

**MINUTES
WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
JUNE 27, 2007 3:30 P.M.
BEVERLY LIVESAY CONFERENCE ROOM**

Present: L. McBean-Clairborne, Chair; C. DeMarco, C. Griep, R. DeLuca, M. Lynch, B. Doling, M. Robertson, D. Richardson, L. Roberts, S. Martel-Moore, L. Holmes, P. Carey
Not Present: K. Kephart, K. Belanger, C. Thompson, H. Stewart, K. Luz Herrera, A. Fitzpatrick, C. Thompson
Others Present: Tim Joseph, Chair of the Legislature; S. Hill, T. Le Karen Fuller, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m.

Announcements

The following announcements were made:

- Ms. Hill announced that the minority outreach portion of her position would now be handled by Ms. Tien Le who formerly worked with the VISTA program.
- Mr. Roberts announced the Fingerlakes Independence Center annual picnic will be held on July 26th, noon until 3:00 p.m. at Stewart Park small pavilion. This coincides with the seventeenth anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Mr. Richardson announced that eight of twelve graduates of the construction preparation program have been placed in an apprentice program.
- Mrs. McBean-Clairborne announced the Race Alliance Initiative will be holding a block party in front of the Greater Ithaca Activities Center on July 7th, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. This event is structured to assist in working on race relations within the County and throughout the nation. There will be many guest speakers, music, conversations around race relations, healing, etc.
- Mrs. McBean-Clairborne announced the City Basketball League, run by Greater Ithaca Activities Center, has started. This adult league runs Monday – Wednesday; in the event of rain the games take place at Boynton Middle School. She shared her recent observations that while watching the teams from Waverly, Elmira, and Newfield participated, the interaction was an excellent opportunity to view how individuals grouped themselves. She explained that it was unsure if they were grouped by familiarity or comfort level.

Chair's Report

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne expressed her excitement regarding the Diversity Statement kickoff event held on the Commons. She reported that following the kickoff event the State Affirmative Action Officers Association conference held in Ithaca; she was pleased to see the Diversity logo displayed on a tablecloth banner.

Road Signs

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne asked Ms. Robertson to provide an update on the feasibility of including the diversity logo on gateway signage. Mrs. Robertson reported that she contacted Ms. McPheeters at the Chamber of Commerce and was notified that unfortunately the signs were already being produced.

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A brief discussion occurred regarding other possible options to enable placement of the diversity logo at gateways or other areas. Mr. Roberts reported the Marketing Committee's next agenda would be including a discussion of how to fit the Diversity logo into the County culture. It was suggested that due to consistent use by outside organizations, placing the Diversity Statement in County-owned conference rooms would be a suitable method to initiate recognition. Also recommended, was the ability for larger departments to obtain additional copies to enable placement on each floor, or in a common area. The Committee discussed distribution of the framed Diversity Statement to the not-for-profit agencies and the library; a survey will occur to determine how many of the poster-sized statements would be required and the subsequent costs associated with them. Mr. Joseph suggested a non-framed poster for use in conference rooms. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said the key-chains have proven to be a highly successful item. As a result, it was suggested that a process for reordering and housing the Diversity Statement products is in order. Presently the excess stock is being stored in the Training Office of the Personnel Department.

Marketing Team

Mr. Roberts expressed his appreciation to everyone supporting the kickoff event, and in particular the individuals who actively obtained and served the refreshments at the event, as well as Mr. Asher who provided the public address system.

Ms. Lynch spoke of the article in the County Corridors about the event and spoke of the wonderful attendance of County employees as well as the general public, with approximately 60 County employees. Mr. Roberts also thanked Ms. Lynch for assisting with the media coverage of the event.

Ms. Lynch passed around a pamphlet that had been prepared for the event. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne thanked Ms. Lynch for her development of the pamphlet. Mr. DeLuca spoke of Mrs. McBean-Clairborne's comments at the event and indicated they were very enthusiastic, adding to the success of the event. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said she was pleased to see how upbeat those in attendance were and noted the high attendance by Highway Department representatives.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne asked that the Marketing Team provide a breakdown of the expenses to date for the event and associated costs.

Mr. Joseph noted that the Marketing Team was recognizing others for their work and he wished to recognize the members of the Marketing Team for their efforts. He personally presented members present with a letter of appreciation while Mrs. McBean-Clairborne read the contents.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said she realized that the Diversity Statement does not fully address the inclusion aspect desired. She anticipates an amendment should be done in the future.

Approval of Minutes

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Richardson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2007, as amended.

Selection of a Vice Chair

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne noted there is no Vice Chair in place and asked what process members would desire to fill this position. A brief discussion took place and suggestions were made to perhaps survey members not present. Following a clarification of the bylaws, it was determined a survey of those excused was not necessary, and the floor was opened for nominations.

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Ms. Griep, to nominate Shawn Martel-Moore for the position of Vice Chair of the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Mr. Roberts expressed concern that the leadership of the Committee being heavily County staff; Mr. DeLuca noted that the Committee is generally County-heavy as opposed to other groups completing similar works. Mr. Richardson said the work done is about the County.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne asked if there were any other nominations. There were none; Mr. DeLuca called the question. A voice vote on the motion to elect Shawn Martel-Moore to the position of Vice Chair of the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee was unanimous. MOTION APPROVED.

Workplace Communication Plan

Ms. Lynch said the Committee is working to build upon the excitement of the kickoff. She will be attending the July 11 Department Head meeting to discuss plans for providing an awareness and will follow-up with each department individually to tailor the individual approach for their specific needs. Ms. Lynch reported there is a Cornell Public Administration Masters program student willing to intern and assist in the program. Ms. Carey expressed appreciation that there will be an effort to recognize the differences within departments. Mr. Richardson recommended that union leadership within departments be included as well. Ms. DeMarco recommended that senior staff members also be involved.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne spoke of her desire to have the Communications team efforts directed developing letterhead that would include a tagline on the bottom of the page indicating the diverse workforce, and to communicate with departments of potential amendments. Mr. Roberts suggested the logo phrase presently used, "Strength in Diversity" could be used. He also noted the Marketing team had made every effort to envision the logo's use when designing it. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne would like to have some alternate choices to review.

Ms. Lynch expressed a desire to have the Diversity logo visible on the County web pages and that it perhaps have a link to the diversity page. Although there is information on the diversity statement, she would like a more refined web site.

Spending Plan Subcommittee

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne reported the subcommittee met to discuss various ways to utilize the funds available. At the present time \$5,500 has been allocated. She provided a list of possible ways to use the funds that included a variety of training opportunities, resource materials, community education, etc. A discussion occurred regarding the various suggestions and their positive and negative aspects of some of the suggestions. Over the course of the conversation the following items were noted:

- Grants and Awards – would be to provide an incentive to provide training or activities that would benefit employee understanding of diversity and inclusion rather than provide an award after the fact.
- Facilities and accessibility – Mr. Roberts suggested a self-assessment of programmatic needs for disabled individuals be completed after the infrastructure assessment is completed.
- Participate in welcome back for students on the Commons – members of the Committee had varied opinions of whether this type of activity. Mr. Joseph said he does not feel the students are the right audience for what the Committee is attempting to do; he would prefer to have the funds spent for a Project Assistant or Recruitment and Resource guides. Other committee members expressed a preference for other items. Ms. Martel-Moore noted the idea behind the activity was to assist staff in the Finance Department who experience an increased workload during the period

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the students return. In addition, Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said it is a good opportunity to be visible to students and their families, many who are seeking work during a spouse's educational period. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne spoke of the need to instill the importance of diversity and inclusion to those we serve as well as employees.

Following the conversation, the following items were chosen by the Committee to be top priorities to attempt to complete this year: posters with diversity statements in conference rooms; utilizing a project assistant to provide support; marketing Civil Service materials; and a Resource Guide for department head use.

Civil Service

The subcommittee addressing Civil Service has been developing a preliminary action plan that includes a review of alternate systems. They will be meeting again to review the information once compiled to determine the best steps to take. Some suggestions to be reviewed include training possibilities, the ability to have a pass/fail system and eliminate the need to hire one of the top three on the list, determining how to work within the educational requirements for positions to allow the most flexibility when hiring.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on July 25, 2007.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne spoke of Ms. Belinger's e-mail thanking the Committee for their work to put together materials for the recent conference she hosted.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.