



Community Involvement Committee



Community Involvement Committee

November 19, 2024 6:00-8:00 pm

Virtual Meeting

Zoom

Contact community.involvement@multco.us for links

REGULAR MEETING Minutes

Attendance:

Present: Ann Singer, Brian Outlaw, Diego Martinez, Jen Mair, Jenny Shadley, Lung Wah Lazum, Nina Gallo, Pau Thang, Renai Bell, Quay'Roemel Matthews, Pau Thang, Lung Wah Lazum, KellyAnn Cameron (Staff-OCI), Amara Perez (Staff- OCI), Monique Smiley (Guest), John Wasiutynski (Guest)

Excused: Brian R.

Absent: Angel Brophy,

Minutes:

(6:00-6:10) Introductions

KA welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Nina to lead an ice breaker of "if you were an action figure what accessories would you come with?" -

The group reviewed the agenda and approved it using fist to five.

(6:10-6:40) Guest Speakers: Sustainability Engagement - John Wasiutynski and Monique Smiley

KA introduced John and Monique, who work in the Office of Sustainability. SLIDES HERE.

Introductions:

Monique shared that she has been in the county 5 years as the engagement specialist at the Office of sustainability. John introduced himself as the director of sustainability.

Background:

The county has been working on Climate since the 1990s. In 2015 we passed a climate action plan and really focused on equity. Now we're working on shifting from a consultation model to collaborative model of decisionmaking.

Climate Justice: [Climate Justice Framework](#) Focusing on how communities of color and low income communities are hit the hardest by climate change. This community is also resilient and has knowledge and insight on how to approach climate change. We used Community Driven Planning and Targeted Universalism as concepts. This involves including as many people as possible while also acknowledging who is most impacted and furthest from our shared vision and goals for our community. One example of this practice is curb cuts - designed for people with mobility disabilities everyone benefits from being able to use the cuts with strollers, bicycles, etc.

- Community Driven planning: worked with Coalition of Communities of COlor to develop a planning process. The 2015 plan didn't have a lot of community involvement- a lot of government planning is done by experts with advanced degrees and capital. Community driven planning centers justice (in general

and for most impacted people), shifting power (deferring to community members), co-creative, and with community data (interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc).

- Environmental indicators report: [Environmental Justice Zine](#) from a 2017 Board resolution using data to show impacts on communities as well as impacts. For example tree canopy, interviews, surveys etc so the zine was grounded in stories. This zine also shows vision and values that we're using for the climate justice plan.

Vision to Action:

We made a steering committee of 15 community organizations representing folks most impacted by climate change - moving from Climate Action to Climate Justice. Members included: APANO, Coalition of Communities of Color, Community Energy Project, Multnomah County Youth Commission, NAACP PDX and more. Over the summer we worked with the steering committee to create goals. We also worked with over 100 community partners to develop strategies and universal goals. We found a gap with reaching youth, immigrants and refugees, and people in east county. Our role as staff was creating these spaces and empowering people to share their expertise and experience

Universal goals

- Every community member has the opportunity to contribute to climate justice in Multnomah County.
- Every community member has access to wealth-building opportunities and green jobs.
- Every community member has access to affordable, reliable, and safe transit, biking, and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Every community member has access to nutritious, culturally-specific food and can participate in traditional food practices.
- Every community member has access to affordable clean energy.
- Every community member is safe from the risks posed by fossil fuels and new energy infrastructure.
- Every community member has access to clean water that supports their needs and all living systems.
- Every community member breathes clean and healthy air.
- Every community member has safe, healthy, and affordable housing.
- Every community member is resilient to extreme weather events and other climate threats.
- Every community member is surrounded by and connected to nature, parks, and green infrastructure.
- Every community member has access to the resources and underlying conditions that promote health and well being.

Actions:

Actions include code changes, funding programs, mutual aid, advocate for change, governance third space, game changers, and others.

John then walked through an example of a targeted strategy: with the goal of clean and healthy air - recognizing that Latine communities are exposed to higher rates, and doing a wood stove exchange program that targets those communities.

Quay shared she is in a climate class and thinks this plan looks awesome and will impact people in so many ways, especially the storytelling element.

- John: yes I love the storytelling - how do we imagine ourselves into a better future.

They also invited everyone to an event on Dec 5th - [REGISTER HERE!](#)

(6:40-6:55) Guest Speaker: OCI Strategic Planning - Amara Pérez

KA introduced Amara - she started just a couple days after your retreat but is also scheduling 1:1s with everyone on the CIC. She is here to talk about the OCI's strategic direction and how the CIC can get involved.

In her first 8 weeks she has prioritized meeting with community and county leaders (including all of you on the CIC!) to learn about what OCI has been, and hopes for OCI from other partners and the Chair. This all has informed strategic direction for our office.

Amara shared **OCI Strategic Focus Areas & [Resolution on Community Engagement](#)**

- **Support Department Engagement Plans:** Collaborate with County departments to develop and implement equitable and effective engagement activities using coaching, mentoring, and best practices to reduce barriers to civic engagement
- **Advise on Best Engagement Policies and Practices:** Provide subject matter expertise, elevate recommendations, and lead implementations on best policies and practices in community engagement to advance the County's goals to increase access to civic participation
- **Serve as Engagement Training and Resource Hub:** Serve as a County-hub for best practices in equity, inquiry, and engagement (resources, workshops, tools, technical assistance, Communities of Practice)
- **Provide a Community Portal to County Engagement Opportunities:** Serve as a point of connection for community interest in County engagement opportunities
- **Coordinate County-wide Community Involvement Committees:** Support the Community Involvement Committee (CIC) to advise OCI and County engagement practices and Community Budget Advisory Committees (CBACs) to advise County budgets

She sees the CIC as a thought partner and advisor in implementing these things. Amara opened it up for questions and comments.

Comments:

Jenny: welcome to the position! I've been thinking a lot about the role of Community Involvement - it becomes a rubber stamp, and we think about it in decision making a lot. I'm interested in evolving that definition of what involvement looks like to not just be rubber stamping a decision, but many ways of engaging with the County.

- Amara: yes- I'm curious how we articulate all the ways people have their voice heard, volunteer, participate in the county - can we share what they all are and their values and limitations (not a hierarchy, just different access). Our office can help demystify the ways to be engaged and get involved.
- Jenny: thinking of generational and lifetime engagement, through the years.

Jen: I'm excited about this, our subcommittee is focused on exactly this - increasing infrastructure in the county to be able to do meaningful engagement. I'm interested in specifically putting in there some training for community members to be able to serve on a committee - like a resident academy or any kind of ramp-up to help people feel ready to participate at this level. I do see engagement is not just committees, but broad and diverse engagement with many points of engagement. A lot of cities have training academies that cultivate engagement and also future city council members.

- Amara: In addition to infrastructure, the CIC has great infrastructure with KA's support - how can we get CBACs to catch up a bit. How can we support CBAC coordinators to do better in their role and be supported- training for the community AND for staff to facilitate those opportunities.

Amara: I'm going to keep meeting with the subcommittee and also come to your meetings!

(7:00-7:15) Community Agreements

Jenny shared that team agreements are basically what we all agree to and keeps us moving forward. KA shared a working document for FY2025 Community Agreements. Jenny asked what ones come up for people:

Jenny: move up and move back is one I always need to remember because I love to share!

Nina: I really like to consider earned/unearned privileges since we have different lives and experiences that bring us here. I'm curious what oops/ouch means

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- Jenny: it's a tool around communicating if something landed weird with you or you are hurt by it - it's similar to the call in and name impact.

KA: do we want to combine some of those:

- Jen: combine the first and last
- KA: we can remove the oops/ouch example as a tool and just discuss different ways we can handle those conflicts.

Thang: in making space for different styles maybe we can add a 10 second pause before moving on to a new topic - sometimes I am still thinking and need a couple seconds.

- Jenny: I really like that
- Brian O.: I also want to encourage us to go back to stuff later if you think of things!
- Nina: I also think that since we get so much information we have an agreement that it is okay to go back to things later.
- Jenny: maybe let's build in breaks in between things into the agenda
- Brian O.: we could add space in around public comment to have reflections on the meeting.
- KA added these notes in the agreements and also meeting expectations.

Renai: I appreciate us taking the time to go through this and adapt these to where we are now, and talk about them.

- Jenny: yes sometimes we use these as check-in questions.

Jenny: not sure if conversation not debate is the best way to frame that.

- Jen: maybe more like attack the issue not the person....
- General convo: healthy conflict, keep an open mind, be intentional... workshoped it to "Discuss ideas not people: Dialogue not debate"

Everyone approved the new FY25 Community Agreements using first to five.

Thank you Jenny!

(7:15-7:35) Subcommittee topic updates:

Thang and Jen are co-chairs of the Infrastructure subcommittee and can give a brief update- Jen shared that the subcommittee started on a twofold focus on supporting the CBACs so they feel more effectual and the other was to improve infrastructure on Community engagement with the County. Amara came to our last meeting and presented her plan on how to increase that infrastructure - it's a pretty comprehensive plan and we were interested in it and supporting the development there. The CBAC piece - we learned there is a lot of info already on the CBAC process and what people think needs to change, etc. A lot of changes are in motion and both Stephan and the Chair's office, and OCI, are working on it so we are going to keep learning more and building out support. Thang shared that covered it pretty well- we've received a summary of the CBAC listening sessions and studies, and saw a lot of overlap between the issues with CBACs and the CIC as well as other advisory committees. I think we can use this to make things better for all advisory committees.

Quay'Roenel is chairing the engagement on addiction and recovery subcommittee - Quay shared that she is on the bus. Nina shared that they met last night with a member of JOHS who provided an overview of how their office does community engagement - 15 months advance notice seems really important, as well as peer support. Diego added how their process is extensive and gave everyone hope for how plans could look. We also talked about volunteering

KA shared thanks for folks who reviewed the membership materials - there were no significant changes that need CIC approval. Amara and I are going to work on some Outreach plan drafts - I'll send an invite to a meeting in December for anyone who wants to work on the Outreach plan.

(7:40-7:50) Co-Chair Elections

We have two nominees for Co-Chairs of the CIC who have accepted their nomination: Renai Bell and Brian Outlaw. For Brian this will be his second term as Co-Chair. Since we only have 2 folks, we can vote to approve their appointments rather than vote for Co-Chairs. Please show or put in the chat (in private or in the group) a fist to 5 on this.

(7:35-7:40) Public Comment & reflections

There was no public comment so the group took this time to reflect on their speakers today, additional thoughts that have come up.

Renai shared she appreciated the subcommittee updates.

Quay'Roemel: shared she's excited for the changes

Nina: shared she really likes the framework that sustainability shared, and she's going to try to attend the event next month.

Brian O: it sounded like there were a lot of ways to engage as well

Ann: yeah I love the storytelling - I was teaching a class at the detention center yesterday with the youth doing storytelling about what is important to them - they shared how they felt their neighborhoods are dirty and using like 'slums' - so it's important to hear from people.

Renai: in the CBAC orientation there was a great presentation on equity and "inclusively leading with race" and that was helpful.

- KA: oh yes! You all can see the slides and other materials for the CBACs in their [CBAC resource packet](#).

Jenny: in my work there is a 9mo like intercultural communication training that you get certified for, and if you have that training you are also asked to get more involved in various committees.

- Brian O: that seems exciting and like what Jen was mentioning in California.
- Jenny: yeah there is some info online I will try to find, it's something you have to be recertified in of course.
- KA: maybe there will also be updates in January about the "civic engagement grant" OCI has funding for.

(7:50-8:00) Closing

- Logistics: next meeting January 21st, 6-8
 - Alternate-month CIC Activities (OCI visioning, guest speakers for optional meetings, in-person activities, etc)
 - This month: the December sustainability event
 - Future: maybe testing out some trainings, meeting with JR to learn about tribal engagement etc.
 - What went well? What could be improved for future meetings?
 - Reflection time
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- More space between topics
 - Any CIC appreciations or accomplishments to share?
 - Brian O shared appreciation for this group- going through the agreements gave me appreciation for how we all work together and come to this space authentically. There are groups where we need to call out a lot, but I appreciate that this group has those agreements in our hearts already.
 - Jen: and KA for being the glue!

Zoom transcript: