

**CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CENTERING COMMUNITIES OF COLOR COMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes**

April 27, 2023  
5:30 p.m.

City Hall  
Conference Room 1E-120

**ATTENDEES:** Amirah Haque, Chair  
Monik Martinez, Vice Chair  
Kananu Mason (Remote)  
Dr. Randy Nunez (Remote)  
Jeri Tiernan  
Royce Yuen (Remote)

**ABSENT:** Ryan Qualls

**STAFF:** Dr. Marcus Johnson, Diversity, Inclusion and Outreach  
Adminstrator, City Manager's Office

**CONSULTANT:** Joshua Barr

**MINUTES WRITER:** Kelly Wilson, City Clerk's Office

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:43 p.m. by Chair Haque.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Attendees identified themselves and are reflected above.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was approved by consensus.

**4. RETREAT REFLECTION**

Chair Haque said they would discuss the retreat later in the meeting with Mr. Barr's presentation.

**5. SCHEDULING**

The committee discussed scheduling a mock community dialogue as a practice before the community dialogues are held with residents and workers. Mr. Barr said it would be good to

have a few other people attend the mock dialogue to solicit feedback and input for the committee.

## **6. STAFF UPDATES**

Dr. Johnson noted the need for additional recruitment to fill vacancies on the committee, preferably before the mock community dialogue. He suggested that committee members submit names of any interested individuals and he would contact them.

Vice Chair Martinez said the Indian-American community was not represented on the committee and she knew someone who might be interested in serving.

Dr. Johnson said staff is working on transitioning the CCC meetings to the conference room used by the boards and commissions, which has better technology equipment.

Dr. Johnson noted that Ms. Boyle and Dr. Whitehead are working on the cross-cultural programming project and the CCC will be involved in that effort in the future. He said staff is working to revise the application for board and commission appointments to make the recruiting process more inclusive and transparent.

Dr. Johnson said a number of City departments, including Bellevue Police Department, are interested in having discussions with the CCC.

The I.T. Department is setting up City email addresses for CCC members. Dr. Johnson said he will make a packet for CCC members to provide information regarding email, CCC bylaws and related topics. He asked everyone to submit a photo and brief biography to post on the CCC's web page.

## **7. COMMUNITY DIALOGUES WITH JOSHUA BARR: PHASES 1 & 2**

### **(a) Retreat Follow-up and Scheduling Community Dialogues**

Mr. Barr presented a spreadsheet depicting the community dialogue project goals, activities under each goal and progress to date. He noted that staff working on the cross cultural project also plan to hold community dialogues this fall. He said goal 3 is about designing the dialogue process and initiating the community events. Tasks include setting the dates, scheduling locations and publicizing the project.

Mr. Barr asked whether the CCC would like to invite elected officials, City leadership, school representatives and/or others to participate in the dialogues. He said it can be helpful but the decision should be made by the committee.

Mr. Barr said the dialogue groups are typically 16-20 people, with a maximum of 30 people. He noted that smaller groups can enable more in-depth discussions. He suggested providing the opportunity for people to register online to participate in the dialogues.

Mr. Barr said June is targeted for training the dialogue facilitators, identifying note takers and otherwise preparing for the community meetings. The dialogues will be held in July and August.

Dr. Nunez encouraged scheduling the dialogues as soon as possible. He noted that people are busy with vacations and other activities during the summer.

Mr. Barr concurred. He said the planning should include providing food for the community meetings. He said participants should be prepared to spend approximately 2.5 hours at the dialogue sessions.

Ms. Haque suggested that the CCC set the dates in May to provide sufficient time for people to plan ahead for the July and August dialogues.

Continuing, Mr. Barr said the CCC will need to determine who will be facilitators and note takers. He suggested that everyone should be a note taker at least once. He said ideally there are two note takers per session, one to write on the notes used throughout the dialogue and another note taker on a laptop taking more detailed notes.

Responding to Ms. Martinez, Mr. Barr said the facilitator training should be held in June.

Mr. Barr said the input from the dialogue is used to develop concepts and ideas that will move the community forward. That information is taken directly back to the community in an open public meeting where everyone can vote on the concepts and issues of most importance to them. Mr. Barr acknowledged that the dialogues will not necessarily capture every community of color for input. However, the larger public meetings will solicit broader input. He suggested holding up to four of the larger meetings for the community to review and comment on the overall concepts and suggestions from the dialogues. Mr. Barr said all of the information will be used to guide the City in developing policies and practices that are beneficial to the entire community.

Mr. Barr urged CCC members to work on identifying and contacting potential participants for the dialogues. He said they should be held in places that are welcoming to the community. He encouraged using trusted organizations and individuals to help organize dialogue participants.

Mr. Johnson suggested City facilities, including community centers, as well as other locations. Regarding participation by City officials, he noted that the City Council and many of the boards and commissions are in recess during August. Ms. Haque suggested inviting a broad range of individuals.

Mr. Barr said that everyone has a role in planning and hosting the community dialogues in order to make them a success. He noted the CCC Team's role in relationship building with the City Council and presenting the outcomes and recommendations generated through the dialogues.

Mr. Barr said that when you are centering communities of color, it is important to understand where they are, where they want to be, and how we can all get there.

Mr. Barr described the community dialogue packet, which includes a discussion guide about the broad range of issues that impact people who live and work in Bellevue. Additional written materials provide a demographic overview of Bellevue; information on economics, housing and education; and discussion questions that draw on the experience of community members. Mr. Barr said it is important to provide data to support a factual foundation for the dialogues.

Mr. Barr said the CCC will ultimately develop recommendations for the City Council. He said the demographic data provides information regarding disabilities, gender, age, business ownership by race/ethnicity/national origin, unemployment, food insecurity, income levels, health insurance, crime, life expectancy in King County based on race, and other factors.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Bellevue Police Department's online dashboard provides crime information including about who is being arrested.

Mr. Barr said additional data topics are home ownership versus rentals by race, school demographics, high school graduation and dropout rates, number of students who speak a first language other than English and student readiness by grade level. He said home ownership is higher among individuals of European descent. High school graduation rates are lower and dropout rates are higher for Latino individuals. Mr. Barr said student readiness is similar between White and Black children in kindergarten. However, by third grade and continuing through high school, readiness among White students begins to exceed that of Black and Latino children. Mr. Barr noted that Black students have a high graduation rate in the Bellevue School District.

Mr. Barr highlighted sample questions for facilitators to guide the community dialogues: Do you feel like you belong in Bellevue? Are there places where you feel you do not belong? Do you want to live in Bellevue long term? What places, services and/or people do you reach out to when you need support? How do you feel about work, transportation and housing options in Bellevue? What worries you the most about living in Bellevue?

The next step in the dialogue is a visioning exercise to discuss where the community wants to go and how living in Bellevue could be enhanced to better center communities of color. What is working and how can we make it better? What things are already in place for the community to build on? Where are opportunities needed in terms of housing, employment and housing? What would support in your community look like? Which actions based on the community dialogues will have the greatest impact? Who in the community needs to be involved? Who has not been involved in the community dialogues?

Responding to Dr. Nunez, Mr. Barr said training will be provided on how to respond to certain questions, for example, challenges about the accuracy of the data. Mr. Barr acknowledged that some people are skeptical about the U.S. Census data. However, it is the best data we currently have and it serves as a reference point for beginning discussions.

Referring to earlier discussion, Mr. Johnson confirmed that Mr. Qualls would be able to attend the mock dialogue training on May 21.

Dr. Nunez moved to schedule the mock dialogue training for May 21, 2:00-6:00 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried by a vote of 6-0.

Vice Chair Martinez said the training will tentatively be held at the Bellevue Youth Theatre.

Responding to Ms. Tiernan, Mr. Barr said “disability” will be defined for inclusion in the community dialogue guide.

(b) Networking Map Grid and Identifying Gaps in the Community

Mr. Barr demonstrated the networking map grid exercise in which participants map the groups and affiliations with which they identify. He asked everyone to complete the exercise before the next meeting. He said this helps to determine the groups in the community that would be important to involve in the dialogues.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

/kaw