DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE MEETING
MT. CALVARY AME ZION CHURCH
800 LASALLE STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28110
SEPTEMBER 8, 2022 – 6:30 PM

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Acceptance and Approval of July 13, 2022 Minutes
3. Review of Staff Notes from August 11, 2022 Meeting
4. New Business
5. Old Business
6. Adjournment

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 13, 2022 – 7:00 P.M.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee met on Wednesday, July 13, at 7:00 p.m. at Mt. Calvary AME Zion Church in Monroe.

Staff Present:	Debra C. Reed, Human Resource Director and Sheila Couick, Minute Taker
Members Present:	Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Councilman Freddie Gordon, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Cynthia Baez, Melissa McKeown, Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Lanny Lancaster, Selina Campbell, Steven Ramsey, Swindell Edwards, Tamara Williams and Tiffany Wilson
Members Absent:	Benita Sanders, Cress Barnes, Cynthia Brown, Emily McGinnis, Ernest Collins, Jamie Nader, Lakeysha Medlin, Matthew Belk, Michele King, Penelope Locklear and Tripp Helms

Chairperson Anthony open the meeting at 7:00 p.m. by welcoming everyone to the meeting.

Chairperson Anthony stated that due to there being a quorum that the minutes from the February 9 meeting could be approved and accepted.

Due to not having a quorum at the April and June meetings, Staff Notes are attached but will not be voted on.

Acceptance and Approval of February 9, 2022 Minutes:
Minutes from the February 9, 2022 meeting were approved as written. Melissa McKeown made the motion to approve the minutes as written. Tiffany Wilson second the motion. Chairperson Anthony asked if there was any discussion needed on the minutes and then conducted a vote.

Ayes: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Councilman Freddie Gordon, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Cynthia Baez, Melissa McKeown, Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Lanny Lancaster, Selina Campbell, Steven Ramsey, Swindell Edwards, Tamara Williams and Tiffany Wilson

Nayes: None

Chairperson Anthony stated that the minutes from February 9, 2022 were unanimously approved by all in attendance.

New Business:

Committee Member Attendance:
Chairperson Anthony commented that committee member attendance had been a problem and stated that an email was sent out to all committee members asking if they wanted to stay on the committee or be removed from the committee. There were four responses to the email. Chairperson Anthony stated that if the members that are at the meeting tonight continue to come then we can continue to have official meetings. Chairperson Anthony stated that she hoped others would decide to come to the meetings. Chairperson Anthony asked if there were any suggestion on member attendance or how to get members back. Steven Ramsey asked if any of the responses were to be removed. No removal from

committee responses were received. Chairperson Anthony stated that if anyone knew a committee member personally please encourage them to come back. We need to move forward with the training that we received.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the only item that are currently involved in is the joint meeting with the Union County Chamber in 2023. This would be for a job fair with a new twist of having a job fair where the owners of the companies and factories have learned about DEI and have an understanding of what the barriers are. Then they will be able to present the job and be able to hire people, offer them training and retain these people. Chairperson Anthony stated that she is waiting on Pat Khale from the Chamber to set a meeting date and time. Currently the Chairpersons are meeting, however Chairperson Anthony would like to include more of the committee members at meetings.

Melissa McKeown asked if a list of committee members could be provided. Tiffany Wilson commented that committee members were listed on the minutes.

Melvin Tate commented that while we are waiting on the meeting with the Chamber we need to work on the logo and making this committee known to business. Melvin Tate stated that Council approved the mission statement. We needed to work towards having a press conference to announce the Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Committee in Monroe. Need to have something started by the next holiday in September such as a flyer or stickers that we had talked about. This would help us sell the ideal to the businesses. The Chamber's motives are not the same as out motives. We want to be heard at the Chamber meeting; not used at the Chamber meeting. We need a listing of who has vacant jobs and need to remove barriers that are keeping people from seeing job listings.

Melvin Tate stated that a good business practice is to thank people for their services. We need to thank Dr. Samuel for his service with this committee.

Chairperson Anthony thanked Melvin Tate for his comments.

Chairperson Anthony commented that Mr. Tate had suggested a news conference to make the committee known and asked if anyone had any suggestions on how to make the committee known in the community. Tiffany Wilson commented that a press release could be released on the Union County government channel. Melvin Tate commented that it could be on Spectrum News. Tiffany Wilson commented that we could reach out the Channel 36 WCNC News for a news story. Steven Ramsey commented that we could contact local radio stations and conduct on air interviews. Chairperson Anthony stated we could attend City Council meetings.

Chairperson Anthony asked which of the suggestion should be done first. Selina Campbell made the motion that we should start with a presentation at a council meetings first. Tiffany Wilson second the motion. Chairperson Anthony stated that the next council meeting would be August 9. Chairperson Anthony asked how many of the members would come to the council meeting.

Freddie Gordon commented that council meetings are scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month and there are two sessions. The first session is at 4:30 p.m. and it is the Strategic Planning Session and the second session is at 6:00 p.m. and it is the regular council meeting. Freddie Gordan recommended attending the first session at 4:30 p.m. and asked for thoughts on attending the council meeting at that time. At the 4:30 p.m. session a presentation could be done to council and Chairperson Anthony and Melvin Tate just attended one of those meetings for approval of the mission statement. Freddie Gordon commented that Council has heard of this committee and they support it. Freddie Gordon commented that we needed to assembly facts and goals of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to present to council prior to attending the meeting and decide on type of support we need from Council.

Melissa McKeown commented that we started working on quarterly goals before and kinda got off the topic due to not having a quorum at meetings. Maybe we could talk about that at the meeting.

Melvin Tate stated that we needed to thoroughly prepare for the council meeting stating who we are, what we are planning, what that looks like, how we can help businesses, and how we can help the community so we are not stumbling at the meeting. Melvin Tate commented that he preferred the 4:30 p.m. council meeting due to the 6:00 p.m. sessions being different and we could be heard at this meeting. If Councilmembers had questions they could be asked at this meeting.

Cynthia Baez asked what time the meeting would was on the second Tuesday of each month. The meeting time suggested was 4:30 p.m. was for the council meeting.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the 4:30 session was just for council and the 6:00 p.m. council meeting this meeting would go out to the public on video. At the 6:00 p.m. session we would have 5-8 minutes to present. Melvin Tate commented that negative comments from the public could come up at the 6:00 p.m meeting and we don't need any negative comments and we just needed to meet with council. Melvin Tate commented that a press conference would let people know who we are.

Cynthia Baez commented that we should meet with council in September so that we could have the month of August to organize and create sub-committees to gather information.

Tiffany Wilson commented that since council approved the mission statement could we do a press release in August announcing the mission statement of DEI. Then we can meet again to plan for the September council meeting.

Melissa McKeown commented that we could share the mission statement in a press release and note that we are going to be at the September council meeting to hear more information.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she would like for someone else or several people to speak at the council meeting to show that everyone is working together as a committee.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the general consensus of the group was to wait till September to meeting council.

Freddie Gordon commented that he would like for all committee members to be comfortable with the September meeting. Freddie Gordon commented that he would need to present this to the Mayor and City Manager prior to the meeting to explain what the meeting would be about. Freddie Gordon commented that if that is the date then it would need to be placed on the agenda.

Tiffany Willson commented that we needed a printed article for a press release. Melissa MeKeown commented that it could go out the newspapers.

Chairperson Anthony assigned the following projects the members and asked for them be prepared to discuss these projects at the August meeting:

Tiffany Wilson and Melissa McKeown – Prepare press release for next meeting (August meeting)

Althea Richardson-Tucker, Cynthia Baez, Tamera Williams, and Steven Ramsey – Prepare a listing of what we needs to be presented at the council meeting.

Lanny Lancaster, Melvin Tate, Selina Campbell, Michael Hall and Swindell Edwards – Prepare a narrative for a press conference.

Chairperson Anthony stated that all of this would need to be approved but this would give us something to work with at the next meeting.

Chairperson Anthony asked if everyone understood their assignments and were good with them. Everyone was good with the assignments.

<u>Meeting Date and Time</u>:
Althea Richardson-Tucker asked it the regular meeting nights were going to be on Tuesday and Chairperson Anthony commented that the council meeting was on Tuesday night.

Chairperson Anthony stated that was the next item on the agenda.

Melvin Tate commented that at the last meeting the consensus was to meet on the second Wednesday.

Chairperson Anthony stated that at the meeting tonight we had the authority to set a date and time.

Freddie Gordon commented that Wednesday nights were bad nights for meeting due to pastors.

Melissa McKeown commented that pastors could attend the meetings if they were not on Wednesday night.

Swindell Edwards made the motion for the set meeting date to be on the second Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. This motion died due to not receiving a second motion.

Chairperson Anthony asked for another motion.

Tiffany Wilson made the motion for the set meeting date and time to be the second Thursday of each month. Althea Richardson-Tucker second the motion. Chairperson Anthony took a vote on the motion as follows:

Ayes: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Councilman Freddie Gordon, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Cynthia Baez, Melissa McKeown, Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Lanny Lancaster, Selina Campbell, Steven Ramsey, Swindell Edwards, Tamara Williams and Tiffany Wilson

Nayes: None

Chairperson Anthony stated the set date was the second Thursday of the month and the next meeting date would be Thursday, August 11, 2022.

Melissa McKeown made the motion to set the meeting date and time as second (2^{nd}) Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Tamera Williams second the motion. Chairperson Anthony took a vote on the new motion as follows:

Ayes: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Councilman Freddie Gordon, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Cynthia Baez, Melissa McKeown, Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Lanny Lancaster, Selina Campbell, Steven Ramsey, Swindell Edwards, Tamara Williams and Tiffany Wilson

Nayes: None

Chairperson Anthony stated that the set meeting date and time would be the second (2^{nd}) Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Meeting location will be Mt. Calvary AME Zion Church sanctuary, 800 LaSalle Street.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the meetings should last around one (1) hour if we stay on task.

Freddie Gordon asked if the presentations should be ready to present at the August meeting. Chairperson Anthony answered yes.

Steven Ramsey asked if we could vote on the removal of members due to having a quorum? Chairperson Anthony stated that she would need to get clearance from the City Attorney.

Melissa McKeown commented that we need attendance by-laws for members and that this should be discussed at the next meeting. Chairperson Anthony stated that she would like to have attendance by-laws for the meetings.

With no other business to discuss, Chairperson Anthony adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sheila Couick.

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Chairperson Surluta Anthony

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2022 – 6:30 P.M.

INFORMATIONAL STAFF NOTES ONLY

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee met on Wednesday, August 11, at 6:30 p.m. at Mt. Calvary AME Zion Church in Monroe.

Staff Present:	Sheila Couick, Minute Taker
Members Present:	Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Councilman Freddie Gordon, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Benita Sanders, Cress Barnes, Cynthia Baez, Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Selina Campbell, Swindell Edwards, and Tamara Williams
Members Absent:	Cynthia Brown, Emily McGinnis, Ernest Collins, Jamie Nader, Lakeysha Medlin, Lanny Lancaster, Matthew Belk, Melissa McKeown, Michele King, Penelope Locklear, Steven Ramsey, Tiffany Wilson, and Tripp Helms
Guest:	Brian Reedy, Human Resources Manager

Chairperson Anthony open the meeting at 6:50 p.m. by welcoming everyone to the meeting.

Chairperson Anthony stated that due to there not being a quorum that the minutes from the July 13 meeting could not be approved and accepted.

New Business:

Committee Member Attendance:
Chairperson Anthony stated that a letter was sent out to all committee members asking if they wanted to stay on the committee or be removed from the committee. Six letters have been returned as of August 11 and the deadline to return the responses is August 12.

Chairperson Anthony stated that there were three committee presentations assigned at the July meeting.
1) Tiffany Wilson and Melissa McKeown were asked to prepare a press release for review.

- -Chairperson Anthony stated that these members were not present and was unsure of the status of the press release.

2) Althea Richardson-Tucker, Cythnia Baez, Tamera Williams and Steven Ramsey were asked to prepare a list of what needed to be presented at the September 13 Strategic Council meeting at 4:30 p.m.

- -Althea Richardson-Tucker commented that they did meet and had prepared something; however, they thought that they were doing something for a press conference.
  Althea Richardson-Tucker stated that the group had met virtually and she presented the topics that they developed. A copy of their talking points is attached.
  Althea Richardson-Tucker commented that they focused on the vision of DEI and included the mission statement as the core center.
  Chairperson Anthony stated that the talking points were good, however we cannot include the county due to two different forms of government but these talking points

can be tweaked to use at the council meeting. All of the points are good but knowing the council the part of the DEI Manager would be a suggestion for the future.
Councilmember Freddie Gordon commented he wanted to make sure if he understood that the committee was asking the Council for a DEI Manager and that there was nothing wrong with this suggestion.
Althea Richardson Tucker stated that they did not know that this was going before the council they thought that this was to be interview material for a press conference and the newspaper and was an ideal that could be shared with the interviewer. Now that we know that this is going to council we will need to take a few things out and yes we did suggest a DEI Manager could be and should be possibly employed for the City for a go to person for the various issues that will come up and help train, staff and detain employees. We will tweak this now that we know that this may not be a sound judgement call at this time.
Chairperson Anthony stated that it could be suggested as a future initiative.

Councilmember Freddie Gordon commented that we would not get an answer at the September 13 meeting on a DEI Manager and that planting a seed is a good thing. It takes funding to pay for this position and taxes to pay for this and would need to be addressed at the budget sessions and budget meetings start in January. There are meetings during January – April on the budget to try to have the budgets locked in and then it has to be presented in May to the public and then it is voted on in June as the fiscal year starts July 1. This is the time line that we would be on if you were suggesting that this person be looked at in the normal budget process.

Chairperson Anthony stated that it could be presented in a way that would plant the seed for future.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the mission statement had been approved and that council has had time to digest it and we are building on that.

Melvin Tate stated that it is a good ideal to speak of the future, not the near future, but we can not do DEI without funding. We will not be able to do DEI unless we have someone that is charged and tasked with that responsibility for training and bringing awareness of DEI. We have come a long way from where we started. Not asking for any budget but if the budget process starts in January we need to have something in place.

Councilmember Freddie Gordon commented that we need to start establishing goals and map out what is needed. We have council support. We have some positive sentiment from council on this committee.

Chairperson Anthony stated that when it is presented we will give credit to the training that has been done and lightly touches diversity.

3)Lanny Lancaster, Melvin Tate, Selina Campbell, Michael Hall, and Swindell Edwards were asked to prepare a narrative for a press conference.

-Chairperson Anthony stated that this would be presented at the next meeting.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the Strategic Council meeting would be on September 13 at 4:30 p.m.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the logo committee had met virtually and a logo was shared with Chairperson Anthony who shared it with all committee members. Tamera Williams provided a description of the logo stating that it uses the shape of the City of Monroe with various hands circling and touching each other. Chairperson Anthony stated that a drawing of the logo would be presented at the next meeting and be ready to take a vote on it.

Benita Sanders asked what was being presented to council on September 13? Chairperson Anthony commented that suggestion from the committee and change of the committee number.

Cress Barnes asked about the status on the previous logos. Chairperson Anthony stated the previous logos were rejected by the committee.

Melvin Tate asked what the time limit would be at the council meeting. Chairperson Anthony stated that the time limit would be 15 minutes total.

Melvin Tate stated that he would not be able to be at the next meeting or at the Council meeting on September 13 and stated that he needed someone to step in for him. Chairperson Anthony invited all committee members to come to the 4:30 p.m. strategic council meeting.

Cress Barnes asked if anything had been done with finding out if members wanted to stay or leave the committee. Chairperson Anthony stated that letters were sent out on August 3 and seven letters had been returned.

With no other business to discuss, Chairperson Anthony adjourned the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sheila Couick.

Attachment: Talking Points from Committee

City of Monroe DEI Mission Statement

The City of Monroe is committed to ensuring the **barriers of inequality are removed** and all **voices are heard**. We will develop and improve **socio-economic opportunities**. We pledge to promote open and **inclusive conversations** to foster **cultural sensit**ivity that creates a sense of belonging.

Proposed talking points recommended for the Chair relating to the press conference/interview

The subcommittee comprising of Althea Richardson-Tucker, Tamara Anthony -Williams, Cynthia Baez and Steven Ramsey.

DEI Chair should focus on the **<u>VISION</u>** of the DEI in Monroe.

1. To incorporate DEI program in every department, agency, business that is within the control or oversight of the City and eventually the County will incorporate the same philosophy throughout its departments. Union County is comprised of 7 cities, therefore in order for any DEI program to have a significant impact in the County we envision all 7 cities adopting the City of Monroe DEI initiative.

2. To bring awareness of conscious and unconscious bias in the workplace.

3. Employ a DEI Manager to engage and assist management in staffing, retaining and training employees to understand the importance of having diversity, equity and inclusion in the work place.

   The DEI Manager can also be available to train local businesses and conduct workshops for their employees.

4. Why Cultural sensitivity/diversity, Equity and Inclusion are important within our government

   For example: African Americans make up approximately 22.95 % in the City of Monroe and approximately 12.6% in the County. Hispanics make up approximately 22% in the City of Monroe and approximately 12% in the County. Our municipalities should make an effort to employ citizens that reflect the diversity of the community, not just low skilled maintenance jobs.

   A strategic plan should be created to recruit skilled diverse workers.

   There are also many other races and ethnicity within our cities and it is important that our government agencies have cultural sensitivity so that everyone will feel welcomed, appreciated and valued.