

MINUTES
WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
APRIL 28, 2010 3:30 P.M.
BEVERLY LIVESAY CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: L. McBean-Clairborne; S. Martel Moore; M. DeSouza; R. DeLuca; C. DeMarco; P. Pryor
Excused: K. Belanger; P. Carey; L. Roberts, K. Luz Herrera; K. Kephart, B. Doling; L. Holmes
Staff: M. Lynch, S. Reistetter; K. Fuller, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature

Call to Order

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

Announcement(s)

- The Work of Skills Job Fair will be held on April 29th from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn. There are 44 employer institutions signed up to be on hand to answer questions. This event, although sponsored by Finger Lakes Independence Center, is open to everyone and is known as a premier event for people with disabilities.
- A National Health Care Decision Event will be held at McGraw House on April 29th at 12:00 p.m. The event will assist in providing information on health care proxy forms and other topics associated with health-care decision-making.
- The annual Careers in Construction Event will be held on May 4th, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at Tompkins Cortland Community College. This event introduces high school students to a variety of construction-related jobs. Thus far 509 students and adults are signed up to attend, including youth from the William George Agency. Businesses will include Cornell University, three other 2-year schools, 9 unions, 2 green construction companies, and Tompkins Cortland Community College Green Program representatives. In addition to introducing youth to various skills, demographic information is collected and forwarded to the State to provide information. This event is funded by the State (20%) and Federal (80%) government. It was noted that Tompkins County employee Jerry Stern for the Highway Division has been a participant in the event each year. The State has brought equipment to the event for the past 3-years, however, they have said it would not be available this year. A brief discussion on the ability to include youth from the Gosset Center and Lansing Residential School for Girls took place; it was noted that although youth from the facilities have participated in some of the events within the County they would not be allowed to participate in this event. It was noted it could be a staffing issue due to the size of the event.
- Ithaca College will be having a presentation of Lesson Plans for Social Change at Dexter Hall, 6:30 p.m. This is related to a work being completed on a book relating to Martin Luther King.
- Members received a handout of Summer Youth Employment Outlook 2010 addressing reductions in funding to programs.
- It was suggested to attend The Kitchen Theatre's production of In This Place, starring Michelle Hurst. This play centers around the first free black man in Kentucky to buy a house and is shown from his wife's perspective.
- Mrs. McBean-Clairborne, Mr. Richardson, and Ms. DeSouza have been participating in the Undoing Racism workshops. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said the workshop while very good is challenging. She encourages employee participation. She expressed appreciation to Department Heads for their efforts in seeking volunteers for the training. It was noted that all but one individual desiring the training was able to attend this workshop. Ms. DeMarco expressed the importance of making sure perceptions are not that the training is the result of any negative action by employees. Ms. Martel-Moore noted she sent a letter of invitation appreciation to those volunteering with Mr. Mareane and Mrs. McBean-Clairborne's signatures. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne expressed appreciation to Ms. Martel-Moore and Ms. Reistetter for their efforts. Future workshops will be held at later dates to allow continued participation by County employees. During the discussion it was noted some individuals did not know about the availability of the workshop.

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- The Community Mental Health Services Board will hold its annual recognition event on May 25th at 5:00 p.m. This event recognizes people in recovery and rehabilitation for mental health and disabilities as well as the people who work with them. Guest speakers will include Tom O'Claire, father of Timothy O'Clair (Timothy's Law amending mental health coverage), and Jackie Washington.
- Lansing Residential Center is seeking individuals to participate in an event on May 27th to provide youth descriptions of various forms of employment.
- The Greater Ithaca Activities Center has additional tickets available for the Family Event trip to see the Broadway show "Fences" starring Denzel Washington. Tickets are \$75 per person.
- On May 6th the Women's Expo will take place at Tompkins Cortland Community College from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This event will include the "Twenty Outstanding Women You Should Know", which includes Mrs. McBean-Clairborne and Tompkins Workforce Center Manager Diane Bradac.
- Greater Ithaca Activities Center will hold an Open House on June 12th to highlight the renovations. In addition, there will be a "Welcome Home" Dance at the Clairon.
- The Multicultural Resource Center and Greater Ithaca Activities Center will hold a joint Annual Meeting at 5:30 p.m. on May 19th at the Holiday Inn.

Dorothy Cotton Institute

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne spoke of an independent organizing group effort to recognize local resident Dorothy Cotton's work with Martin Luther King through the development of a building to highlight her work. The Tompkins County Legislature awarded \$7,500 tourism grant through hotel room tax revenues to help support a study examining the feasibility of creating a Dorothy Cotton Institute visitor and education center. The institute would honor and perpetuate the legacy of an important civil rights leader as an internationally renown education and resource center it would develop, nurture, and train leaders for a global human rights movement; build a network of community and civil rights human leadership; and explore, share, and promote practices to transform individuals and communities, opening new pathways to peace, justice, and healing. There will be community meetings held to allow public input regarding this project.

Martin Luther King Freedom Walkway Logo Design

A contest for the Martin Luther King Freedom Walkway Logo is taking place. An e-mail with more information about this contest will be forwarded to members and suggested notifying individuals who may be interested in participating.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Street Name Use

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said the City GIS Department is working on making necessary changes and contacts to enable the use of the new street name. At this time the primary concern is online sources not recognizing the dual-designation. Once their work is completed a friendly resolution would be coming forward through the Committee.

Membership Appointment(s)

Appointment

By consensus of members present, it was recommended to appoint Marcia Lynch as a Staff Member of the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee for a term to expire December 31, 2012.

Membership Discussion

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne spoke of the need to fill vacancies existing and would like assistance in seeking individuals.

Youth Outreach

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne provided an article entitled “Locals Face a Lack of New Talent” for members to read.

Immigration Reform

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne expressed appreciation to the Legislature for allowing the resolution prepared by Ms. Herrera and herself urging the congress to enact immigration reform. She spoke of the recent legislation passed in Arizona regarding illegal aliens and is concerned with the direction this type of legislation is taking. There will be an Immigration Reform Rally on the Commons May 1st at 3:00 p.m. and she said regardless of position it would be good to attend. Cornell University President Skorton has written a letter of support for immigration reform, noting the number of students and families attending their educational facility. The Committee had a brief discussion of the problems non-traditional couples face due to the current immigration laws that sometimes deny a partner entry into this country as well as the inability to be eligible under the new Health Care Reform Act. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne also expressed concern that Utah is considering similar legislation to Arizona.

“People-Friendly” Workplace Climate Survey

The Committee reviewed the final draft of the survey and recommended some minor amendments. Following a discussion regarding distribution of the survey it was decided to include the survey with payroll checks/stubs, offering individuals the opportunity to submit it either electronically through Survey Monkey or complete a paper copy. A self-addressed envelope addressed to “Climate Survey” with the street address would be included, with a note indicating it should be returned within a two-week period. Also noted was that only one survey could be completed per computer station; this information will be provided to notify departments who are required to share a computer.

Ms. Pryor said that she has been very pleased with the accommodations that have been made to assist her with her disabilities.

The Committee reached a consensus to allow Ms. Reistetter, Ms. Martel-Moore, and Mrs. McBean-Clairborne complete the suggested amendments and proceed with the process.

Deferred Items

Due to the lack of time, all other items on the agenda were deferred to the May meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.