



RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, May 18, 2022 (6:30PM)
MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

Committee Members: Izola (Zola) Shaw (Chair), Selena Mendy Singleton (Parliamentarian), Sonia Canzater, Isaac Cudjoe, Jared Hautamaki, Sylvia Hernandez, Shuo Huang, Tasnuva Khan, Betty Lam, Jordan Neal, Willie Parker Loan, Gustavo Torres

Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice Staff: Tiffany Ward

Absent: Pat Grant, Shane Lloyd (Vice Chair), Jim Stowe, Partap Verma

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35pm by Chair Shaw.

AGENDA

No objections or additions.

MINUTES

No objections or additions.

- April 27 meeting minutes approved.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT OUT

- Zola Shaw – Reparations Subcommittee
 - The reparations subcommittee did not meet in May.
- Jordan Neal – Health, Public Safety, and Immigration Subcommittee
 - The health subcommittee is working on developing an agenda for the “Health Equity” breakout session for the June 26 Community Forum.
 - The three subcommittees are working on developing priorities for the next three months.
- Isaac Cudjoe – Communications and Outreach Subcommittee
 - The subcommittee is continuing to plan for the upcoming Community Forum on June 26.

COUNTY COVID-19 STATUS

Presenter: Dr. James Bridgers, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
Discussion Highlights:

- Montgomery County is currently at a “medium” level for COVID-19. It is recommended that people wear well-fitted masks around others if you take public transportation, are experiencing symptoms, and as an additional precaution for indoor gatherings.

- In the last 7 days, there have been 200 or more COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people in Montgomery County however hospitals have had fewer than 10 new COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 people in past 7 days.
- Montgomery County is not seeing a significant impact on hospitalization rates or deaths in the county. In fact, there has been an 88% reduction in hospitalization and death.
- Paxlovid and other therapeutic treatments for COVID-19 are plentiful in Montgomery County.
- If you receive a positive COVID-19 test, the recommendation is that you self-isolate for 5 days and then wear a well-fitted mask on days 6-10.
- COVID-19 subvariants are highly transmissible and unvaccinated people have the highest hospitalization rates.
- Montgomery County is currently planning for COVID-19 booster vaccines for children as well as continuing efforts to vaccinate the current unvaccinated population.
 - More than 95% of people in Montgomery County have 1 dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, 88% are fully vaccinated and another 55% have a booster shot.
 - In December – January 2022 COVID-19 cases were higher for Blacks and Hispanics. Black and non-Hispanic White populations are the least vaccinated group of people.
- PCR tests are more effective for people who do not have any symptoms. Although some people continue to test positive on PCR tests for weeks after the initial positive test because of residual virus in their bodies, it is not recommended to keep testing after the first positive test.
- Montgomery County is working to ensure everyone is aware of the therapies they might be eligible for in the treatment of COVID-19. The Health and Human Services
- Discussion Highlights is using community partnerships to disseminate this information to the community.
- There is a hotline for people to call and get screened over the phone or they can complete an online questionnaire and get a response back regarding their eligibility for therapeutic treatment.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Item: Community Forum Planning

Discussion Highlights:

- Izola Shaw reported that the Communications and Outreach subcommittee is
 - Working on a graphic and communications plan for all activities related to the upcoming Community Forum.
 - Planning to have all promotional materials including the registration page ready for dissemination about a month in advance of the forum.
 - Working with county staff to get IT and Zoom support for the Community Forum.

Item: RESJAC Retreat

Discussion Highlights:

- Zola Shaw reported that the next RESJAC retreat will take place in the Children's Classroom at Brookside Gardens on Saturday, May 21 from 10:00am – 3:00pm.
 - The purpose of the retreat is to go over community agreement, status update of where we are and our plan moving forward, revisit trust and accountability principles, and values, and continue activities we were not able to cover in our last retreat.

Item: Membership Term Information

Presenter: Ms. Beth Gochrach

Discussion Highlights:

- Members serve 3 years terms as outlined in the Montgomery County codes. Standard practices require that terms are staggered so only 1/3 of each committee turns over every year.
- When a committee member's term ends, they must reapply online. Incumbents must be reappointed and confirmed by the County Council. They are not automatically reappointed. A public vacancy notice must be posted to the county website for 3 weeks to list the number of vacancies along with the number of incumbents. The nominating committee will then make a recommendation to the County Executive who will make selections and send names to the County Council for final nominations.
- Transition of the County Executive does not impact the committee members.
- Boards are allowed to have a social media presence, but it must be monitored by a county employee and the social media channels must comply with all county rules.
- Committee/board members are not allowed to use the prestige of the committee/board for self-gain.

OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY SOCIAL JUSTICE FY23 OPERATING BUDGET

Presenter: Ms. Tiffany Ward and Ms. Sarah Alvarez

Discussion Highlights:

- Tiffany Ward's office helps the administration examine the budget for racial equity and social justice and is currently performing racial equity impact assessments for supplemental requests.
- Capital Improvement Process: Used for infrastructure, sidewalks, bridges, buildings, etc. The process happens bi-annually, and Tiffany Ward goes through a prescreening where her office asks departments if they need any money for projects.
- Tiffany Ward's office created a budget equity tool for the Capital Improvement Process to ask departments how racial equity was considered in their projects.
- Tiffany Ward and her team then put together a rubric and score the departments based on their responses to several questions including but not limited to, how the projects would help communities of color? What racial inequities the project would close? Etc.
- The results showed that many departments did not consider racial equity when developing their projects and many did not understand the impact their projects would have on communities of color.
- Tiffany and her team then provided each department with guidance/recommendations on how they can improve upon their project ideas and offered consultation for departments on how they can strengthen their racial equity lens in the future.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37pm by Chair Shaw.