

APPROVED 6/27/07

**MINUTES  
WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE  
MAY 23, 2007 3:30 P.M.  
BEVERLY LIVESAY CONFERENCE ROOM**

Present: L. McBean-Clairborne, Chair; C. DeMarco; C. Griep; R. DeLuca; C. Thompson; M. Lynch; A. Fitzpatrick; B. Doling; M. Robertson; D. Richardson; K. Luz Herrera; H. Stewart

Not Present: Kit Kephart, L. Roberts, P. Carey, K. Belanger, S. Martel-Moore, L. Holmes

Others Present: Tim Joseph, Chair of the Legislature; Karen Fuller, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:37 p.m.

**Announcements**

The following announcements were made:

- Ms. Herrera, on behalf of Mr. Richardson and Mr. Kibble, Co-Chairs, extended appreciation to Tompkins County, its employees, and supervisors who assisted in the *Careers in Construction Day* recently held. This annual event is used as outreach to young students to provide information on various opportunities available to them in the construction field. Members from the County Facilities, Highway, and Solid Waste Divisions were present and have participated for several years. Employees attending included: D. Dexter, M. Merchant, Facilities Division; J. Dolan, L. Walker, G. Lockwood, S. Metcalf, J. Stern, W. Vandemark, R. Sherry, Highway Division; K. Thompson, L. Short, Solid Waste Division. Ms. Herrera also extended appreciation to the staff that covered for the employees representing the County at the event.
- Mr. Joseph spoke of attending a Workforce Investment Board (WIB) meeting where it was announced there is a shortage of machinists in our area. The discussions focused on how to best get people trained for these positions that start at \$11-12/hour, and \$20/hour when fully trained. Although the WIB would like to see a program to train individuals for this field the cost of machinery is very expensive; this expense is why the course is no longer offered through BOCES. Local businesses such as Emerson, Borg Warner, Therm, and Incodema have reported that after training machinists they often find and accept placements in Cortland and Elmira. It is very likely that local businesses will train for these positions. If the County could develop a course for machinists, it would help to ensure diversity. [Later in the meeting Mrs. McBean-Clairborne spoke of the possibility of collaboration with the CDBG funds for this training. It was noted by Ms. Herrera that the City of Ithaca has utilized CDBG funds for training programs and it seems as though the County could also. She said it would be good to encourage best practices regarding diversity while undertaking this initiative.]
- Mr. DeLuca reported on the Public Hearing for persons affected by mental retardation/developmental disabilities held May 14<sup>th</sup>. Approximately one-hundred individuals were in attendance at the event that combined entertainment with break-out sessions for County plans. He reported it exceeded the expectations for the event.
- Mr. DeLuca reported on May 19<sup>th</sup> the County co-sponsored with NAMI and other groups a mental health rally in Cass Park, noting that one in five individuals are affected by mental health challenges in the county. One of the keynote speakers was a consumer services individual and member of the Emotional Disturbed unit of the Rochester Police Department.

Minutes  
Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee  
May 23, 2007

- Mr. DeLuca announced the hiring of Maria Pena working in the CSS division. Ms. Pena is fluent in the Spanish language.
- Ms. Griep spoke of her work with Kendall at Ithaca. At the present time Kendall is reviewing work force practices to become a better place of employment. As part of the process they sought outside opinions, including former employees. Over the course of the next several years they will be working on multicultural diversity and inclusion and may ask for the Committee's assistance and advice.
- Ms. Doling attended a four-hour workshop earlier in the day regarding Cultural Competency. The meeting had approximately twenty individuals in attendance and covered the topics of language, diversity, inclusion, exclusion, etc.

### **Chair's Report**

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne reported the Ithaca Downtown Partnership (IDP) is re-energizing their conversation and efforts around diversity and inclusion. Information on both positive and negative aspects of experiences relating to proprietorship, rental, or other experiences as a consumer are being sought to assist in a better understanding of why people are not shopping downtown. The IDP is working on a diversity policy statement to be sent to all members that will be acceptable, and is seeking feedback on ways to make downtown a viable area.

### **Approval of Minutes**

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. DeLuca, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting as submitted.

### **Funding for Approved Initiatives**

The subcommittee has not yet met to develop the spending plan for funds. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne noted there is an action item related to funding to be addressed later in the meeting. Ms. Stewart noted the balance is \$14,000 at this time.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne shared information from City of Ithaca Mayor Peterson regarding the City Charter that provides a \$500 award for diversity and inclusion.

With regard to training, Ms. Stewart shared the 2007 Training Program Summary listing shared with the Personnel Committee. She noted the Building Cultural Competence program would again be offered and opened to all employees.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne reported the Personnel Committee is working on how to include the WDIC goals into the goals of the Personnel Committee.

### **Workplace Communications Plan**

Ms. Lynch reported following a review of her files she found a draft Diversity Communications Plan from May 2005. To date she has reviewed the plan and noted that the Diversity Newsletter had only a single issue; the material is now published within the County Corridors employee newsletter. Although there are only general action points regarding diversity articles, she suggested this is a good area to start reviewing and determining what action steps should be taken. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said it would be good to provide information on the Committee's work.

Mr. DeLuca noted not all employees have access to computers to review information on the website. It was suggested that a link to Diversity, Inc. be included as they have a great deal of information on how to set up links to appropriate diversity material. Ms. Stewart also indicated the need to provide audio for visually impaired individuals utilizing the website as well as the possibility of providing access to translation. It was suggested that a subcommittee be assigned to work on these issues. Following discussion it was decided that Ms. Lynch, Ms. Stewart, and Ms. Herrera would act as the subcommittee, with other individuals providing input as needed.

Members were asked to provide brief articles for the County Corridors newsletter. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne also asked there be a revisit regarding internal communication that would expand on what the Committee is doing. This may require knowing when would be the best time to do so.

### **Civil Service**

Ms. Fitzpatrick shared information relating to a subcommittee headed by Mr. Kampe of Nassau County, to review The Taylor Law (Article 14 of Civil Service Law) for any necessary updates. The subcommittee has only met once on February 14<sup>th</sup> in Albany, with eight personnel commissioners in attendance. Mr. Kampe would welcome participation of elected officials, staff, or provide minutes to WDIC members. Ms. Fitzpatrick does not believe this is to amend the civil service system or examination regulations, but specifically the portion of law that deals with labor relations such as mediation, conciliation, arbitration, etc., rather than the civil service process.

Ms. Fitzpatrick is not aware of any state-level committees being created to review and/or amend civil service regulations. She believes for civil service reform to occur it would come through New York State Association of Counties upon the request of counties in the state.

Ms. Doling inquired about the subcommittee to undertake the civil service examination issue and was informed that Ms. Carey was working in this area. The subcommittee's charge is to review what other systems are in place such as pass/fail, exam validity, etc. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said by the next meeting the subcommittee will have a plan or approach for members to review regarding the civil service issue.

### **Report from the Marketing Subcommittee**

Ms. Thompson reported the subcommittee would like to have the launch on June 6<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Bernie Milton Pavilion on the Commons. At that time posters and the official diversity statement would be presented to department heads as well as having give-away items displayed on a table. She said a table with these items would also be on display at the Diversity Consortium and an Affirmative Action event in June. Plans for this event will also include ice cream for the launch event.

Ms. Thompson requested that \$5,500 be approved for printing the posters, framing, post cards, etc.

Committee members expressed concern at the short notice if the launch event were to take place on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Doling said that the date was chosen due to availability of the pavilion; she has a form requiring a signature of a County official which then will require approval at the City level due to their noise ordinance policies. Following the discussion it was requested to see if the date could be changed to either June 13 or 14 to enable maximum participation by department heads.

Ms. Thompson provided information on the various costs associated with the launch and distribution of the diversity material. She stated the quote for the posters was seventy percent below the

Minutes  
Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee  
May 23, 2007

normal charge. When asked if the printer and other vendors are diverse suppliers Ms. Thompson indicated she believed they were. Additionally, more inquiries will be made to provide comparisons of the costs associated with this initiative.

Mr. DeLuca is concerned that providing items to employees may not be allowed due to the County fiscal policy. It was noted that the purpose of the items is to provide knowledge and education on workforce diversity and inclusion.

Members expressed their overall support for the expenditures. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne suggested that agencies receiving funding from the County should be considered as recipients of the materials as well. Examples of agencies included, but were not limited to: Human Services Coalition, Tompkins County Public Library, Tompkins Community Action, Cooperative Extension, etc.

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. DeLuca, and unanimously approved by members present, to authorize the expenditure of up to \$5,500 for the launch program and associated materials.

Ms. Fitzpatrick shared information indicating additional rollover funds from the Personnel Department may be available to use for the initiatives. She believed the holistic approach to the event and recommended a special invitation be extended to members of the Legislature and key individuals within the community. A suggestion was to include members of the Tompkins County Council of Governments as well.

Ms. Fuller suggested the Committee inquire if the diversity logo could be incorporated on the gateway signs throughout the County. Funding may be available through the Strategic Tourism Planning Board for this effort.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on June 27, 2007.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.