

Diversity Affairs Commission
Thursday, June 3, 2021 • 3:00-4:30pm
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Meeting Facilitated by: Mandi Dornfeld, Extension Liaison to the Diversity Affairs Commission.

Dornfeld and the Extension Office will continue to provide facilitation, communication & support for meetings while the formal organization of a Steering Committee and Officers are in development.

Introductions (Name & Agency) of those in attendance: Beth Roberts Winnebago County Human Services, Steve Binder Winnebago County Board Supervisor District 13, Bryn Ceman Human Services ADRC, Deb Martin Winnebago County Resident, Ethan Transition Director for County Executive, Heidi Keating Winnebago County Health Department, Jon Doemel Winnebago County Executive, Lateria Garrett Resident of Winnebago County, Mary Siebert Child Care Director at Neenah/Menasha YMCA, Mee Yang Hmong Service Center, Nathan Menasha Joint School District, Niki Euhardy Health Dept, Sara Muhlbauer CEO Lakeland Care, Sarah Clarke World Relief, Sophia Voight Reporter with Oshkosh Herald, Mike Norton Winnebago County Board Supervisor District 20

Agenda Items

Waking Up White Event:

At the zoom event we watched a 40 minute interview with the author of "Waking Up White.". Beth Roberts facilitated discussion with Winnebago County participants following the video. Roberts reported that several attendees shared personal experiences with their own unconscious bias. Norton agreed that there was a lot of discussion/participation for 30-60 mins. - there could have been more discussion if time had allowed. Dornfeld shared results of post-event evaluation:

- 30 people called in/participated in the event. 8 have responded to the post-event survey (this is slightly lower than the 30% target return rate). Dornfeld will send another reminder to participants to complete survey and bring an update to the next meeting.
- Results from the 8 current respondents:
 - 75% of respondents said they learned something new about racial issues after watching the video
 - 62.5% of respondents reported that they had a deeper understanding of their own bias after participating in this event.
 - 100% of respondents reported that they will seek out future opportunities to learn about diversity, equity and inclusion. Dornfeld commented that this last result was hopeful to see, as one of our major goals is to encourage people to seek out learning around these (diversity, equity & inclusion) topics.
- Feedback & Comments:
 - I appreciate the intentions behind equity trainings like this, but I continuously see the same glaring issue - the lack of diversity within the population we are talking about. Often, I get the feeling of these trainings being a safe space for white folks to discuss how racism affects them (white population) without being challenged or educated by the population we're supposedly learning about (BIPOC communities). There just seems to be no representation to be had.
 - It was perfect introduction to this topic.
 - More offerings like this to continue the discussion.

Ideas for Future Topics Events:

- **Roberts:** Mee Yang would you/Hmong Service Center be interested in putting on a session? Yang - Yes. Yang will make some contacts throughout community to see who would be willing to participate in a dialogue/discussion. Dornfeld will reach out to Yang for scheduling & advertising of this opportunity.
- **Nathan:** African Heritage Inc. Based out of Appleton - do a lot of work around cultural understanding. Nathan will send link to Dornfeld. Garrett is currently working with this group and will work with Dornfeld to coordinate a potential offering.
- **Supervisor Norton:** 1. Oshkosh Corporation has a Diversity Coordinator - can we reach out to them or other Diversity Coordinators to learn what they do, what they need. 2. Health Department Presentation - interviewed highschool students of color about their experiences. Responses they got were very interesting. 3. Imagine Fox Cities: Appleton group that focuses on diversity and race - Norton and Roberts participated in a day-long event last year. Dornfeld is affiliated with this group - they are currently launching a series on Belonging.
- **Roberts:** Mosque has done presentations in past that were incredibly informative. The last presentation was not well attended/advertised. Maybe we could see if they would do this presentation again?
- **Supervisor Binder:** Whatever we decide to do - we need enough lead time to do a quality promotion. If we get 6-8 weeks to recruit we could do a good job advertising and get a good turn-out - make it worthwhile for presenters. If we get bigger crowds - perhaps the Expo Center could be used for these events?

Dornfeld: One of first tasks of Steering Committee will be to evaluate format of events...in-person or virtual. There are pros and cons to both.

Binder: We could also consider hybrid meetings...in-person provides opportunity for connections before and after meeting, virtual helps with transportation issues of getting to Expo for some people. County Board is beginning hybrid meetings based at Expo Building...they are researching technology/equipment needs to make this happen. This group might be able to use their technology/set-up once it is figured out with IS.

- **Clarke:** Recent Post Crescent article with Bess McGee...founder of Bess Knows Best LLC. Helps companies with diversity coaching.

Steering Committee Updates:

We are continuing to move forward on developing/naming a steering committee. There are 3 names that have been presented to Executive Doemel for approval. Doemel does not see any concerns with the proposed names and has also proposed another person to be considered (Harry VanBurek) for next run so it is a staggered board.

Strategic Plan (Facilitator: Heidi Keating, Winnebago County Health Department):

- We worked on drafting a mission statement at our last meeting on May 6: **“Provide actionable opportunities for members of the community with an emphasis on equitable learning and growth”**.
- Roberts shared a chart where she organized notes from previous discussion and contents of the resolution itself into 3 components of a mission statement for the group to look at for patterns and alignment with what the commission would like to accomplish.
 - People, places, organization (Our Cause - who, what, where)
 - Making a difference (Our Action - what we do)
 - Results (Our Impact - change we’re trying to make)
- What themes in the chart are jumping out at people? Are there edits we need to consider to our current draft of the mission statement based on what we’re seeing here or feedback we’ve gotten from others?
 - Education seems to be theme in second column. Equity is another theme in second column
 - Mary: our current wording on the draft is very academic sounding right now. I asked others at YMCA to read the mission and they didn’t really understand it. Our mission statement should have inclusive language that helps the general public be able to see themselves as a part of this group and understand what we’re all about.
 - We’ve discussed “Equitable” being a term we need to provide education and understanding around - so this might not be the best word to use in our mission statement.
 - Dornfeld shared an edited statement that was sent to her: “Provide educational opportunities to Winnebago County residents to encourage belonging, equitability and to see diversity as an asset.”
 - Could “fairness” be used as a term to replace the word equitable?
 - Binder: Hard to pin point one thing when we have so many things we want to do...we’re trying to fix the world. What do we want to start with? We aren’t all on same page yet about where we are starting as a committee.
 - Use of term equity/equitable - if this is most appropriate word to use in mission statement then it should be in there and then we need to educate on the meaning of this term.
 - Norton: Informing and educating on what diversity is in our community should be our first step - then we can address equity. First goal is to inform/educate on how diverse this community is and then work on making things more equitable.
 - For me, its about Experience - how do I meet these people? How do we get groups together to get to know each other? Be an icebreaker for people/groups to get to meet and now each other.
 - Experience is a key word we haven’t included. Convening is another important term.
 - What about Engagementment as another key term or theme?
 - Experience for Engagement?
 - Engage seems like a one-way word/action...Experience seems like a community coming together. Not so much telling people you’re wrong, but showing what is right. If we focus on getting people together to not be afraid of diversity, solutions will present themselves.
 - Suggestion: “A community that is committed to accepting and celebrating our differences in Winnebago County”.
 - Suggestion: “Embracing diversity in Winnebago County.” Do we need to include the next level of engagement in addition to this? It’s one thing to embrace/appreciate diversity but another to provide equity.
 - Hmong Festival: Binder attends every year, but sees very few “white” people in attendance. This is a great way to experience the Hmong culture. Very few people outside of the Hmong community attend this event. Binder has had a great experience at this event and enjoyed learning about history of the Hmong culture. Why can’t we promote events like this for others in the community to attend? We have beautiful facilities, with beautiful festivals - yet we can’t get the community to participate in them.

- Dornfeld: this goes back to the comments earlier - Familiarity reduces Fear. As a commission we can consider promoting these Winnebago County event and serve as someone to “meet up with” at events.
- Suggestion: “To create experiences for all residents and employees in Winnebago County to engage in celebrating our diversity and creating a more equitable and inclusive community.” Maybe “create” is wrong word...maybe enhancing? Or promoting? Support? Drive engagement?
 - Also need to look at bringing events to Winnebago County that are regularly happening in other communities.
 - North Highschool’s Community Department puts on some great events. We need to look around our community see what is being done and find ways to do more encouraging. Prior to COVID there was a great Thanksgiving Event Monday before Thanksgiving that brought together many faith communities at the Grand.
 - Encouragement for this group to be ACTION focused. Lots of committees have lots of great discussion but struggle to move to action.

Sharing of Resources from Group –

- Dornfeld sent an email sharing about the variety of Juneteenth events that are going on.
- “Race Forward” on facebook, twitter and website has some great resources, information and events.
- Equity in Aging Training: The Gemini Group produced “Definition of Equity Terms” document that is really good.
- Send resources you have to Mandi Dornfeld via email (amanda.dornfeld@wisc.edu). She can then distribute to group until the group has their own Secretary to manage these tasks and information.

Next Meeting: Next regular Diversity Affairs Commission meeting on Thursday, July 1 will be CANCELLED due to the July 4th holiday and RESCHEDULED for Thursday, July 15, 2021 from 3:00pm to 4:30pm.

Meeting time and venue of regularly scheduled future meetings will be placed on next month’s agenda for discussion.

Respectfully submitted by: Jody Bezio, Administrative Associate Winnebago County Extension