

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE MEETING  
MT. CALVARY AME ZION CHURCH  
800 LASALLE STREET  
MONROE, NC 28110  
[www.monroenc.org](http://www.monroenc.org)**

**September 12, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

Meeting will be conducted in the sanctuary.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
  - a. March 14, 2024 Minutes
  - b. March 20, 2024 Special Meeting
  - c. April 15, 2024 Informational Only
  - d. July 11, 2024 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**  
**March 14, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.**

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee met on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. at Mt. Calvary AME Zion Church in Monroe.

Staff Present: Sheila Couick, Minute Taker

Members Present: Councilman Surluta Anthony (Chairperson), Benita Sanders, Cynthia Baez, Councilmember David Dotson, Melvin Tate (Co-Chairperson), Melissa McKeown, Tamara Williams, Tiffany Wilson

Members Absent: Althea Richardson-Tucker, Cress Barnes, Councilmember Franco McGee, Lanny Lancaster, Michael Hall, Selina Campbell, and Swindell Edwards

Guest: Jessica Eason, Human Resources Manager, Lisa Hollowell, Assistant to the City Manager

Chairperson Anthony opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. by welcoming everyone to the meeting and stating that there currently was not a quorum in attendance. Due to not having a quorum, items can be discussed but no action can be taken.

Benita Sanders handed out a draft DEI event schedule for all in attendance to review. She stated that the event would start at 6:00 p.m. Benita also handed out a task listing showing dates and the person assigned to handle each task. Copies of the event schedule and task listing are attached. Benita commented that she had someone that was going to help with the setup of the tables and chairs for the event.

Tamara Williams asked what time the committee members should arrive at the Dowd Center Theatre. Benita commented that committee members needed to be there by 4:00 p.m.

Benita Sanders asked if there were any flyers or a registration email. Chairperson Anthony commented that a committee email had been created and it was [deicommitee@monroenc.org](mailto:deicommitee@monroenc.org).

Benita Sanders stated that cards and pens would be placed on the tables for questions.

Melissa McKeown commented that the date in the minutes was showing March 21, 2024. Chairperson Anthony stated the date was changed to March 20, 2024 due to the availability of the Dowd Center Theatre.

Chairperson Anthony stated that committee members needed to let Cynthia Baez know how they would like for their name to be announced at the event.

Benita Sanders commented that she was working on getting a cater for the event.

Chairperson Anthony commented that Melissa McKeown was assigned to talk about the job fair.

Melissa McKeown asked what the dress attire was for the event. Chairperson Anthony stated that it would be business attire.

Chairperson Anthony commented that the doors would open for the public at 5:15 p.m.

Chairperson Anthony asked everyone to look at the schedule to see the allotted time for them to speak at the event.

Cynthia Baez asked if she could get a list of all committee members emailed to her. Chairperson Anthony asked Sheila to email a list of committee members to Cynthia.

Benita Sanders asked if the committee had received a list of employers from Mark Watson. Chairperson Anthony stated that Mr. Watson would supply a listing.

Chairperson Anthony stated that Councilmember McGee was assigned to create a flyer.

Chairperson Anthony instructed committee members to send invitee contact information to Sheila so she could send out the invitation and receive RSVP's.

Lisa Hollowell commented that the city had sign in sheets for employers who attended the meetings for the Good Jobs/Great Cities meetings. Chairperson Anthony stated that she should have the listing on March 15.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she had meet with Pat Kahle, Union County Chamber in reference to having a more prominent role with the job fair. The job fair will be held in the same place as last year at the Union County Agricultural Center.

Chairperson Anthony commented that she had also met with Kristy Phifer, SPCC.

Chairperson Anthony called the meeting to order at 6:53 p.m. due to additional members arriving and establishing a quorum.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

Chairperson Anthony stated that there were three sets of minutes for review and approval. Melissa McKeown commented that she was in attendance at the November meeting and a correction was needed on the November minutes. Councilmember David Dotson made the motion to approve the minutes from November 9, 2023 with noted correction, January 11, 2024 as presented and January 25, 2024 as presented. Tamara Williams second the motion. Chairperson Anthony asked for a vote by show of hands for those in favor of accepting the minutes.

Ayes: All in attendance

Nays: None

The minutes from November 9, 2023 with noted correction, January 11, 2024 as presented and January 25, 2024 as presented were approved and accepted.

#### **Old Business:**

Chairperson Anthony stated the DEI event was scheduled for March 20, 2024 at the Dowd Center Theatre. Invitee names should be sent to Sheila. Dress for the event will be business attire. Tiffany Wilson asked about guest asking questions and was told that guest would write them on the cards at the table.

Benita Sanders asked what Dr. Patterson would be doing for 45 minutes. Chairperson Anthony stated that Dr. Patterson had a presentation and would answer any questions during that time.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the committee needed a time keeper and she volunteered to handle the time keeping piece.

Chairperson Anthony stated that everyone needed to be at the Dowd Theatre by 5:15 p.m. to help. Lisa Hollowell asked how many people were expected to attend? Chairperson Anthony commented that hopefully 55 people would attend.

**New Business:**

Chairperson Anthony commented that committee will help with the Union County Job Fair again this year. It will be at the Union County Agriculture Center.

Chairperson Anthony stated that Kristy Parker, SPCC, will help to prepare residents for the job fair.

Chairperson Anthony commented that the committee will be more involved this time. If you have any suggestions on how the committee can help, please send them to Chairperson Anthony. Prior to the job fair the committee will need to get the word out about the job fair to the communities.

Cynthia Baez commented that the flyer for the job fair had already been created and distributed. The date of the job fair is April 30, 2024. Councilmember Dotson commented that social media was already announcing it also.

Tiffany Wilson commented that last year the committee visited churches to relay the information.

Tiffany Wilson suggested placing a public announcement on the local radio stations.

Councilmember Dotson asked if there were be printed media? Chairperson Anthony stated that she would get some flyers from the Chamber of Commerce.

Melissa McKeown asked about the classes to help prepare for the job fair and transportation.

Benita Sanders asked if county transportation could provide transport for residents. Chairperson Anthony stated that county transportation was used for health visit and for older adults. Melissa McKeown commented that they were busy and short of drivers.

Tiffany Wilson asked about churches with vans providing transportation. Melissa McKeown commented that community centers could be used as pick up locations.

Jessica Eason stated that churches would have to provide certificates of insurance for transportation and the committee would have to have a contract with each church and have to pay drivers. Chairperson Anthony asked if a contract would be needed? Tiffany Wilson asked if the Union County Homeless Shelter provides transportation with their van would be still have to have a contract? Jessica Eason

stated yes, the committee would have to have a contract, certificate of insurance from each church and an indemnity clause.

Chairperson Anthony asked the committee how many job fair flyers were needed and stated that she would get 300 to start.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she needed two dates for the SPCC prep class at the Old Armory and needed people to help on the date selected. The dates of April 16 and April 18 at 6:00 p.m. were suggested. Chairperson Anthony commented that the SPCC prep class would be either on April 16 or April 18 at 6:00 p.m. at the Old Armory.

Tiffany Wilson commented that the city needed to look at some type of transportation to the SPCC class. Chairperson Anthony commented that transportation would be needed from the Sutton Park area.

Tiffany Wilson asked if this would be posted on the City's website. Chairperson Anthony commented yes.

Chairperson Anthony asked who would be available to work at the Job Fair on April 30, 2024 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Chairperson Anthony stated that she could work for 4 hours. Cynthia Baez commented that if it was the same as last year that she could sit at the table and hand out information.

Tiffany Wilson suggested putting the SPCC prep class information in the probation offices.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the committee's role at the job fair would be discussed at the next meeting.

Chairperson Anthony commented that she would check with Councilmember McGee on the name tags for committee members to wear at the DEI Event.

Benita Sanders asked what should be displayed on the marquee at the Dowd Center Theatre? Benita Sanders commented that she would talk to Lynn Price at the theatre about this.

Chairperson Anthony and the committee member stated the mission statement.

With no other business to discuss, Chairperson Anthony adjourned the meeting. Councilmember Dotson made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Tamara Williams second the motion. The motion carried by all in attendance the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sheila Couick.

---

Surluta Anthony, Chairperson

Week ending	Respon. Person	Feb. 10 6 weeks before	February 17 5 weeks before	February 24 4 weeks before	March 2 3 weeks before	March 9 2 weeks before	March 16 1 week before	March 20 Event Day
Confirm the Location	Surluta	Comprd on Jan. 31, 2024						
Confirm the Dates/Times	Surluta	Comprd on 01.31.2024 March 20, 2024						
Confirm Caterer	Benita/Surluta	Confirmed on Jan. 30, 2024						
Confirm Guest Speakers	Surluta	Confirmed on Jan. 30, 2024						
DEI	Melissa							
Invitations/Flyer/Program distribution	Franco							
List of G./GC Employers	Surluta & Teresa Campo							
Create Social Media event on CoM website								
Create Press Release announcement								
Create mobilize registration link								
Plan Agenda/Run of Show for event	Benita	Completed						
Launch event	ALL							
Thank-you email to guest speakers/co-chairs	Surluta							

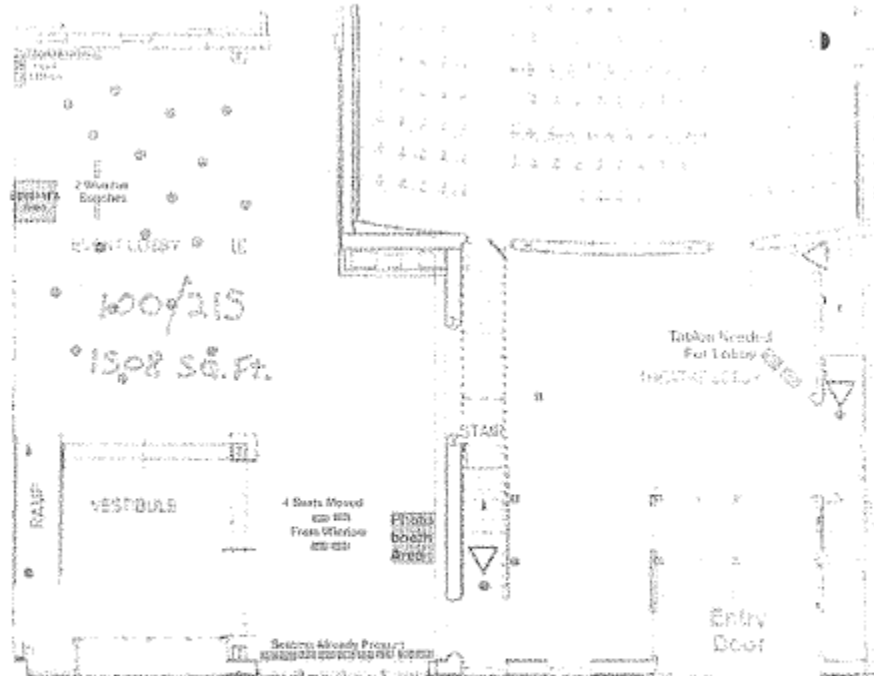
Introducing The City of Monroe DEI (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion)  
Run of The Show

## DRAFT ONLY

TIME	WHAT	WHO
4p-5p	Set-up	Benita & Volunteers
4p-5:15p	Caterer set-up	A Perfect Blend Catering-Damien Massey
5:15p-5:30p	Doors open	People Trickle In
6p-6:05p	Greetings	Tamara
6:05p-6:10p	How We Began	Surluta
6:10p-6:15p	History	Rev. Tate
6:15p-6:20p	Committee Intro	Cynthia
6:20p-6:25p	Mission Statement	Franco
6:25p-6:30p	Intro. Of Guest Speaker	Althea
6:30p-7:30p	Guest Speaker	Dr. Dana Patterson
7:30p-7:40p	Q & A	MC-Tiffany
7:40p-7:45p	Guest Acknowledgment	David
7:45p-7:50p	Good Jobs, Great Cities	Mark W.
7:50p-7:55p	Job Fair	Melissa
7:55p-8p	Wrap up	Surluta
8p-8:30p	Clean-up	ALL

- +
- 
- ⊙

⊙ - Represents Cocktail Table  
 3 guests per table  
 55 guests potential  
 = 18 tables



1. 火 回 器

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**  
**March 20, 2024 – 6:00 P.M.**

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee conducted a Special Meeting on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Dowd Center Theatre in Monroe. This was a presentation by Dr. Dana Patterson, Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, Wingate University on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging.

Staff Present: Debra C. Reed, Human Resources Director, Sheila Couick, Minute Taker

Members Present: Councilman Surluta Anthony (Chairperson), Althea Richardson-Tucker, Benita Sanders, Cynthia Baez, Councilmember David Dotson, Councilmember Franco McGee, Tamara Williams, Tiffany Wilson

Members Absent: Melvin Tate (Co-Chairperson), Melissa McKeown, Cress Barnes, Lanny Lancaster, Michael Hall, Selina Campbell, and Swindell Edwards

Guest: Jessica Eason, Human Resources Manager, Lisa Hollowell, Assistant to the City Manager, Dottie Nash, Chris Harbin, Beverly Dickerson, Daryle Anderson, Denise Altherr, Karen Harbin, Liane Watson, Allen Watson, Jennifer Stringfellow, Linda Little, Chief Bryan Gilliard, Monroe Police Department, Captain Steve Morton, Monroe Police Department, Maria Lander, Eddie Vassar, Dr. James R. Samuel, Insight Consultants, Kimberly Hansley, Pat Kahle, Union County Chamber, Robert Capers, Monique Huntley, Freddie Gordon, Chris Rivera, Chief Ron Fowler, Monroe Fire Department, Melanie Miller, Tomika Brown, Maurice Brown, Karyl Jones, Mike Jones, Captain T. J. Goforth, Monroe Police Department, Captain Shannon Huntley, Monroe Police Department, Rev. Osco Gardin, Mark Watson, City Manager, Deloris Chisley, Tiguane Sowell, Ryan Cureton, Ashley Fomen, and John Kirkpatrick

The presentation started at 6:05 p.m. with a greeting by Tamara Williams. Chairperson Anthony provided a brief statement on how the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was established. Dr. James Samuel, Insight Consultants, provided a history on the diversity, equity, and inclusion committee.

Cynthia Baez recognized the City of Monroe Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee members.

Councilmember Franco McGee read the mission statement for the City of Monroe Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

Althea Tucker-Richardson introduced the guest speaker Dr. Dana Patterson, Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, Wingate University.

Dr. Dana Patterson conducted her presentation on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. Dr. Patterson's presentation is attached to the minutes. At the conclusion of her presentation, Dr. Patterson asked for questions from the guest and there were no questions. Dr. Patterson provided copies of her presentation to those in attendance.

Councilmember David Dotson thanked Dr. Patterson for the information that she shared with everyone in attendance.

City Manager Mark Watson provided an overview of the Good Jobs/Great Cities program.

Chairperson Anthony thanked everyone for coming to the presentation and adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sheila Couick.

---

Surluta Anthony, Chairperson

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**  
**Informational Only Meeting Notes**  
**Mt. Calvary AME Church**  
**April 15, 2024**

Present: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Councilman David Dotson, Benita Sanders, Cynthia Baez, Melissa McKeown, Tamara Williams

Absent: Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate, Councilman Franco McGee, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Lanny Lancaster, Michael Hall, Tiffany Wilson (telephoned in)

Staff: Sheila Couick, Minutes Taker, Human Resources Support Technician I

Staff Absent: Debra C. Reed, Liaison, Director of Human Resources

Guest: Lisa Hollowell, Assistant to the City Manager, Jessica Eason, Human Resources Manager

Chairperson Anthony opened the meeting at 6:31 p.m. stating that there was not a quorum and that this would be an informational meeting only.

Chairperson Anthony stated the Union County Chamber's Job Fair would be on April 30, 2024 and that she had flyers for the event. There will be a workshop for residents to attend to prepare for the job fair at the Old Armory on April 17, 2024 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Chairperson Anthony stated that she needed volunteers to help with the workshop however she did not know how many people would show.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the flyers would be at the back of the sanctuary for committee members to pick up after the meeting. She stated that she had already posted some flyers at beauty shops and barber shops over the weekend. The flyer has also been posted on Facebook.

Chairperson Anthony stated that committee members needed to volunteer to help at the job fair with registration and providing directions. Need to arrive at 9:30 a.m. at the Union County Agricultural Center to set up. This job fair will involve the DEI Committee more this year.

Melissa McKeown commented that she could provide vouchers to individuals in need of clothing for the job fair.

Chairperson Anthony asked the committee about the DEI Presentation on March 20, 2024. Tamara Williams stated that she thought it was well received. David Dotson commented that it was very good. Cynthia Baez commented that it was a good event. Chairperson Anthony stated the content was good.

Jessica Eason stated the remaining funds would be rolled forward and that included the contract with Dr. Samuel.

Chairperson Anthony asked the committee about when they should bring Dr. Samuel back.

Melissa McKeown commented that Dr. Samuel should be brought back to help create a 3-year business plan.

David Dotson asked the question "What is the committee's goals?"

Cynthia Baez commented that we need to educate employers on DEI. Need to reach out to employers to see what they know pertaining to DEI.

David Dotson commented that we needed to be face of trying to get underserved communities into the workforce. Need to create a conversation with the communities. Also need to look at other issues.

Chairperson Anthony stated that we could use Dr. Samuel to finish out the planning of the quarters for the committee.

Chairperson Anthony stated she is waiting on the Department of Labor to complete their plan for the Great Jobs Good Cities program.

Tiffany Wilson commented by phone that Dr. Sameul could be used to talk to employees and employers.

Benita Sanders asked how many more academy meetings are there with the Great Jobs Good Cities program.

David Dotson commented that this should be ongoing academy meetings with Great Jobs Good Cities and that they will stop at some point.

David Dotson commented that we needed to make sure to get young people involved.

Benita Sanders commented that when we bring Dr. Samuel in and establish a plan with dates then we can present DEI to other people.

David Dotson commented the Great Jobs Good Cities has a website for apprenticeships and internship called Monroe Works.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she had attended some of the meeting at other locations in reference to the Great Jobs Good Cities and the same issues are being addressed: childcare and transportation.

Benita Sanders stated that we need to meet with the employers to show them that DEI is present in the City of Monroe.

David Dotson commented that is hard to get a quorum due to the committee number being high.

Chairperson Anthony stated that it would need to go back to council to change the committee number.

David Dotson commented that the committee needed to get dedicated members.

Cynthia Baez commented that we needed to go the high schools and talk about the program. David Dotson commented that Monroe High works with Atrium Healthcare already in reference to programs in the schools. David Dotson commented that we needed to find a way to reach out to employers to help pay for courses. Cynthia Baez stated that NC Works would be a good partner. Lisa Hollowell commented that several businesses already had internship programs.

Melissa McKeown stated that citizens left behind don't have transportation or childcare. David Dotson commented that one of the employers had reached out to a daycare about setting aside daycare space. Chairperson Anthony stated that the missing piece is childcare and transportation and everyone needs to get together to talk.

Jessica Eason commented that before Dr. Samuel comes back in that a list needs to be created of what he needs to address. Melissa McKeown commented that he needed to complete the quarterly goals. Cynthia Baez commented that Dr. Samuel has great information however we need to keep him focused. Chairperson Anthony stated that when Dr. Samuel comes back in we need to have a plan for him.

Jessica Eason commented that the committee could host an event and invite employers to it to build relationships.

Cynthia Baez commented that members needed to have business cards.

Chairperson Antony closed the meeting at 7:11 p.m. with no other business to discuss.

Respectfully submitted by Sheila Couick.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**  
**Informational Only Meeting Notes**  
**Mt. Calvary AME Church**  
**July 11, 2024**

Present: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Councilman David Dotson, Benita Sanders, Cynthia Baez, Melissa McKeown, Tamara Williams, Tiffany Wilson

Absent: Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate, Councilman Franco McGee, Althea Richardson-Tucker

Staff: Debra C. Reed, Liaison, Director of Human Resources, Sheila Couick, Minutes Taker, Human Resources Support Technician I

Chairperson Anthony opened the meeting at 6:45 p.m. stating that there was a quorum based on the number of committee members present.

There are two sets of informational minutes that will be presented at the next meeting.

Chairperson Anthony stated that Benita Sanders had a proposal to present to the committee in reference to moving the committee forward. Attached is a copy of the draft proposal from Benita Sanders. Benita Sanders commented that Goal 1 had been achieved which was an introduction of DEI and a debriefing of the introduction. Goal 2 is to start DEI training with the leadership of the City of Monroe. Training would be conducted by Dr. Dana Patterson. Goal 3 would be to continue the training with City of Monroe Legal Department, Department Heads, Airport Manager, and employees in Supervisory and Managerial roles. Training would be in person and conducted by Dr. Dana Patterson. Cost of the proposal is \$11,000 which includes facilitator cost and materials.

Chairperson Anthony stated that we have two projects this year:

- 1- Job Fair – which has already happened
- 2- DEI Training

Debra Reed asked Benita about the material that Dr. Patterson would be using. Benita Sanders commented that it would be same as what was presented previously by Dr. Patterson. David Dotson commented that it should be given to Council first to review before moving forward.

Debra Reed commented that the city conducted diversity training every other year. The City Manager has seen the presentation by Dr. Pattersen and liked it, however Dr. Patterson would need to adjust it some. The City Manager likes the in-person training rather than the online training.

Debra Reed commented that the committee needed to talk about how this training could be rolled out to the city and county.

Melissa McKeown commented that in-person training is better. Benita Sanders stated that the first training would be in-person.

Councilman Dotson commented that online training can provided too much information at one time. We need to included the history and progression of diversity.

Benita Sanders stated that this was Dr. Patterson specialty and that she could make the training smooth.

Chairperson Anthony stated that Dr. Patterson helps people understand DEI.

Councilman Dotson stated that we don't want to make the Council feel uncomfortable.

Chairperson Anthony stated that we covered the history with the Open Conversation committee.

Melissa McKeown stated that the DEI training could start with City Council and the Mayor.

Tiffany Wilson commented that she liked starting the training with Council. Need to prepare Dr. Patterson for the atmosphere of Council. Council would be the building block before bringing to everyone else and it should be done in phases.

Benita Sanders stated that this is the beginning steps and Council would be done differently.

Chairperson Anthony stated that Dr. Patterson's presentation on DEI at the Dowd Theatre did not offend anyone. Debra Chestnut commented that Dr. Patterson's presentation made people feel comfortable.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the training is geared toward being more inclusive.

Councilman Dotson asked if the city's diversity training could be incorporated in with Dr. Patterson's training.

Melissa McKeown commented that we are trying to change culture.

Benita Sanders commented that City Council should do the training also.

Chairperson Anthony stated the diversity training by Human Resources is a requirement. Debra Reed commented that the diversity training is not a federal requirement.

Melissa McKeown commented that every job requires some type of training.

Benita stated that DEI awareness training could be every other year.

Debra Reed commented that when you think about diversity, we are all different and how do you accept the differences.

Councilman Dotson suggested adding this training and then bringing in another type of training in the off years.

Benita Sanders made the motion to accept the proposal she presented with Dr. Patterson conducting DEI team building training to include City Council as one of the projects of the DEI Committee. Tamara Williams second the motion. Chairperson Anthony asked for a vote on the proposal:

Ayes: All in favor

Nays: None

Chairperson Anthony stated that the proposal passed with no objections.

Chairperson Anthony asked for a budget update.

Debra Reed commented that the remaining funds in the old budget would be rolled forward into the new year. We will check with Finance on this.

Debra Reed commented proposed new budget is \$20,000. Chairperson Anthony will meet with City Manager Mark Watson to ask for funding.

Chairperson Anthony asked the committee if they were comfortable with the three projects:

- 1- Job Fair
- 2- DEI Training with Dr. Patterson
- 3- Presentation at Dowd Theatre on DEI as an annual event.

Councilman Dotson commented that Council could come to this event early for their training.

Tiffany Wilson commented that the Dowd Theatre event should be open to the average person.

Chairperson Anthony stated that was what the presentation would be. Councilman Dotson commented that a date needed to be set. Benita Sanders stated that we should move the presentation around to different locations. Tiffany Wilson commented that the Dowd Theatre could be used for the final sessions.

Chairperson Anthony stated that next month we would continue the discussion of the DEI training by Dr. Patterson.

With no other business to discuss Chairperson Anthony closed the meeting at 7: 43 p.m.

Minutes submitted respectfully by Sheila Couick.

---

Chairperson Surluta Anthony