

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE MEETING
MT. CALVARY AME ZION CHURCH
800 LASALLE STREET
MONROE, NC 28110**

January 12, 2023 – 6:30 P.M.

AGENDA

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Meeting will be conducted in the sanctuary.

1. Call to Order
2. Acceptance and approval of December 8, 2022 Minutes
3. Old Business
4. New Business
5. Adjournment

Mission Statement

The City of Monroe is committed to ensuring that 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 sensitivity that creates a sense of belonging.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2022 – 6:30 P.M.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee met on Thursday, December 8, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. at Mt. Calvary AME Zion Church in Monroe.

Staff Present: Debra Chestnut Reed, Human Resources Director, Liaison, and Sheila Couick, Minute Taker

Members Present: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Councilmember Freddie Gordon, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Benita Sanders, Cynthia Baez, Melissa McKeown, Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Lanny Lancaster, Selina Campbell, Swindell Edwards, Tamara Williams and Tiffany Wilson

Members Absent: Cress Barnes, Cynthia Brown, Emily McGinnis, Ernest Collins, Jamie Nader, Lakeysha Medlin, Matthew Belk, Michele King, Penelope Locklear, Steven Ramsey, and Tripp Helms

Chairperson Anthony open the meeting at 6:35 p.m. by welcoming everyone to the meeting.

Chairperson Anthony stated that we needed thirteen members for a quorum and some of the members were running late for the meeting, therefore, we were going to start the meeting and proceed with discussion items. Chairperson Anthony asked everyone to look at the agenda and the agenda packet so that we could start with discussions.

Councilmember Gordon stated that the Citizens Appointment committee had met and approved the removal of members presented and this information was sent on to Council for approval. Councilmember Gordon stated that Council would be meeting on Tuesday, December 13 and this was on the meeting agenda.

Chairperson Anthony stated that we should have approval by our next meeting for the quorum number to be eight members going forward with a committee size of fourteen.

Chairperson Anthony suggested that members look at the proposed logo that was attached with the agenda and write down any questions so that when we get to that agenda item it will be a simple process.

Councilmember Gordon asked that in the matter of time could we move on to the logo, budget discussion and new business.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she had talked with Debra C. Reed in reference to the budget and that she was going to ask Council for a request for funding instead of a budget for a year. We know that we are going to need a facilitator to help move us along and can asked for just what we need in funding.

Althea Richardson-Tucker stated that she wanted to clarify that we could discuss items at this meeting but not vote on them. Chairperson Anthony stated that she was correct.

Melvin Tate stated that he would like to open the meeting by reading the mission statement aloud to everyone.

Chairperson Anthony asked Debra C. Reed if we could talk about the staff notes. Debra replied that we could discuss the staff notes but could not vote on them, if there is no quorum.

Councilmember Gordon commented to Chairperson Anthony and Melvin Tate that we needed to discuss funding, not an annual budget, and come up with a figure for what we need so that we are not going to council every three months asking for funding. The budget is typically looked at annually. The fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30 each year. We need a funding request for at least six months, January through June and it should include funding for a facilitator. The facilitator dollar figure should be based on how many times we would need this person during the six months. Is the facilitator needed monthly or quarterly? How many times do you think we may need Dr. Samuel here and this will give us an ideal of what his fees are to include in the request for funds.

Chairperson Anthony stated that at this time it would be seed money and by June we could request an annual budget. We do need to discuss what we may need for six months.

Althea Richardson-Tucker asked if anyone had talked to Dr. Samuel to reference to a fee. Chairperson Anthony stated that he is negotiable and that she had not discussed this with Dr. Samuel. Chairperson Anthony stated that we would need to do a request for proposal from Dr. Samuel. We would need to request several proposal and look at each one.

The question was asked what Dr. Samuel's fees were the last time? Debra C. Reed stated that we would need to look at his last contract to see what his cost were for the last sessions. Debra C. Reed stated that we would need to check with Dr. Samuel on his follow-up cost since he has already worked with the committee.

Chairperson Anthony asked everyone, based on training, facilitation, and planning how many times they thought we may need Dr. Samuel to come back?

Melvin Tate stated that we needed to think about establishing a committee budget, outreach, publications, and the Chamber meeting. We need to fast track the Chamber since it will come sooner than later. We need to get the quorum and then decide on at least four or five committees that will be working committees to get things done. Chairperson Anthony asked if we needed a project committee.

Debra C. Reed commented that during the last conversation the important element at the time was that we needed to get the community prepared for the job fair. This is an opportunity to connect the mission statement to the job fair.

Melvin Tate commented that he had talked to Chairperson Anthony with the intent on getting Pat Khale to attend this meeting tonight but that did not happen. We have started a process with the Chamber and are not going to miss this opportunity.

Melvin Tate commented that we had the mission statement approved and adopted on May 20 and we are still working on the logo.

Chairperson Anthony commented that going back to the project with the Chamber that she would like for all DEI Committee members to attend the meeting with the Chamber. The Chamber just has a steering committee at this time.

Councilmember Gordon stated that the date of the job fair is in April and asked if Pat's committee was working towards this date? Chairperson Anthony stated that she was unsure.

Tiffany Wilson asked where the location for the job fair would be. Chairperson Anthony stated that it had not been discussed. Chairperson Anthony stated that we have some ideas to discuss with the Chamber and one of them is the location for the job fair.

Councilmember Gordon stated that we needed to have ideas on location and time. The job fair needs to be towards the end of the month due to holiday. We really need to tie down a date since it is so late.

Selina Campbell asked what is needed from this committee to move forward. Chairperson Anthony stated that we needed everyone's thoughts and ideals so that we can decide on which direction to go in. We have a mission statement and we need to decide how to use it.

Tiffany Wilson asked if the job fair location was set and will they pair with SPCC? Could we look at getting transportation for people to get to the job fair? There are people in this area that may not have transportation to the job fair. Chairperson Anthony stated that had been discussed previously. Chairperson Anthony also commented that not everyone is comfortable everywhere and one is that maybe we should move it from SPCC and use communities centers or other places that people may feel more comfortable. Maybe the employer goes to the person and not the person to the employer. Chairperson Anthony stated that she had talk to Pat Khale about getting business to learn about DEI. She had also talked with Pat about some type of training programs where people end up with a job. People go to training and get paid and then end up with that job. Chairperson Anthony stated that ideals have not been shared with the both groups.

Althea Richardson-Tucker stated that we are going to run out of time and we need to decide what we can contribute. We can't change the location at this time, we can suggest it, but we don't know what has been shared with the businesses. Maybe for a portion of Monroe can we push the information out to different organizations to get the information out to people to get them to the job fair? Chairperson Anthony stated that was what the Chamber was wanting from this committee.

Cynthia Baez stated that we could send flyers out to the communities to get the word out about the job fair. Select a zip code and send information to just that area.

Althea Richardson-Tucker stated that Monroe DEI should be noted as a sponsor of the job fair. Chairperson Anthony stated is should be co-sponsor.

Tiffany Wilson asked if there was the possibility of doing some type of virtual discussion about what DEI is due to it not being a hot topic on social media right now in the community. We need to get the word out that this is still an issues and still a topic. Chairperson Anthony stated that she did not know if the city would agree to something like that since we have already moved away from that and formed a DEI Committee.

Melvin Tate stated that the Chamber has decided that their approach is not working and wants the City's DEI to help get people involved such as churches and non-profits. Need to find out from Pat Khale what are the needs from the corporations – what are they looking for.

Tiffany Wilson stated that we need to have all the players at one table to have an open discussion, then everyone can get firsthand knowledge of the issues. Chairperson Anthony stated that this was what she

stated earlier about the business owners learning about DEI – what it is and what equity is. A lot of people get equity and equality mixed up. Need to get some type of training on this. Tiffany Wilson stated that we could discuss training and that people need to hear what is going on.

Althea Richardson-Tucker stated that it sounded like Tiffany was talking about two different things - getting employers together to discuss DEI and are we able to work with employer before the job fair. We don't have a lot time, we have to figure out what we are going to do. If it is a job fair then do that. In the interim we have to plan as to how we are going to bring these employers to the table so we can tell them what we think DEI is and what we expect of them towards their employees. We have to distinguish what we are going to do now – between now and April.

Chairperson Anthony stated that they were talking about bringing the employers in but several months have passed since then and now there is an issue of time. This was the initial plan.

Althea Richardson-Tucker asked is there time for a conversation with the employers involved - do we have the time to do that?

Melvin Tate commented that the Chamber has had job fairs in the past, however, they were not successful. The Chamber has a strategic plan already and we need to look at that to see where we fit in. They need us to help coordinate and share ideas. Chairperson Anthony stated that they needed us to help bring the people in and share ideas on how to make it more effective. Althea Richardson-Tucker stated that we needed to brain storm on that because when we come back in January we need to a decision on this so that we can vote on this.

Benita Sanders asked if this committee could work with SPCC about talking to employers, manager level or employees, about diversity. If this could be done we could start with a small group within the City of Monroe, since this is a City of Monroe function, to learn what the issues are. Start on the inside first to accomplish one mile stone and then move to another level. Small group such as employees in Parks and Recreation or Water Resources since they deal with people. Start with this and then tailor it more to what we need. Chairperson Anthony stated that this was a possibility.

Cynthia Baez stated the job fair is in April and some of the work has already been done. She asked if they already had employers or are they looking at us for employers? She stated that Tom Foster, NC Works, has a database of employers in Union County and applicants that he can send information out to in an email blast about the job fair. If the Chamber is looking at us to help with the job fair we need to be thinking about what it is we need to do talk up the job fair. Need to talk to Tom Foster as a separate identity because he works for NC Works and has the information.

Althea Richardson-Tucker stated that we could do an e-blast however people may still not show up. This committee as a group needs to figure out how to reach people to get them to come to the job fair?

Tiffany Wilson commented that people with a history (bad employment or criminal) don't get a chance. People with felonies or misdemeanors, even if they are twenty years old, are not getting hired. If we are looking at inclusion, people are not looking for jobs such as Tyson or Pilgrim Pride, they want office jobs and they know that they will be eliminated because of their criminal background. These people are not going to come to a job fair because they know they will not be hired. We need to know the employers that are coming and how open are they to hiring the people that are showing up, because she hears from a lot of people who state that they go through the process but don't get hired. This is the other issue.

Cynthia Baez stated that the state (NC) has a program for people who have former offenses. If there is someone in that category and the employer wants to hire them then that person has to apply for the program. The program will insure them for six months and the employer has to buy into the program for it to work. A person needs to go and present themselves because an employer may give them a chance.

Tiffany Wilson commented that is where this committee comes in and that people needed a reason to come to the job fair. People need to hear what the employer has to offer – what is the person going to get from the job fair.

Cynthia Baez stated that people look for jobs every day, sometimes there is an educational part they need to go through first. Sometime you need to start at the bottom and work their way up to show them you know what to do. You can't just walk in there as the CEO. Some of the people have attitudes and they need to know how to talk, not just dress, for the job fair and interview. Maybe we could get a group of people together for an orientation or training session prior to the job fair. Chairperson Anthony stated that may be something we could offer to the people. Chairperson Anthony stated that we needed to find out where Pat is on the job fair and then get us together to share these ideas since it is still in the planning stage.

Melvin Tate commented that a lot of employers have internships and we need to find out who has these programs.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the job fair that the Chambers offers is with the employers that are members of the Chamber and they don't use all of the companies in the county.

Althea Richardson-Tucker stated that we needed to find out what companies and what skill set are they looking for are coming to the job fair so that we know how to talk to potential job seekers. We need some information to be able to work it through and the next step is to talk to Pat for this information.

Chairperson Anthony asked Melvin Tate to talk to Pat about the employers and what these employers are look for at the job fair and to bring that information back to the next meeting.

The question was asked if there could be committees formed and information brought back from these committees for discussion. The response was that we could not have form individual committees.

Tiffany Wilson stated that we also needed to find out what the people's needs are. Some people are anti-Chamber even if it is a job fair. We can be the middle person to help them understand that they may need to utilize the Chamber. You have to use these sources to get to the next step so maybe we need to help them utilize these sources to get to where they need to be – may not be able to read.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she is hearing of all of these possible projects that we need to work towards across the programs we initiate.

Councilmember Gordon commented that all of these are good ideas and thoughts and something to work towards. As far as the Chamber goes it was a good place to start due to having the connections with the employers. They are having these job fairs that were not successful. We have to keep in mind that employers are looking for qualifications, they may not be interested in bringing people in and training them. This a longer term idea that we can look later as a group. We need to consider this job fair as a good start and try to do something between now and April.

Other ideas that have been suggested take time and effort to accomplish. We may not have that in three months.

Debra C. Reed commented that many of you are in the communities and the Chamber did not have enough applicants at the last job fair. So even if we can't train them we know where they are and we need something like a brochure to hand out with the information on the job fair. We need to get the people to the job fair. We need to encourage people to attend and communicate to the communities the importance of attending the job fair. Employers are trying to fill jobs.

The members that were running late arrived and the committee had a quorum so the minutes from the July meeting were reviewed. Lanny Lancaster made the motion to approve the July 13 minutes as written and Tiffany Wilson second the motion. Chairperson Anthony did a roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

The minutes from the July 13 meeting were approved.

Lanny Lancaster made a motion to approve the proposed logo that was attached to the agenda. Swindell Edwards second the motion and Chairperson Anthony did a roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

The logo was approved by all in attendance.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the logo would be presented to Council. Chairperson Anthony stated that we needed to talk about how the logo would be used – shirts, pens, etc.

Swindell Edwards asked how the logo will be marketed. Chairperson Anthony stated that the logo would let people know that the DEI Committee does exist and would also be included in the funding. Chairperson Anthony asked how the logo should be used. Tiffany Wilson commented that we could put the logo on magnets. Chairperson Anthony suggest some type of shirt with the logo.

Chairperson Anthony stated the floor was open for discussion if any on the November 8 staff notes. Sheila Couick commented that this was staff information only and no action was needed.

The question was asked if we needed to discuss the budget. Chairperson Anthony stated that we are going to do a fund request and we will do a budget later. A budget will need to be submitted in June but we need operating funds for six months. Funding request items will be for the logo marketing items and funding for a facilitator for the next six months.

Cynthia Baez asked when the budget funding request was due. Councilmember Gordon commented the sooner the better. Chairperson Anthony stated in January. Debra C. Reed stated that currently the city is working on the fiscal year 2024 budget and the activities we are talking about are happening in fiscal

year 2023. Debra C. Reed stated we need to figure out what you need now. Chairperson Anthony stated that we needed funding for the logo and facilitator and asked if we needed anything else.

Debra C. Reed stated that you need cost for how the logo will be marketed and cost of the other items. Melissa McKeown stated that we needed a marketing plan. Chairperson Anthony asked Melissa McKeown and Tiffany Wilson to work on a marketing plan. Chairperson Anthony stated that she would request a cost for a facilitator. Debra C. Reed stated that you need a follow-up cost from Dr. Samuel to continue.

The question was asked if we were a 501C3 entity. Chairperson Anthony stated that we were not and that we were a council committee. Councilmember Gordon stated that we would not become a 501C3 organization quickly – that takes time going through the state. Councilmember Gordon stated that we would be asking the Council for help and will look to see where they can find funding. Councilmember Gordon stated that the facilitator is something that is needed and then some funds for development and marketing of the logo would be something we need.

Chairperson Anthony asked how many request for proposal would we need. Debra C. Reed stated that we needed three or four. Debra C. Reed ask if this was a new proposal or a follow-up from Dr. Samuel on the work he has already done. Chairperson Anthony stated that would consider this part of the original proposal as a follow-up. Debra C. Reed stated that we would not need new proposals if this is a follow-up. Chairperson Anthony stated if this is a follow-up then we would not need the request for proposals. Benita Sanders stated that it sounded like we were rushing to get a budget for a December 13 meeting. Chairperson Anthony stated that his would be presented in January. Debra C. Reed stated that it may be February before it can be presented to Council. Debra C. Reed stated that we need to keep in mind that you need line items for current and future funding.

Melissa McKeown asked if we would need a proposal from the facilitator or just cost. Chairperson Anthony replied just cost at this time due to being considered follow-up sessions. Chairperson Anthony asked Debra C. Reed to check to see if we could do the follow-up session by obtaining a cost from Dr. Samuel.

Cynthia Baez stated that we needed some type of hand out for the job fair like a pen. We also need to come up with a QR code that can be scanned for more information on DEI. Need to look at cost for a banner.

With no other business to discuss Chairperson Anthony asked for a motion to adjourn.

Melvin Tate made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Lanny Lancaster seconded the motion. Chairperson Anthony conducted a roll call vote:

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

Nayes: None

The meeting was officially adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Next meeting: January 12, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Mt. Calvary AME Zion Church, 800 LaSalle Street.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sheila Couick.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony