



RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, December 7, 2022 (6:30 PM)
MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

Note: Checked boxes indicate present. Unchecked boxes indicate absence.

Community Members:

Shane Lloyd (Chair) Jared Hautmamaki (Vice Chair) Izola Shaw (Zola) (Second Vice Chair) Sonia Canzater Isaac Cudjoe Pat Grant Shuo Huang Tasnuva Khan
 Jordan Neal Gustavo Torres

County Staff Members:

Selena Mendy Singleton (Parliamentarian) Anthony R Alston Sylvia Hernandez Betty Lam Willie Parker Loan James Stowe

Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) Staff: Tiffany Ward and Jeanette Rojas

I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Chair Lloyd.

II. AGENDA

- No objections.
- James Stowe brought up that reparation discussions should resume in future conversations. It was noted that the Reparations sub-committee will need a new Chair.

III. MINUTES

- November 16, 2022, minutes were approved.

IV. METRICS/MEASURES

Item: Open discussion about how to measure the success of RESJAC's efforts year over year

- Zola Shaw recommended that we see other agencies' metrics so that they can inform our own. A more specific recommendation includes considering legislation and its impact statements. How many Bills were voted on with negatives, positives, or no impact concerning racial equity and social justice? Are the legislators being accountable for their commitment? The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) may already have something like this. This will help inform our advisory role.
- Pat Grant mentioned that Health and Human Services (HHS) measures a variety of indicators. We could compile the various measures gathered by departments on racial equity and social justice.

- Jared Hautamaki asked the question that the group to reflect on, “What do agencies have in their policies and the San Francisco plan, the DC plan that was sent last week? What are the best practices and what can the County try”?
- Jordan Neal offered that RESJAC could track events, and attendance numbers and create evaluation criteria (flyers, attendance, etc.). During a future retreat, each RESJAC subcommittee could discuss its priorities and success measures.
- Shuo Huang mentioned that the ORESJ collects reports on projects conducted by each department.
- Tiffany Ward shared that ORESJ collects metrics around budget, amount of people the office has trained, RESJ action plans, REAs, fiscal decisions, and the number of Core teams and leads.
 - No department has RESJ plans yet. There is a template around what departments are looking for such as hiring, community engagement, promotions, and internal matters with how employees of color are treated and how that treatment is translated into better services.
- Shane asked the question: “Is their data around promotion, retention?”
- About County employee data on promotion and retention by race and ethnicity, Tiffany Ward answered that although some data is disaggregated, we need to find it. Disaggregating data is a huge metric for the County, but it is not done consistently or at all in some contexts.

Item: Comparative analysis ORESJ tracking measures in Montgomery County and other jurisdictions

- Shuo and Jordan offered to help with conducting a comparative analysis of different measures collected around racial equity and social justice.
- Tiffany Ward mentioned that ORESJ looked at Seattle, Fairfax, and other jurisdictions’ RESJ impact statements.
- The ORESJ is also trying to find out our impact through our REAs (150). Tracking how people are voting, whether people are watching Council, track REIAs. Question: Does RESJAC want to impact the decision or just want to track votes?
- Selena Singleton informed RESJAC that there is another bucket of assessments to consider. Also suggested that a university student could help with this comparative analysis.
- After RESJAC determines the scope, then the committee can work with a student to get information.
- Pat Grant expressed concern about the lack of African-American-led nonprofits/ and small businesses.

Item: Year-in-review discussion to evaluate RESJAC’s success in meeting the duties of the legislation

- For the first part of the exercise, committee members rated and discussed RESJAC's performance on each of the duties enumerated in the legislation.
- Zola Shaw requested clarification on examples for each duty to ensure there was shared language and common understanding.
- Several RESJAC duties received varied ratings amongst committee members indicating a lack of shared consensus around the nature of the duty and what success looked like.

Those duties were:

- Develop and distribute information about racial equity and social justice in the County
- Promote educational activities that increase understanding of racial equity and social justice in the County
- Meet periodically with the racial equity and social justice leadership for each department and office
- Recommend coordinated strategies for reducing racial and social injustice in the County
- Advise the Council, the Executive, and County agencies about racial equity and social justice in the County and recommend policies, programs, legislation, and regulations necessary to reduce racial and social justice inequity
- RESJAC committee members shared the most consensus on the following duties:
 - Adopt rules and procedures as necessary to perform its functions
 - Keep a record of its activities and minutes of all meetings
- Tiffany Ward stated that equity leads are only as impactful as their management empowers them so that must be kept in mind.
- For the second part of the exercise, the committee discussed the duties that revealed the most variance on the rating scale to begin coming to some consensus around how to evaluate success.
 - Selena Singleton added nuance in that some departments cannot even have Core Leads because there are 2 or 2.5 people in their office.
 - Tiffany Ward relayed to the group that the RESJ legislation was very ambitious and with three years under the legislation, this should be amended, Selena Singleton agreed.
 - Jared Hautamaki expressed appreciation for the additional context and noted that leaving it to the head of each agency seems insufficient and there is something to be said for meeting with staff.
 - Tiffany Ward noted that staff alone should not be the only ones accountable for advancing RESJ within a department. Power dynamics need to be analyzed too because the power equity leads have to wield may be undermined.
 - Pat Grant posed the question: Has health been looked at? If we're going to ask for changes, can we look at health disparities?

- In response to Pat Grant's question, Selena requested clarification and asked for an email detailing what she ought to look for in her review of the Bill. That will help in her review of the Bill and through executive regs, and amendments.
- Shuo wondered about focusing on departments and if we should focus on other things.
- Zola requested that the committee agrees with our measurements. We need shared frameworks.
- James Stowe stated that for the community members appointed to the committee, their time is as a volunteer, and they've done a great job bringing awareness. Question: How do we make this work better because there has been a lot of progress in the last two years including RESJ conversations, Equity Lead work, and advocacy?
- Zola elaborated on what counts as advising, offering the example of public testimonies as advising.
- James Stowe suggested that the REJAC annual report can be leveraged to deliver a verbal presentation to the Council.
- Selena agreed with that idea and mentioned that RESJAC could go before Government Operations. The Committee Chair Kate Stewart was the former mayor of Takoma Park.

Guests for Future Meetings:

- The committee discussed some initial ideas for future meeting guests and topics to explore.
 - Selena Singleton mentioned that the new County Council President, [Evan Glass](#), was invited to the January meeting and we're awaiting a response from his office.
 - Chair Lloyd and Tiffany Ward will send a communication to the Council introducing the newly elected Committee Leadership.
 - Tasnuva Khan and Zola Shaw are partnering with the Department of Environmental Protection on community engagement processes.
 - Dalbin Osorio and Nadia Salazar Sandi are co-chairs of the [Police Advisory Commission](#).
 - James Stowe recommended that the committee invite Bishop Paul Walker, the current chair of the [Police Accountability Board](#).
 - [Tania Stern](#), the acting Planning Director, was suggested as another person for the committee to invite in the coming year.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

- James Stowe provided an update on the documentary, Who We Are, and shared that RESJAC members could view the documentary on Netflix or YouTube with the link he shared, in the next 24 hours. Tiffany Ward suggested that RESJAC co-sponsor a viewing with the Human Rights Commission and host a panel. The committee will explore this as an educational activity for the future.
- For the future, Chair Lloyd shared that the committee could explore collaborations with local businesses and youth communities.

- James Stowe alerted the committee to a recent act of [vandalism](#) at the Scotland AME Church in Potomac.

VI. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 pm by Chair Shane.