the remote teaching tools be expended to include outreach efforts in the remote learning bundle?

from Dani Bernstein to Everyone: 6:47 PM

Feel free to also drop your updates/check-in in the chat!

from Amanda Squiemphen-Yazzie to Everyone: 6:51 PM

You would be surprised with how many people forgot about this today.... But Happy Election Day. :-) Hope you all got your ballots in.

from Mike Savara (he/him/his) to Everyone: 6:53 PM

Woohoo! good call out!

from Claire Carder to Everyone: 7:00 PM

Universal internet access!!

from Desiree' to Everyone: 7:07 PM

I'm realizing that you all cannot hear me. My imput may be helpful for all subcommittees. It would be nice to revisit all rec's and then analyze them within the era of COVID and their relevance going forward.

from Claire Carder to Everyone: 7:07 PM

Yes!

from Desiree' to Everyone: 7:08 PM

For H and H it may be most relevant to recommend the Trans advisory committee and leave it there as some may be to changeable within everything that's going on.

from Desiree' to Everyone: 7:08 PM

some things may be too changeable*

from Mike Savara (he/him/his) to Everyone: 7:09 PM

https://multco.us/mhas/office-consumer-engagement

from Mike Savara (he/him/his) to Everyone: 7:12 PM

Agreed Desiree'!

from Rhiannon to Everyone: 7:27 PM

I agree with Emily, there needs to be flexibility

from Mike Savara (he/him/his) to Everyone: 7:27 PM

Hey all - so sorry but I have to hop off for another zoom call for the election (yes for here together!) - only thing I would add is that we should think about suspending accountability for missing meetings, like Emily is saying. I appreciate all of you!

from Amanda Squiemphen-Yazzie to Everyone: 7:28 PM

I agree, Email voting is great. Also one on one conversations are great as well. But sending virtual hugs, I need to jump off. Happy Election Day Everyone.

from Claire Carder to Everyone: 7:29 PM

I think we are all responsible and aware enough to recuse ourselves from votes or meetings if we feel we can't participate in good faith. But it is good to allow flexibility in missing meetings because we all have different and changing circumstances.