

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Mt. Calvary AME Church
October 29, 2024

Present: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Councilman David Dotson, Councilman Franco McGee, Althea Richardson-Tucker, Benita Sanders, Cynthia Baez, Melissa McKeown, Tamara Williams,

Absent: Co-Chairperson Melvin Tate, Tiffany Wilson,

Staff: Jessica Eason, Liaison, Interim Director of Human Resources, Sheila Couick, Minutes Taker, Human Resources Support Technician I

Guest: Lisa Hollowell, Assistant City Manager, Teshim Garro, community resident

Chairperson Anthony opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. stating that there was a quorum based on the number of committee members present.

The minutes from the March 14, 2024, March 20, 2024, and July 11, 2024 meeting were reviewed and voted on. Councilman Dotson made the motion to approve all minutes and notes as presented. Tamara Williams seconded the motion. Chairperson Anthony ask for a vote on the motion:

Ayes: All present

Nays: None

Chairperson Anthony stated that all minutes were approved as presented by the committee.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the committee needed to address committee size and asked what was the current size of the committee. Sheila Couick responded that currently the committee size is 15 members, 5 vacant positions and need 8 members present for a quorum to vote. We are currently at 10 members and need a quorum of 6 to vote.

Chairperson Anthony reminded committee members of the attendance requirements for the meetings. Members cannot miss more than three meetings in a consecutive time frame. If members cannot make a meeting they need to contact Chairperson Anthony or Sheila to let them know that will not be in attendance for a rational reason. Chairperson Anthony stated that this needed to be put back into effect due to all of the items planned for this year. Members who miss two meetings consecutively will receive a letter letting them know that they have missed two meeting and if they miss a third they could be removed from the committee.

Chairperson asked for a budget update from Sheila. Chairperson Anthony stated that funding was still in the budget for Dr. Samuel since his contract had not been fulfilled. Chairperson Anthony stated that we need to decide what Dr. Samuel is going to do. Chairperson Anthon stated that Council approved the request for funding in FY25 in the amount of \$20,000. The current balance is \$32,338 which includes a contract in the amount of \$9,000 for Dr. Samuel which was rolled forward in July, rolling forward of funding from FY24 in the amount of \$3,338 and the new Budget Amendment in the amount of \$20,000.

Chairperson Anthony stated that this year we would purchase a tablecloth with the logo on it, DEI cards and more shirts.

Chairperson Anthony stated that there was a project that going to be started soon. Chairperson Anthony asked Benita Sanders to review the project proposal. Benita Sanders stated that she had talked to Dr. Dana Patterson, who was the person that conducted the DEI training in March. Benita Sanders commented that Dr. Patterson agreed to do the first line of training City Council for free. Benita Sanders commented that it was proposed that after the City Council training, it would move into the different tiers. The tiers would consists of: First Tier - Department Heads, Second Tier – Managerial or Supervisory level and then based on department size the Third Tier would be all employees. Smaller department would be grouped together. Large departments would need to be done virtually due to shift scheduling. Benita Sanders stated that training would start with Councilmembers and then move through the tiers. Benita Stated that she had received a copy of the organizational chart and asked it the number of employees was shown on this chart. Lisa Hollowell stated that she could provide the count for employees in the departments. Benita Sanders stated that would be helpful when meeting with Dr. Patterson. After each training there would be an evaluation so that data could be collected. For the virtual sessions it is undecided on how they would evaluate the session. There was discussion on how the training could be delivered to the employees. There needs to be a timeline established for the training. Chairperson Anthony stated that virtual sessions may not work due to employees signing that they watched the session. Jessica Eason commented that when the Human Resources conducts diversity training that employees who miss the training receive a make-up packet in which they need to complete and return for review. Councilman McGee stated that Human Resources has diversity training and it is required for all employees and you may want to work with them to see what the schedule is like because every employee is required to attend. Councilman McGee stated that Ms. Sanders would know what the times since they have a schedule to ensure that everyone attends. Benita Sanders commented that Mark Watson liked this training and since Human Resources did training every other year he would like for something to be done every year. This would eventually be combined and when new employees started it would be a part of their new hire packet. Benita stated that this was the goal for the training. Benita stated that she talked with Dr. Patterson and she is going to go ahead and work with us for the first of the year. Benita stated that she would like to work with Human Resources and get some dates and plan on how we are going to schedule this training so that no one misses work and still get the training. Benita Sanders stated the City Council training would be free. Benita stated that Dr. Patterson was working with the City of Monroe and we need to make sure that we stay committed and get employees to the training. Chairperson Anthony stated that this was an important training to help people get a clear understanding as to what DEI is. Lisa Hollowell asked if the training would include “ageism”. Benita stated that it would include that in the training. Chairperson Anthony stated that we needed to be prepared to help with this training. Councilman McGee stated that we needed to piggyback on the training that Human Resources has done and how it was scheduled. Councilman McGee asked how many training sessions Human Resources conducted. Sheila and Jessica responded that it was an all week training event and that they could go back and look at the schedule. Councilman McGee stated that if we knew the total number of sessions then we could determine the amount that would be charged. Benita stated that was in the proposal and that there was a start time and end time for the training due to us working on a schedule and get some good feedback data. Chairperson Anthony stated that this training would be interactive. Benita stated that she and Dr. Patterson would be working together on the first round and then they would decide on the second round. Benita stated that she and Dr. Patterson would work on the evaluation together and send to the committee for review. Councilman Dotson stated that he thought it was good that Council would get to see the training first due to there being several types of training. Benita stated that it was the same presentation that was conducted in March with some changes.

Chairperson Anthony stated that we needed to discuss what how to fulfill the contract with Dr. Samuel. Chairperson Anthony asked everyone to think about how we can utilize Dr. Samuel. Do we use him to complete the quarterly objectives?

Chairperson Anthony stated that we had a guest, Ms. Teshim Garro. She recently moved to Monroe and was looking for ways to get involved and saw that there was a special meeting tonight and in order to be a part of a meeting you had to attend a meeting first so she chose to attend tonight.

Councilman McGee commented that the agenda needed to be more detailed to include discussion items so that members would know what is being discussed at the meetings.

Chairperson Anthony stated that at the next meeting the committee would discuss projects that have been voted on so that we can get them developed and decide who will head them. We will all work together but there will be someone in charge of that project to make sure that it is handled. Benita Sanders asked what the other projects were. Chairperson Anthony one was the job fair in April 2025 to include childcare, hosting a presentation on how businesses can obtain government contracts and grants and hosting another DEI presentation to the public.

Chairperson Anthony asked Melissa McKeown to obtain quotes for a tablecloth for presentation at the next meeting.

Chairperson Anthony asked Councilman Dotson to obtain quotes for the ordering of more shirts for committee members and to present the quotes at the next meeting.

Cynthia Baez asked if more promotional products could be purchased.

Chairperson Anthony stated that before the meeting adjourned the mission statement needed to be read aloud.

Chairperson Anthony entertained the motion for adjournment. Councilman McGee made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Dotson seconded the motion. Chairperson Anthony asked for a vote on the adjournment motion.

Ayes: All in attendance
Nays: None

Chairperson Anthony adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Minutes respectively submitted by Sheila Couick.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony