



Community Involvement Committee (CIC) Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: April 14, 2020 | Time: 5:00 -6:30 pm

Location: Zoom meeting

Attendees: Kaitlin Berger, Susan Novak, Sandra Walden, Tony Greiner, Tanaira Johnson, Claire Carder, Valaria Vidal Natasha Gaskin (BPS), Nikoyia Phillips (BPS), Leslie Lum (BPS), Sofia Alvarez-Castro (Enviroissues), Anne Pressentin (Enviroissues)

Apologies: Caitlin Burke, Kaitlin W. La Bonte, Rachel Bernstein, Harranie Chavers, Daniel Hafner, Christina Wienholz

Welcome, Introductions and Announcements

Nikoyia Phillips, CIC Coordinator, welcomed committee members to the meeting and thanked members for attending this virtual Zoom meeting amidst COVID-19. Phillips proceeded to do a technology check and went over a few of the different Zoom features. Phillips encouraged members to have their cameras on, but that there was no expectation of having them on. Phillips reminded members to take care of themselves and to take a break whenever needed. Phillips then proceeded to do a round of acknowledgments.

Phillips led the committee in a review of the agenda, ground rules, and an ice breaker activity.

Before the presentation, members reflected on how COVID-19 had affected them and voiced questions about the response:

- How is the City dealing with the houseless population? What services are houseless people getting?
- When/how do we resume life after Covid-19 physical distancing directives?
- When is it going to end?
- Will working class be depleted with effects to the economy?

Updates

Phillips gave members an update on what work the City and the Bureau is doing related to COVID-19 response. Phillips shared that she wants to be fully transparent and honest in providing updates.

- Things have felt disorganized during this time.



- In the last few weeks, the City has been catching up on what the community needs are and sharing information.
- Mayor Wheeler released a moratorium on rent payments, which was encouraging. The rent moratorium allows one to defer payments. However, that money has to be paid back, causing debt.
- Mayor Wheeler and his staff hosted a community forum for community-based organizations and nonprofits doing direct service. The two-hour forum included people from the City's budget office, County and Civic Life. The forum was an opportunity for organizations to ask questions about what the City is doing. Organizations advocated for the following:
 - The rent moratorium to include rent and mortgage forgiveness for renters and property owners.
 - Culturally responsive food responses.
- BPS is under the direction of the Mayor, so they have been following his office's guidance. It's been a challenge for the Bureau to know where to prioritize their energy and work. The Bureau has been working on resiliency planning and thinking about what going back to normal might look. Considering that for a lot of people, the old "normal" didn't work for them, so trying to leverage this opportunity for some change to community work, engagement, and climate change.
- The budget impacts have been significant, with an estimated \$100 million in lost revenue.
- There has been work started for emergency food boxes for communities of color, front line workers, and laid-off individuals.
- The Smart Cities team has been looking for resources for those who have limited internet resources.
- There has been coordination with the emergency coordination center in partnership with County's health department to serve the houseless community. They are keeping bathrooms open and stocking them with soap and towels. There are portable handwashing stations been put out. And there is quite a bit of food relief work, primarily giving resources to those organizations that already serve people experiencing houselessness. Working with restaurants to repurpose food, so it doesn't go to waste.
- The County and the City launched the Joint Volunteer Information Center (JVIC) to coordinate a regional response to COVID-19. JVIC is a collaborative resource group with professionals and volunteers from the City and County, offering their time and goods to help slow the spread of this virus.



Members asked a few clarifying questions and moved on to the presentation portion of the agenda. One member said the City could do a better job of telling the community what the City is doing by getting information to the media.

Presentation:

Phillips welcomed Leslie Lum, East Portland District Planner, and shared that Lum would be talking about the JVIC and describing some of her work with the JVIC. Lum continued to share that the group is made up of eight to 10 individuals who have assigned about five nonprofits to support and provide case management. The most significant needs nonprofits have are face coverings and food. Lum explained that a lot of people have been making masks, but they have been going to health care workers, as they should, but that a lot of the vulnerable communities are still in need. Lum continued to share that the food boxes delivered were not culturally appropriate or didn't consider dietary restrictions. Some people don't know how to cook the food or couldn't consume it.

One member asked if JVIC was collecting data about culturally appropriate food and dietary restrictions? Lum shared that they have been working directly with the community organizations.

Another member asked who they should contact if they wanted to donate masks or food? Lum thanked the member for wanting to donate and shared they could contact her directly to coordinate donations.

Phillips shared that she would share Lum's contact information with everyone in the group. Phillips thanked Lum for her time and moved the meeting to the work session portion of the agenda.

Work Session

Phillips introduced the work session and shared that members would break up into groups and have 10 minutes to discuss one of the following questions:

- 1. What are your biggest concerns related to community engagement processes as a result of COVID-19?*
- 2. Moving into the spring and summer, physical distancing will be the norm. This requires creativity and new thinking to move decision-processes forward. What ideas do you have, or what strategies have you seen work to include community voices outside of meetings?*



3. When do you think our communities would be ready to learn about new project proposals and provide input?

The group then gathered together and reported on the key themes of their discussions:

Group 1:

Concerns related to engagement processes as a result of Covid-19:

- The most vulnerable have the most difficulty accessing information and resources. They may not have access to Zoom meetings. These are the same people who have health or economic challenges.
- The most vulnerable are more fearful and more affected by the virus
- If we are engaging communities right now, the responses we receive will be different.
- There are limited economic resources for outreach. City and County are already strained. What does outreach look like now?
- Institutions that are able to provide access to information are now closed – such as libraries and schools.
- I'm concerned with elections. Lots of people are disenfranchised.

Ideas or strategies to use to include community voices outside of meetings:

- Phone calls
- Mailers with pre-paid envelopes
- Take advantage of fact that people have time and are at home
- Provide some space that allows physical distancing – such as large City room
- As weather gets better, meet outside with spaced out chairs
- Use social media – It takes advantage of smart phones and allows connection with young people.
- Be aware that some people are not on computers or cell phones.

When do you think our communities would be ready to learn about new project proposals and provide input?

- People are looking for something to focus on other than the virus. We could reach out.
- The time is now. We are doing a pivot. This is really important to define what the future looks like.
- We need to ask community members when it is OK.



Group 2:

- One member stated that people need time and space. They continued to share that they have friends who are currently unemployed because of COVID-19, are living day-to-day, and are in survival mode. They can't engage with our projects when they are trying to figure out how they are going to pay for rent.
- One member shared their fear that engagement will get lost in the process. Questioning if they should engage with communities to see what their needs/wants are or if they should give them time or space.
- One member shared that a crucial part of resiliency planning is engagement and if people are not engaged then it's not resilient
- Members expressed concerns about the lack of access to technology with the closure of schools, libraries, and other resource centers. Members shared their fears for the individuals that don't have access to the internet and can't file for unemployment or rent assistance

Report out

- We don't know when people will be ready to engage on projects. Wait until later for projects like streetcar or residential infill.
- Reach out to folks using non-digital means – postal mail and phone calls.
 - People may want a diversion from virus to look long term.
 - Do need to consider what the community says; need to ask whether the City can engage and how to engage.
- Use text messaging more than apps that require downloading. Text messages don't require a smart phone.
- Open schools or libraries for communication and information access.
- The crisis has shown the need to immediately pivot. The future will be different.
- People may give different responses now when they are in crisis. Maybe that is good, but need to acknowledge that the feedback is coming at an odd time.
- People will want to be engaged differently now.
- There is an opportunity to make a big leap forward. We can do more digital engagement, which can expand in the future.

Phillips thanked everyone for their participation.

One member shared that the committee should reconsider shutting down for the summer. All present members agreed to continue meeting through summer. One member shared that it's an opportunity and an obligation to continue meeting.

Phillips thanked members for their commitment and moved on to close the meeting. Phillips shared that she was one of the folks in the Bureau that was being reassigned to the emergency response team, but that would make sure that the committee had staff and capacity. Phillips



invited members to email her if there are any topics they would like to add to the agenda for future meetings. Phillips shared that at the next meeting, they would discuss the draft charter prepared by Enviroissues. Phillips said she would send it out electronically before the meeting.

Meeting Evaluation

Phillip shared she would send the meeting evaluation via email. Phillips asked members to share their feedback as it was Phillips's first time facilitating a meeting via Zoom.

Meeting Adjourn