

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

March 9, 2023 – 6:30 P.M.

AGENDA

Meeting will be conducted in the sanctuary.

1. Call to Order
2. Acceptance and approval of January 12, 2023 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
January 12, 2023 – 6:30 P.M.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee met on Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. at Mt. Calvary AME Zion Church in Monroe.

Staff Present: Sheila Couick, Minute Taker

Members Present: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Benita Sanders, Melissa McKeown, Co-Chair Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Selina Campbell, and Swindell Edwards

Members Absent: Councilmember Freddie Gordon, Cress Barnes, Cynthia Baez, Lanny Lancaster, Tamara Williams, and Tiffany Wilson

Guest: Sheri Laney, Senior Human Resources Analyst and Pat Kahle, Union County Chamber of Commerce

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate open the meeting at 6:40 p.m. by welcoming everyone to the meeting and introducing Pat Kahle, Union County Chamber of Commerce.

Pat Kahle commented that the Union County Chamber of Commerce started their diversity, equity, and inclusion committee before COVID. They have been partnering with other agencies such as NC Works, SPCC, Union County Public Schools, etc. to have job fairs usually in April each year. Pat stated that they wanted to partner with DEI on the job fair to make this job fair work for everyone. There are approximately 72 employers across Union County and some outside of Union County. The jobs included in the fair are manufacturing, retail and other jobs. Employers have been turned away in the past due to space issues. The Chamber is hoping that we can work together to bring groups of people together. The Chamber does not do work force development, job training or make things. The Chamber bring employers and people together.

Pat Kahle stated that SPCC typically heads the partnership because of their resources on the campus of SPCC on Old Charlotte Highway with lots of parking and conference room space. Currently the conference center in the main building at SPCC is undergoing renovations. Pat Kahle commented that SPCC has offered space in another building or stated that the job fair can be moved to the Union County Agricultural Center. Pat asked the group which location would be better?

The comment was made that the Agricultural Center would be better since it is right down Highway 74 and has adequate parking.

Melissa McKeown stated that transportation would still be a problem for citizens for either location. Melissa McKeown stated that maybe by using community centers as pick up location this would help, but we would have to get the information out. If we want to reach more people this would be something to think about.

Swindell Edwards asked if we could talk to Union County Transportation in reference to transporting citizens to the job fair. Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that Union County Transportation is used mainly for medical needs and they don't provide regular transportation. Melissa McKeown stated that Union County Transportation is booked daily due to having to schedule pick-up times.

Pat Kahle commented that communication is the key factor and possibly asking the religious community about using their buses or van to help with transportation. Need to reach out to the churches and ask about buses or van along with communicating the job fair.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that part of the funding request she was going to present to Council included funding for transportation.

Pat Kahle stated that any location would still have transportation issues unless the person really wanted to come. Pat Kahle commented that she was still not sure if there is a clear direction from this group on location.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate stated that the location is a key piece and transportation will be an issue. If we can solve these two pieces it will help get people to the job fair. Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate stated that people did not attend the last one due to transportation and the location. People did not feel comfortable in the setting (Hispanic residents).

Chairperson Anthony stated that the Agricultural Center would be more centralized. Residents from Monroe and Marshville could attend. People go the Ag Center for other events.

Pat Kahle stated that the transportation piece was still an issue.

Melissa McKeown stated that a new community center in Marshville was opening and it could be utilized as pick-up and drop-off location for transportation. Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated we could involve community centers as pick-up sites. Pat Kahle stated that this was good feedback that she would share with her committee.

Pat Kahle stated that if the job fair was held at the Agricultural Center then it would be pushed out to May due to scheduling and if SPCC was used then it could be held the first of April. Pat stated she would share this feedback also with her committee.

Pat Kahle commented that her committee has talked about having workshops prior to the job fair for residents that have been away from the workforce for a while or just retired or that need help in preparing for the job fair – interviewing, resumes, information needed for applications, etc. SPCC has training available and can bring this training into the communities. If a church wants to host a workshop, maybe one or two, within the community then this could help resident with resumes if they have one prepared or help with preparing one. If a resume is not possible then we could provide the citizen with interview tips and walk them through the interview process. Pat Kahle stated that partnering with SPCC is good, but this type of workshop needed to be done in the communities where people are comfortable. Pat Kahle stated she wanted to suggest this training and that the committee could let her know later if this was something that that a church wanted to do and if so she could connect the church with the appropriate person for the training. This would need to be added to the schedule pretty soon.

Pat Kahle stated that she wanted to know how the Chamber and the City of Monroe DEI could collaborate. The Chamber is not work force development, they bring people together. One of the way to work together is to get the information out to the communities. If the Chamber sends out the information versus a church sending it out, it is accepted differently by the audience. Pat asked if the City would be open to including an announcement on the city's utility billing invoices. Pat stated that they really needed help on getting the communication out, which is a really important piece.

Benita Sanders commented that the Department of Health and Human Services building has space downstairs to host the job fair. Melvin Tate commented that some people may not feel comfortable going there due to other experiences there.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate asked if there was an issue with SPCC. Pat Kahle commented that the large conference center at SPCC was undergoing renovations. SPCC has offered another building and the job fair could be held in early April. Pat Kahle asked if this was the right location.

Melissa McKeown stated that if transportation is provided any location should work.

Swindell Edwards commented that time is important and one month may make a difference in putting this together especially with communication. Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate commented that the job fair may need to be delayed to make it better. Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate asked if this was a job fair or career fair. Pat Kahle stated it was a job fair due to having job available with employers.

Althea Richardon-Tucker asked if the job fair was a whole day or half day event. Pat Kahle commented that it was a half day event. Pat Kahle stated that she could provide more information and a list of names of the employers participating.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate suggested having information tables available for people to ask for assistance with applications.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate suggested getting transportation provided by churches.

Melissa McKeown commented that she would reach out to her contact at Enterprise Rental about the rental program partnership they offer in reference to transportation. Melissa stated she would contact Enterprise in reference to transportation for the job fair.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate commented that Pat Kahle also has information on government grants available for minority businesses.

Pat Kahle commented that there are government contacts that minority business can apply for. This is doing business with federal, state and local government. Pat Kahle stated that she wanted to focus tonight on helping minority business get ready to apply for these grant. The other piece is talking to local government and making sure they are open to accepting application from minority businesses. Pat Kahle has researched the number of businesses that are certified as a historically underutilized business (HUB) in Monroe and discovered that there are less than 50. Pat Kahle commented that they are partnering with SPCC's small business center and offering an eight week series on how not only to get a business certified to apply for government contracts but how to also build a partnership. This series will start on April 4 and will be every Tuesday morning for eight weeks until May 23. A person does not have to attend every session, they can pick and choose the session that want to attend. The location has not been determined as of now. There is no cost for the program. The sessions range from having a panel discussion with successful minority business that have done business with government contracts and the difference it has made in their business, contracting 101, how to get certified, what are the options, how to market to the government, understanding proposals, and business procurement. Pat Kahle stated that she would get more information to the committee once a brochure or flyer is created. Pat Kahle stated that the Chamber would help get the speakers and that they needed help with communicating the government grant sessions to the communities. Pat Kahle stated that her committee feels it needs to be done in Monroe just not at the Chamber or SPCC. Maybe the library or the meeting room at the hospital. Pat stated she needed help getting the word out on this also.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony asked if there was a minimum number of hours you had to attend to get certified. Pat Kahle stated that the certification is a different process and this series of classes is more about gathering documents and getting them ready to send to the state. One session is information on helping businesses get to that stage of submitting the documents.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate thanked Pat Kahle for attending the meeting and stated that if anyone had feedback or comments they could contact Pat at (704) 289-4567 Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate stated that you should identify yourself as part of Monroe DEI when calling Pat Kahle due to the large volume of calls she gets.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate turned the meeting over the Chairperson Surluta Anthony stating that we had a quorum in attendance. Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate stated that we needed to go back to the logo for any discussion and to finalize it.

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that we did have a quorum and asked if everyone had read the minutes from the December 8, 2022 meeting. Chairperson Surluta Anthony asked for a motion to approve the December 8, 2022 meeting minutes. Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate made the motion to approve the December 8, 2022 meeting minutes as presented. Melissa McKeown seconded the motion. Chairperson Surluta Anthony conducted a roll-call vote:

Ayes: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Benita Sanders, Melissa McKeown, Co-Chair Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Selina Campbell, and Swindell Edwards

Nayes: None

Minutes from the December 8, 2022 meeting were accepted and approved as presented.

Old Business:

Chairperson Surluta Anthony commented that everyone received a copy of the logo at the last meeting and ask if there was any discussion on it. Chairperson Surluta Anthony asked for a motion to accept the logo. Swindell Edwards made the motion to accept the logo as presented at the last meeting. Benita Sanders seconded the motion. Chairperson Surluta Anthony conducted a roll call vote:

Ayes: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Benita Sanders, Melissa McKeown, Co-Chair Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Selina Campbell, and Swindell Edwards

Nayes: None

The logo was accepted and approved as presented at the December 8, 2022 meeting.

New Business:

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that she had talked to and emailed Debra Reed a proposed budget request which included the following:

Total of \$14,000 to include:

Training	\$9,000 (Maximum of six sessions at \$1,500 each by facilitator)
Shirts and pins	\$1,000
Publicity and Promotions (print, radio, etc.)	\$1,000
Programs, Projects and Collaborations (transportation and food)	\$1,000
Miscellaneous	\$2,000

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that this would need to be present to Council. The new budget will be approved in June and if we need more funds then we can request more at a later time. Chairperson Anthony stated that Debra Reed would need to get a clarification on the budget proposal.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that Dr. Samuel would be the facilitator since this would be follow-up sessions to his previous sessions. Chairperson Surluta Anthony opened the floor for discussion on the budget items.

Swindell Edwards commented that Dr. Samuel was good for continuity. Chairperson Surluta Anthony commented that Dr. Samuel helped before and understands the process and knows where we are.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that the budget request would be presented at the Council's Strategic meeting once approval is received from the City Attorney.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony asked for discussion on transportation to the job fair and how to communicate the job fair to the communities.

Melissa McKeown asked if childcare or drop in child care could be provided at the job fair – what is the liability for something like this. Melissa McKeown stated that advertisement could be placed at Head Start and Early Headstart, in the community centers and to contact the Hispanic faith community. Use the community centers as pick-up and drop-off locations in Monroe, Marshville and other areas. Get in contact with the Hispanic faith community and use churches as pick-up/drop-off locations for transportation and to help get the information out. Melissa McKeown also stated that a translator needed to be provided at the job fair.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that all of those are good suggestion, and she would need to check with the City's Safety Risk person about using the community centers as a child care location and a pick-up and drop-off location during the job fair.

Melissa McKeown stated that she would email all of these suggestions to Pat Kahle to make sure these suggestion are noted with her committee. This DEI Committee would not have to do all of these suggestions.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate commented that Pat Kahle would meet with her committee to discuss suggestions from this committee. We need some representation at the table for the job fair and we do not need to wait to be ask to join. Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate stated that we needed to start now due to the location being a problem, lack of transportation and childcare. This was a good time to show support and provide services. Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate also stated that the location needed to have rest areas for individuals with disabilities in case they needed to sit down, if someone needs to rest or comfort a child.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate stated that if anyone had suggestions or comments later they could send them to Chairperson Surluta Anthony.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that we needed to use the community centers as a communication center, transportation hub and childcare due to these centers already having activities for children.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated we needed to think about ordering shirts now that we have a design. She asked for one other person to work with her on this and stated that Tiffany was at one time working on pricing for shirts. Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated she would work with Tiffany Wilson on the design for shirts for the committee. She will send out an email to the committee for opinions on the shirt design.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate commented that he would be willing to offer the church as a location for training assistance for individuals to prepare for the job fair and small business grant training.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated that we needed to get a list of the minority businesses in Monroe and let them know about the grant training sessions.

Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate commented that there needed to be some type of outreach for giveaway items at the job fair. Chairperson Surluta Anthony stated she would check with City for handout materials.

Benita Sanders shared information on an upcoming event that she is sponsoring in February. This is a Black History 2023, Embracing Diversity and Inclusiveness which will be conducted on February 18, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. at the Old Armory Community Center, 500 S. Johnson Street, Monroe. Attached is a flyer on the program.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony asked if there was any other business to address. With no other business to discuss Chairperson Surluta Anthony asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Swindell Edwards made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Benita Sanders seconded the motion. Chairperson Surluta Anthony conducted a roll call vote:

Ayes: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Benita Sanders, Melissa McKeown, Co-Chair Melvin Tate, Michael Hall, Selina Campbell, and Swindell Edwards

Nays: None

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at Mt. Calvary AME Zion Church, 800 LaSalle Street, Monroe.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sheila Couick.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony



BLACK HISTORY 2023

Sponsored by: EXCEL Enrichment Program

FEBRUARY 18, 2023, | 11:00 A.M.- 1:00 P.M.

OLD ARMORY COMMUNITY CENTER, 500 S. JOHNSON STREET MONROE, NC
28112

Embracing Diversity & inclusiveness

Guest Speaker: Sheriff Paula Dance, Pitt County Sheriff Dept, NC &

Moderator: Chelsea L. Floyd, Spectrum News 1

Business Dress Attire

Doors open at 10:30 am

Program contact: Dr. Benita Sherrod Sanders (404) 242-7765

Includes: light refreshments following the program

