



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT

**CITY COUNCIL Racial Equity, Inclusion, and
Belonging Committee**

c/o Community & Economic Development Office

City Hall, Room 32 • 149 Church Street • Burlington, VT 05401

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Minutes: Tuesday, November 17th, 2020 5:30 PM – 7:00PM.

Meeting conducted via Zoom.

Present:

Councilor Ali Dieng (AD), Chair, Ward 7

Councilor Karen Paul (KP), Ward 6

Councilor Brian Pine (BP), Ward 3

Staff: Tyeastia Green (TG), Director REI&B; Belan Antensaye, REI&B; Skyler Nash, REI&B; Vanessa Santos Eugenio (VSE), Human Resources Dept; Marcella Gange, CEDO (committee staff)

Members of the public: Patrick Brown, Megan Polyte

1) Motion to amend agenda: move item 6 to item 3. BP, unanimous. Motion to approve agenda, BP, unanimous.

2) Motion to approve the minutes of REI&B Committee 10/28/2020, BP, unanimous.

3) Update from Dir. Green. Introduce and welcome new staff members of REI&B Dept, Belan Antensaye and Skyler Nash. Belan and Skyler introduced themselves to the Committee. The first meeting of the Reparations Task Force occurred 11/11/20. Dir. Green is developing the request for proposals for the study consultants and hopes to post the RFP by end of November. Strategic planning is underway and Community Listening Sessions are planned for Dec 3rd and Dec 10th. AD congratulated and welcomed the new staff members. BP, is a plan for communicating the work is available? Dir. Green confirmed that communications are a priority and planning is underway. Dir. Green welcomes outreach by City Councilors to bring constituents to the listening sessions.

4) Public Forum – No members of the public wished to speak

5) Presentation: Data Collection and City Hiring and Retention Processes. Vanessa Santos Eugenio; HR Talent Development and Diversity Manager. HR and REI&B looking at how the City creates a culture and establishes relationships to recruit, attract, and retain staff. Also seeking to understand how are people exiting, are we collecting the right data to inform the rest of this employment cycle? Working on improving and expanding data collection through current systems, to understand recruitment and the employee experience, including perhaps a climate survey. What data should the City be collecting to ensure a representative workforce? Expanding data to go beyond census-type data categories, to gender identity, preferred pronouns etc. In terms of access to employment, we would like to understand language access requirements for position postings and applications. Can we improve access to the application process through targeted workshops etc? Long term, this data collection will also allow us to consider pay equity and position equity.

AD, Does the City hold data on the demographics of applicants? VSE, Yes, EEO reports are run during the application/hiring process and sent to hiring managers.

BP, The City has a history of anti-racism training and development programs, is the team considering something similar and please make presentation available?

VSE, the citywide REI&B Staff Committee is working to support many such ideas. Our sub-committees are informing much of this work on recruitment and retention, events, training, and affinity groups. Presentation will be available on webpage alongside minutes.

AD, have we moved forward on having VSE present this information to City Council? Dir Green sent the request to Council Chair Tracy and he responded positively. AD to connect again with Council on this.

6) Presentation: MLK Day Events and History in the City of Burlington

a) Dr. Patrick Brown, Executive Director Greater Burlington Multicultural Resource Center (GBMRC), presented on the history of Dr Rev Martin Luther King Day events in Burlington. In the early 90's there was a lack of recognition for the day and Dr Brown organized to have the day declared a statewide holiday. Since 1993 a long list of important speakers have visited Vermont to speak at the annual GBMRC event, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Sharon Robinson, Rev. Al Sharpton, and many others. This year, planning is underway taking into account COVID-19 restrictions. BP, does BTV funding support the event? Dr Brown, the Mayor's Office does support the event, not requested funding support this year because there may be a limit for audience numbers due to the pandemic.

b) Marcella Gange, CEDO has partnered with ECHO for the past 8 years to organize a day of learning and service. This year CEDO is planning an entirely remote event and working in partnership with ECHO, other city departments and

REIB City Team for arts, outdoor, and educational events, including a panel discussion on reparations led by Dir. Green. Will share more details and link to activities as they become available.

7) Open Forum Discussion. Dir. Green informed the Committee that the merchandise with the REI&B logo has arrived and distributed to the REI&B Staff Committee. It is very popular, there are some additional items available, and they are looking at how to extend availability. BP asked about the progress of the BIPOC small business grant program. Dir Green and Skyler Nash updated on progress, the program has launched and applications are being received. Funding sources include City and private sources. BP and Dir. Green both commented on the need to have a user friendly and streamlined application and reporting process. AD, will add as an agenda item to next meeting for update.

Meg Polyte, Commissioner of the Green Mountain Transit Board and leading racial equity and inclusion work. Wants to collaborate with the City and learn from our progress and share trainings etc.

AD asked VSE for an update on the recruitment for the public health equity manager? VSE – the application period has been extended. KP, asked about the process for the HR Director? VSE, the interview process is underway.

8) Date of next meeting. The committee members set meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 5.30pm – from December 15th, 2020. Agenda items to include: updates on the REI&B strategic planning (Dir Green – Grayscale may be available?), BIPOC business grant program, MLK Day planning update, and update on demographics of staff by types of position and public health equity manager

9) Motion to adjourn brought by BP and seconded by KP. Meeting adjourned at 7.27pm.