

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE MEETING

July 6, 2021

Minutes

Chair: Kate Baxter-Kauf

Secretary: Catherine Plessner

Staff Contact: Alexa Golemo, Alyssa Mitchell

Attendees: Lissa Jones Lofgren, Art Punyko, Kensey Lipstreuer, Gene Johnson, Brian Wagner, Tom Dietsche, Patty Hartman, Ann Dolan, Zak Yudihishthu, Athena Adkins, Marsha Berry

Minutes

I. Introductions / Additions or Deletions to Agenda

Committee members and guests introduced themselves

II. Approval of June 8, 2021 Minutes Meeting

Motion, Seconded, Passed 9-0

III. Introducing Lissa Jones-Lofgren, Equity Consultant MGCC Board and Committee Retreat

Lissa expressed her excitement to work with MGCC because she believes that democracy is best affected by the people who are closest to it, as was the belief of the founders of community councils. So she believes really strongly in the power of community councils to move agendas for people who live in and understand the needs of the community. She has been working with other district councils on what she calls “coaching models” to get closer to inclusion. How inclusion is defined depends on who is at the table of influence and decision-making. It’s important to constantly challenge ourselves to include more broadly people who describe themselves in different ways to insure that the work we’re doing is representative of all the people and all their needs. It’s a tall order but we have recipes, like our Inclusivity Plan, to help us start.

Lissa said that she’s here to broaden our thinking and challenge us positively to help us get new information so we can be informing other people, including the MGCC Board and community around work that she calls IDEA: **I**nclusion, **D**iversity, **E**quity, **A**ccessibility. She knows that we have invested in this work by creating the Inclusivity Task Force and an Inclusivity Plan that we update annually. As a way of beginning the ITF participants watched *Jim Crow of the North* prior to our meeting and Lissa invited us to share our responses to the film. She encouraged us to debate ideas so we all get better. When we face the myths that we all grew up with, as evidenced in many of our responses to *Jim Crow of the North*, it makes us realize it wasn’t right and question why we believed it. Our work together is not based in shame, it’s rooted in how well we just be honest with ourselves and when you feel the “ouch” that will be transferred to others, especially those who come after us, our families. If I get better, then they’ll get better, then things will get better in a way that takes real work from all of us. Part of our work together is to establish

common language for how our organization talks about inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility. As we go to community we have agreed that when we say these words, this is what we mean. The middle is necessary because we have to find common ground. But it does not mean we that we give up yielding to things that we know are inherently wrong. If it were done to you, you would not want it to be done, means it should not be done to others. Kindergarten rules, tell the truth and treat each other fairly.

The consensus was to send out the excellent questions in the Chat to the retreat participants beforehand and ask them to reflect and come prepared to share anything they'd like in that realm. We aren't doing work with widgets, we're doing work with hearts.

IV. IDI Check-In

Athena Adkins will be administering the Intercultural Diversity Inventory (IDI) to members of MGCC Board and ITF who have agreed to participate. It is a culture neutral tool that is a way to think about and understand how you want to show up in the world and how you actually are showing up with regard to intercultural humility. Emails have gone out to the participants for them to take the IDI, then we will debrief as a group in a workshop and later meet individually to go over your personal profiles.

V. Updates on Inclusivity and Equity Strategic Action Plan

Goal One's first Action Step is Equity Training Opportunities and we have our Board and Committee Retreat tomorrow so we're on track. We're on pace for our second Action Step that involves educational videos.

The first Action Step of Goal Two involving active participation of underrepresented groups, was to do a survey to understand who participates in MGCC activities. That survey has been completed. When our intern returns in the Fall we look forward to making more progress. Action Step 2 is to talk more with the Board and Committees about inclusivity work and explore opportunities with other district councils on equity focused topics. These are two things we can continue to work on. We have our summer anti-racism series starting right before the the Retreat, our videos getting ready to launch and MacGrove in September. We can use information from all of those to think about how we want to go forward.

There was a motion to adjourn the August meeting date that passed unanimously. We encouraged each other to use the time to participate in the Anti-racism Series.

VI. Meeting Adjourned