

# WESP

## renewal steering committee

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2 day retreat  
Capture  
June 2023





“

“I am no longer accepting the things  
I cannot change. I am changing  
the things I cannot accept.”

**Angela Y. Davis**

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# Project Background

Workforce equity demands that the County identify and address structural and policy barriers to equal employment opportunity faced by our employees and communities because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation and other protected classes.

County employees across the organization have stepped forward to develop a strategic plan and help create a workplace where everyone can reach their full potential.

The WESP Renewal Steering Committee oversees the research, design, and proposal of the new iteration of the WESP. In addition, the WESP renewal structure will create a process to co-design recommendations, expand engagement and ensure we center the voices of those most impacted by racial disparities in the workplace.

# Retreat Goals and Deliverables

- Create a culture of collaboration
- Establish community care agreements / approaches on how we work through conflicts
- Create new decision making practices, agreement for practicing accountability, measurement, and communication to build a strategic and shared mind set that creates and supports our work together
- Reflect on current data, prioritize issue areas, and come up with a plan, and timeline

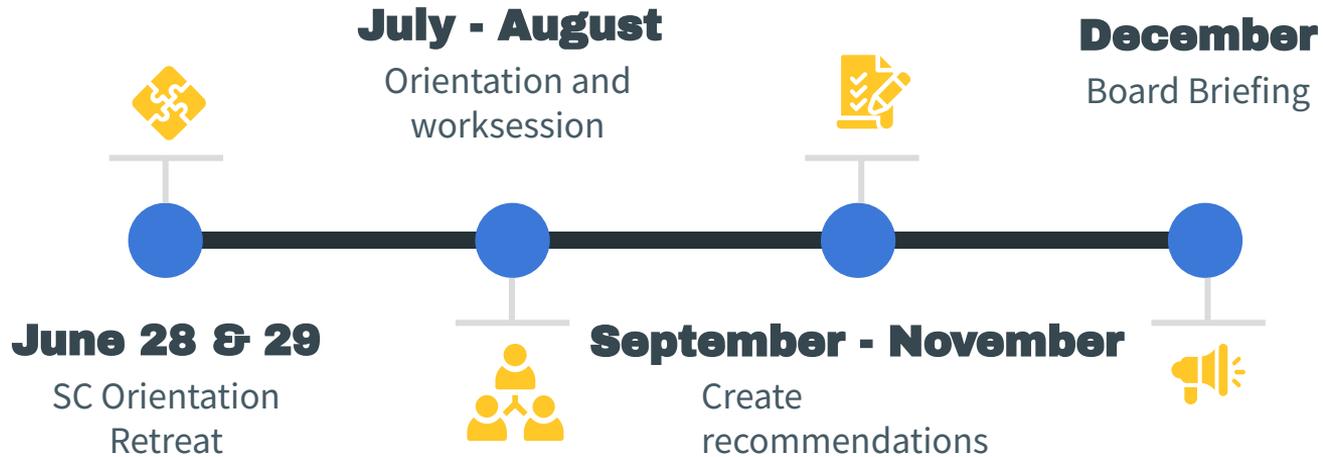
In the next 5 month, we are committed to deliver...

## **Specific Measurable Actionable and Accountable Strategic Plan**

To be adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in December 2023

The Plan will cover up to the next four years, in a phased approach. There will be clear implementation steps, responsible parties, and reporting expectations in it.

# Timeline





# Retreat Process Overview

Steering Committee members met for a two-day retreat at the June Key Delta Center on June 28 and 29. Committee members were selected to have a diverse representation of departments, positions, and identities. The majority of the group was from Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other communities of color.

## **SC Attendees**

Ari Alberg  
Joseph Almond  
James Anderson  
Walle Brown  
Eve Buchanan  
Jonathan Cruz  
Andrea Damewood  
Brian Dunnaville  
Rosa Garcia  
Shannon Goultier  
Timothy Ho

Estelle Norris  
Jenny O'Meara  
Kalisha Stout  
Jackie Tate  
Arnita Tucker-McFarland  
Larry Turner

## **ODE/ MIL Facilitation Team**

Veronica Cano  
Ashley Carroll  
Joy Fowler  
Alejandro Juárez  
Mary Li  
Erika Molina-Rodriguez  
Maya Noble  
Jooyoung Oh  
Sam Silverman  
Terralyn Wiley





# Outcomes

Topic Areas

Community Care Agreements

Decision Making Process

Steering Committee Working Format



# Retreat Activities

The steering committee's first day focused on establishing a foundation for effective collaboration through Community Care Agreements. We also discussed the decision-making process, considering the impact on the organization.

On the second day, the committee envisioned the future and identified priority issues for the next six months. This exercise allowed us to think big and address urgent topics, which were then prioritized into seven main areas.

Finally, the steering committee explored a different approach to executing the work moving from the “workgroup” model to a “work session” model.

# Topics to Address: Summary

## **Accountability\***

Holding managers accountable for equity and effective employee management. Supportive systems that provide resources, facilitate research, and improve data management for more accurate reporting.

## **Restructuring\***

The relationship between centralized and departmental efforts, particularly regarding the responsibilities of Equity Managers and HR Departments. Align systems with a preventative framework and avoid working in silos.

## **Training**

Training and support for managers on equity topics and managing in a diverse workplace. Supporting managers of color and setting up managers for success. Equity training for all staff, including navigating change.

★ = voted as the most important

# Topics to Address: Summary

## **Practice**

Adopting preventative and trauma-informed practices for workforce equity and exploring targeted approaches for each department with a county-wide perspective.

## **Data**

Centralization, transparency, and accessibility of data. Research and disparity reports to be shared with Employees of Color, Managers of Color, the Office of Diversity and Equity, and leadership.

## **Compensation**

Recognize the additional toll for employees of color as they frequently take on additional duties, responsibilities, and emotional labor in service of equity and inclusion.

## **Retention**

Protect our investments in diversity and retain staff of color. Collect data on retention and implement systems to track separations.



# Community Care Agreements

## What We Expect From Each Other

- Listen to understand, not respond.
- WAIT (Why Am I Talking; Why Aren't I Talking?)
- Hold ourselves accountable to meeting agreements.
- **Embrace conflict as it is generative and not destructive**
- Take risks, make mistakes, and be empathetic with those who do.
- Respectfully allow for, appreciate, and challenge disagreement of opinions, ideas, and methods.
- We commit to interrupting acts of harm in the moment. **We consent to being called in/out** and will call each other in and out. When this happens, attend to impact and believe what you are told, rather than express intention.
- **Action oriented commitment to accountability**
- Find your own challenge zone, where our best learning occurs because when we are too comfortable or feeling danger, our ability to learn is impacted.
- What is said here, stays here. What is learned here, goes out from here.
- **Expect discomfort and accept non-closure.**
- Celebrate and respect all identities, especially race, ethnicity, and pronouns.
- **Create an authentic space in which the outcome feels transformative, the experience feels complete, while embracing differing emotional responses and experiences.**
- Ensure that all have the opportunity to speak and be heard; all have a part in what we feel is the "win."



# Community Care Agreements

## What You Can Expect From ODE

- Commitment to the process
- Commitment to conflict resolution
- Commitment to communication
  - With the committee
  - With leadership
- Support with research and information gathering

# Decision Making Process

## **This the spirit in which we are making decisions**

- Think outside the “colonial” box
- Identify and call out white supremacy behaviors
- Not to be disappointed that we didn't solve racism / celebrate small wins
- Avoid perfection, give permission to be wrong/to try, be mindful of what activates our shame
- Acknowledge that there can be multiple answers
- Acknowledge that this is a very difficult process as we each wear multiple identities
- Clarify feelings vs. questions as we vote
- Unpack strong feelings as needed
- Listen to others

## **Ask a series of questions that provide clarity about the decisions**

- Are we inclusively leading with race?
- What is the impact of this decision on Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other people of color?
- Do we have all the information we need to make a decision? What is missing?

## **Investigate whether there is a consensus to move forward/land in a shared space**

- Recognize when consensus is not possible and come back later
- Slow down but remain committed to action
- If no consensus is reached, dive deeper



# **Steering Committee Working Format**

Working as a team of the whole, the Steering Committee will meet at least once per month for a whole day session.

In priority order, as determined by the SC, specific issue areas will be engaged with to create the required elements of the Plan.

Key informants and interested parties will be identified by the SC and invited to participate aligned with each specific issue area.

Final decisions about recommendations to the Executive Team will be made by the SC.



# Next Steps

Regroup to debrief the retreat  
and prepare for the  
accountability session

Set meeting schedule

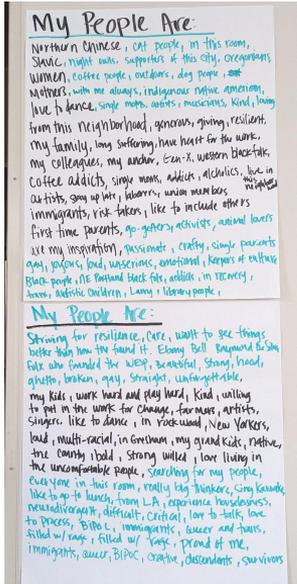
Begin work to create action and  
implementation

Have fun!

The background is white with several decorative elements: a large blue circle in the top-left corner, a yellow circle in the top-right, a blue circle in the top-right corner, a blue circle in the bottom-left corner, a large blue circle in the bottom-right, and a yellow circle in the bottom-right. Scattered throughout the white space are small grey stars.

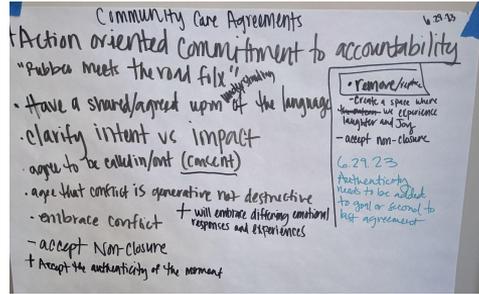
# Appendices

# Day 1 Activities



## My People Are...

We introduced ourselves and shared who our people are to understand more about the communities we come from, the lived experiences we bring, and the people we carry with us when we enter this space.



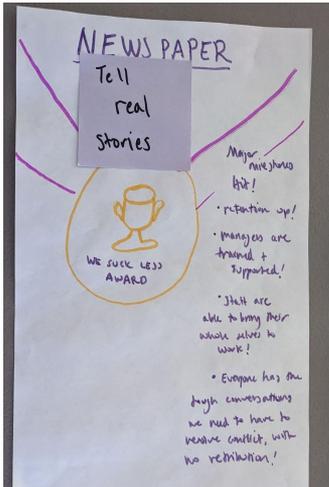
## Community Care Agreements

To set the stage for how we will agree to share space and work together, committee members reviewed community care agreements to ask:

How do we want to show up for each other? How do we respond when there is conflict? How do we respond when we have not honored our agreements in the future?

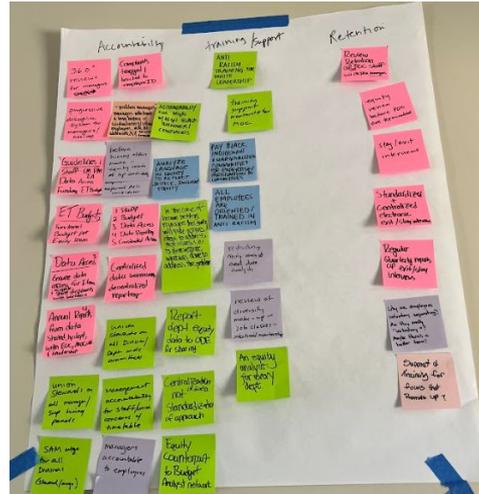


# Day 2 Activities



## Future Visioning

Looking to the future of our work, committee members imagined what might be on the cover of a newspaper or magazine to report on what the County will look like in 2027 after the new WESP has been successfully implemented.



## Ideation and Prioritization

We broke into small groups to answer the question:

"What needs to happen to get us to your future vision?"

High level themes were drawn out into topic areas. Committee members were asked to prioritize their #1 issue to address first moving forward.

# Day 2 Activities



## **Working Format Discussion**

To prepare for the next steps of the WESP renewal, committee members motioned to address each of the topic areas as a collective instead of breaking into smaller workgroups. This way, the work happens in the same room with the same people receiving the same information.

It was recognized that "someone will be left out of this conversation no matter what we do." Members agreed "we need to ensure we are intentionally including people and inviting voices to the table." They decided to invite subject matter experts and County employees to come engage with them at work sessions.

The order of which topic area to discuss at each work session will be decided by the Steering Committee.

# Topic Area 1: Accountability 1/2

"Accountability can be recognizing people that are doing a great job and push them up. People of color choose to stay in front line service roles for years, with no benefit or reward."

- Manager accountability, training, reflection, supervision
  - 360 reviews for managers
  - Accountability for managers with high Black turnover complaints
  - Support for managers of managers
- Successful managers proven effective to be mentors or outside consultants
- Effective complaint resolution process
  - Accountability to departments for resolution
  - Continue work on microaggressions
- Complaints tagged and traced to employee ID
- Provide a model for a disciplinary process
  - Corrective actions for Black employees must be a collaboration of equity and HR managers

# Topic Area 1: Accountability 2/2

- Progressive discipline system for managers/non-rep
  - Problem managers who have a long history of discrimination against employees will be addressed if necessary, and terminated.
  - In the case of known problem managers, they will take active steps to address the issues and be able to demonstrate what was done to address the problem
- Clear, definable, measurements that Departments can deliver on and agree to
  - Measurable consequences for not meeting objectives
- Support from all levels of leadership, commitment, willingness to deliver to their ERGs and equity departments, a feedback loop
  - Department directors engage in the WESP and take responsibility for the improvement
  - Stronger equity mandates for HR
- Convene Black, Indigenous staff to participate in alignment review alignment quarterly for adjustments, including Black staff
  - Include Black paid representation, Black union representation in alignment

# Topic Area 2: Restructuring

- Restructuring equity analyst and data analyst
  - An equity analyst for every Department
  - Equity counterpart to budget analyst network
- Equity workers should not answer to directors of departments
- Union stewards on all division department-wide committees
- Centralized HR so equity training work isn't Department specific
  - Cross departmental or non-departmental equity oversight plus training
- Review of diversity makeup in job classification for intentional mentorship
  - Compensate culturally specific mentors
  - Incentives for mentors

# Topic Area 3: Training

- All employees are oriented and trained in anti-racism
  - Anti-racism training for white leadership
- Training support mentorship for managers of color
- Department implicit bias training
- Annual HR requirements require trauma-informed training
- Train staff to be collaborative, not adversarial
- Training capacity in OL for cultural specificity
- Training is mandatory and regularly revisited
- Professional development specifically tailored to underrepresented communities

# Topic Area 4: Practice 1/2

- Promoting organizational learning/change
  - Analyze language in the county to reflect justice, inclusion, and equity
  - Culture shift/change
- Commitment to change, doing things differently/better than in the past
  - Scenario planning versus outcome-oriented
  - Moving from minimum to best practice
  - Be preventative, not reactive
  - Supportive when questioned, not suspicious
  - More community engagement
  - Stories/storytelling
- Shift from workforce to community
  - Implement for our employees what we strive to do for our communities
  - Culturally specific services for staff
- Trauma-informed approach
  - Expectation of courageous conversation
  - Empowerment to set and maintain boundaries to prevent burnout
  - Empower all new and current County Employees with an understanding of equity empowerment

# Topic Area 4: Practice 2/2

- Top-down respectful culture/cultural competency campaign
  - Shared respect of equity manager role
  - Appreciation and support of ERG roles
- Operationalize equity practices/outcome/impacts in position descriptions
- Department specific equity strategic plan builds trust throughout the county
- Commitment from the executive committee not only to the WESP but to what's going into the WESP
  - Advisory committees for WESP-funded programs
  - Resources budget for WESP-funded positions
- Provide appropriate resources to support the work
  - More money
  - Participatory budgeting process
- Centralized ADA accommodations, train staff, lived experience
  - Disability justice training, policies, and practices
  - Safer spaces for disabled employees of color
- Center queer and trans staff of color
- Engaging white employees, time for allies/co-conspirators

# Topic Area 5: Data

"As a manager of color, how do you know if you're treated equitably compared to other managers without data?"

"How do we capture data that shows things like hiring internal white candidates over external candidates of color?"

- Centralized data warehouse, decentralized reporting
  - Centralization of data, not standardization of approach
  - Ensure access for equity teams to create and share dashboards with the workforce
- Annual reports from data shared by department with EOC, MOC, ODE, and leadership
- Research and evaluation plan
  - Support thorough research on areas where delinquency is suspected
- Workforce disparities report
  - More granular data, especially regarding firing within the probationary period
  - Transparency regarding pay promotions and compensation based on culturally specific knowledge
- Identification of funding disparities and funding them
  - Transparency in funding process and budget creation top down
- Better data management systems
- Increase the transparency of CIU outcomes
- Public visibility of documentation, including anecdotal info

# Topic Area 6: Compensation

"Why are those frontline positions that are necessary for serving the community paid the lowest wages?"

- Robust employee support
  - Trauma leave
  - Family leave
  - Employee Wellness be more accessible, POC providers therapist
  - Addressing burnout/coverage for vacancies
  - Restorative practices and places post-trauma
- Equitable pay across different departments
- Contingency plans or resources for the next COVID emergency
- Pay Black, Indigenous, and marginalized communities for expertise/participation in committees
  - Equity KSA
  - Training KSA

# Topic Area 7: Retention

"How do we track recurring themes? If we have 3-4 questions on all [exit and stay] interviews regardless of department, we can track trends."

- Why are employees voluntarily separating? Are they really “voluntary?” Maybe there's a better term?
- Stay/exit interviews
  - Standardized and centralized electronic exit/stay interviews
  - Regular quarterly reports of exit stay interviews
  - Move exit interviews out of Workday
- Increase retention of employees of color
  - Review retention of POC staff with POC managers
  - Equity review before POC staff are terminated
- Retention strategies
  - Identification of retention path - progressive growth
  - Support and training for folks that promote up
- Increase cultural competency/literacy, clear hiring procedures for departments
  - Before hiring, offers made equity revision of top candidates
- Equity in teleworking

# Workforce Equity Efforts

- WESP Implementation
- Equity Managers
- Equity Committees
- Non-protected class complaint resolution

**Departments**

**Complaints Investigation Unit**

- Protected class investigations and trends
- Restorative resolutions

**Workforce Equity Efforts**

**Office of Diversity and Equity**

**Central HR**

- Workforce Equity Strategic Plan Development, Monitoring and Review Committees
- Civil Rights, Disability Equity
- E & E Lens, Equity Tools
- Employee Resource Groups
- Multnomah Youth Commission

**DCM and ERU**

- Leadership Development
- Core Competencies
- Equity Learning
- Policy & Compliance
- Talent Acquisition Strategy

- Countywide Employee Survey
- HR Trends Report & Analysis
- Pay Equity Analysis

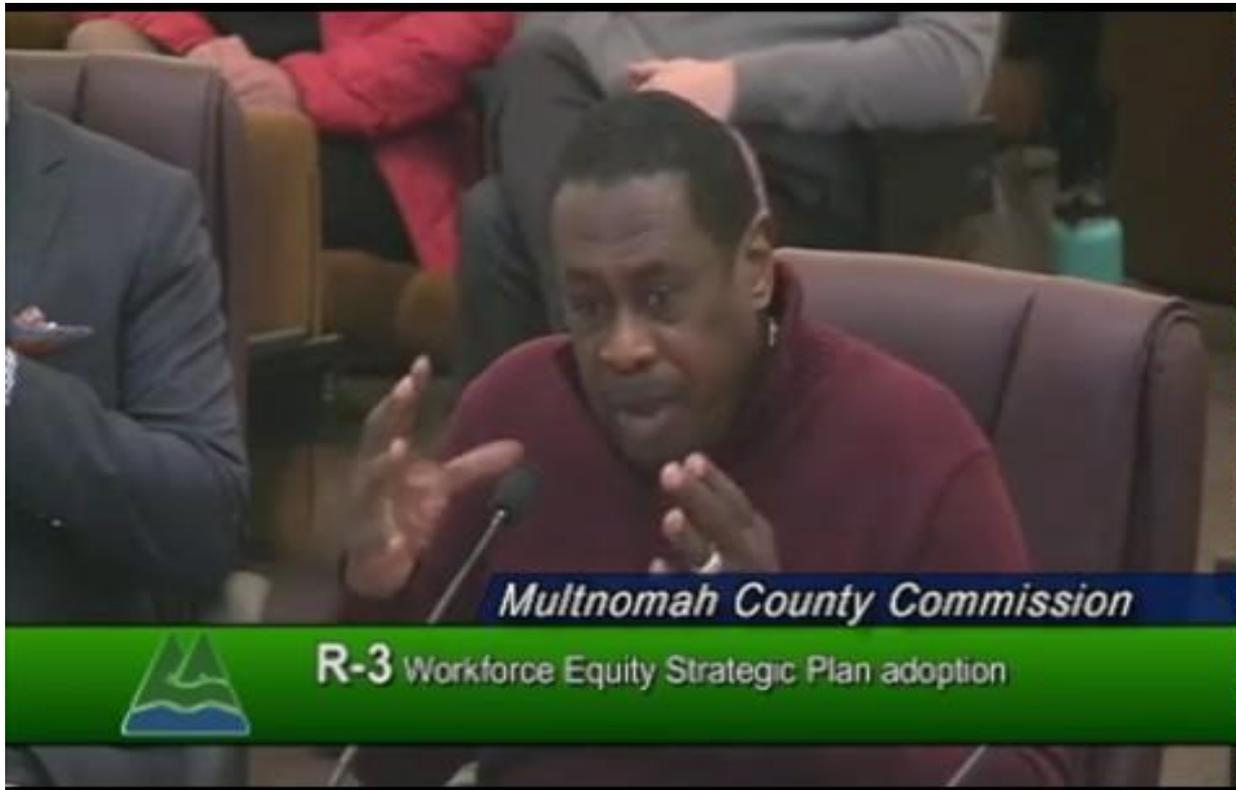


# WESP 2019 - 2022

## Data Comparison

- There is a disconnect between the perceived experience of staff of color vs actual hires and promotions.
- Retention of BIPOC, especially Black staff, is a challenge.
- The County has a backlog of recruitments

# WESP Brief History



# Thanks

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