



Community Involvement Committee (CIC) Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: May 12, 2020 | Time: 5:00 -6:30 pm

Location: Zoom meeting

Attendees: Kaitlin Berger, Susan Novak, Sandra Walden, Anthony Greiner, Tanaira Johnson, Claire Carder, Susan Novak, Katy Wolf, Daniel Hafner, Rachel Bernstein, Harranie Chavers Kaitlin W. La Bonte, Susan Novak, Sandra Walden, Anthony Greiner, Tanaira Johnson, Claire Carder, Natasha Gaskin (BPS), Sofia Alvarez-Castro (Enviroissues)

Apologies: Caitlin Burke, Valeria Vidal, and Christina Wienholz

Welcome, Introductions and Announcements

Natasha Gaskin and Sofia Alvarez-Castro welcomed committee members to the meeting and thanked members for attending this virtual Zoom meeting amidst COVID-19. Gaskin proceeded to do a technology check and went over a few of the different Zoom features. Gaskin reminded members to take care of themselves and to take a break whenever needed. Gaskin then proceeded to do a round of acknowledgments and 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 discussed the following questions:

- How are you?
- What part of your routine has changed that you might keep doing post COVID-19?
- What questions have come up?

Gaskin thanked everyone who participated in the reflection and then moved the meeting to the presentation section of the agenda.

Presentation

Gaskin thanked Bureau Director Andrea Durbin for coming to the meeting and invited Durbin to share a few words of acknowledgement, encouragement, and thanks. Durbin took a few moments to thank committee members for their time and service. Durbin reminded members of the importance of their service and how she hoped that they continue to serve, as their role will be even more increasingly important as public involvement changes with COVID-19 and that the Bureau is going to be looking at them for support.



Durbin shared with members that the Bureau's Smart Cities Program, in collaboration with the Office of Technology, started a pilot program to distribute laptops and technology assistance packages that are culturally responsive to community-based organizations. The community-based organizations would then share the laptops and internet packages to the communities they serve. Durbin emphasized the importance of being connected and how this might look in the future.

Durbin then opened the conversations up to answer any Bureau questions and asked if members had any memories or takeaways from this year they could share. Members took some time to share their thoughts and questions:

As perspective and role change in many important ways because of COVID-19, I have noticed changes we have made that allow us to live more sustainably. For example, people are getting out more and walking, things are moving more slowly, and there is less transit. I have noticed this paradigm shift; this experience has shown us that we can do things differently and be agile. My assumption and/or questions are these conversations the Bureau is having?

Durbin thanked for their question and shared that yes, the Bureau is having those conversations. Durbin continued to share that even though this is a devastating time for our most impacted communities some positive outcomes are highlighted. Durbin shared the Bureau is having conversations around how we continue to build on these opportunities and create a recovery framework that focuses on racial equity and climate change and invests in systems and projects that are don't add to the disparities in our communities. Durbin also shared that the Bureau has been part of the response team and that some staff has been reassigned and been responding to the different needs of our community. This time is more important than ever, they have been collaborating with partners, such as Prosper to make sure that people and businesses stay in place. They have been working creatively to do things that previously were not politically feasible. We are looking at how to enhance community ownership and build community resiliency. The old normal did not work for everyone, so how do we create a new normal.

Durbin continued to share that on May 20th Council will decide how to spend the Cares Act dollars and on May 26th they will meet again to determine what will be prioritized because unfortunately there just is not enough funding for everything.

Another member asked that it is hard to continue initiatives when leadership changes. Member asked Durbin if she can speak to the impact of initiatives with leadership change?

Durbin explained that they do not have a lot of control over leadership change and cannot advance on a lot. Once we know who the leadership will be, we work to bring them up to speed quickly regarding what the Bureaus are doing.



Durbin then shared that she wanted to give this group an update on the Bureau's budget, as some of the members had helped with the budget. Durbin shared that they submitted their budget and tried to include as many things as possible, they got some but not all that they asked for. The anti-displacement did not get the additional funding they requested for but shared the Bureau will support this need through other means. The request for the flood plain work for the Lent's neighborhood was tabled for future decisions in the fall. The Bureau was also directed to put a freeze on merit-based salary increases and there has been some talk about furloughs. In general, the Bureau is feeling positive, but expect additional budget cuts in June. They suspect that there will be a better sense in a few months, what that will mean for our portfolio work.

One member asked what Durbin mean by anti-displacement work?

Durbin explained that anti-displacement work refers to the work that the Bureau is doing around evaluating strategies that can be put in place to prevent displacement for the homeowner, renter, and/or business owners who have been in our communities for years. Some of this work includes looking at displacement risk analysis and looking at neighborhood livability. We have been focusing this work specifically in N/NE Portland. We want to make sure that we are not further pushing these neighborhoods out.

As displacement continues and small businesses are getting consolidated by bigger corporations, what do you see the BPS role in regarding the to anti-displacement work for these struggling small businesses?

We are working closely with Prosper Portland to distribute funds to small businesses. The Bureau is also supporting other Bureaus by providing research analysis support. However, the bottom line there is not enough funds for everyone; a reality that is being faced through the entire county and state.

Is Prosper Portland trustworthy?

Prosper has been a consistently excellent partner, they have been distributing funds and have been working collaboratively with us to implement these priorities. They have been good partners and are receptive to feedback. Like many organizations, they have a lot of turnover in staff, but the new staff has been nothing but wonderful to work with. Prosper and their staff understands the importance of equity and how to leverage dollars to communities who have been historically disinvested.

Gaskin thanked Durbin for her time and questions. Gaskin then moved to the work session component of the agenda.



Work Session

Alvarez thanked everyone for taking their time to review the charter. Alvarez shared she wanted to take some time to review the vision and mission components of the charter. Alvarez took a few minutes and reminded members of the re-chartering process and the journey of the charter. Alvarez took a few minutes to read the mission and vision and asked members to discuss some questions.

Does this sound like an accurate capture of the work you do and/or strive to do in the future?

One member said that this fairly represents what I understand is our objective, nice work!

One member asked how can you have equity results when we do not make any decision for the City?

One member responded by sharing that we are constantly trying to call out equity at all levels, advancing work in an equitable manner. Another member responded that to have equitable results, we need to have an equitable process. Another member agreed that they think it is like using an equity lens, which is more of a process than a means to the end. Another member suggested that the members have an equity training, so they all a shared knowledge of what equity is, members liked the idea. Another member reminded folks that everyone has a different definition of equity-based on their privilege.

One member said they like the mission and vision; however, they are unsure if the word “unmute” is the best word. Maybe we can replace it with encourage or hear?

One member responded saying maybe we can use elevate those to speak who haven’t before or amplify the voices of those who cannot speak? Another member responded maybe we can use the word amplify instead. Members agreed that they should use amplify.

What isn’t being mentioned that the public should know about your committee?

One member shared how in their committee bio they wrote something about they wanted to serve to advocate for those who could not advocate about their social class, gender, ethnicity identity, etc. Member suggested that maybe we should write about the advocacy work we are doing. Members agreed and liked the idea, and agreed that we should add something about “advocating -- hearing those voices for those who are not traditionally heard.”

One member shared that we should add something about how this group is composed of a diverse group of individuals of different ages, sex, ethnicity, and lived experiences. Members agreed and liked the addition.



One member said that the group has a stronger voice, that we need a stronger word than “feedback” we do not just give opinions and feedback, but rather give recommendations. The group agreed.

Alvarez thanked the group for thinking critically about this, noted the changes, and said she would incorporate these changes in the charter.

Close and Next Steps (6:20 pm)

Alvarez thanked everyone for their discussion today and reminded members that there was no meeting in June. Alvarez told folks to be on the lookout for an email from Nikoyia with the decision if the committee will meet during the summer. Alvarez wrapped by reminded folks that a link to the meeting evaluation was added at the bottom of the agenda.

Before ending one member shared that they would be interested in connecting with other Bureau committees or entities like this. Members agreed and said they like that idea and that they would be open to sharing events or meetings of other organizations and groups that doing similar work.

Adjourn (6:30 pm)