CITY OF BELLEVUE

BELLEVUE DIVERSITY ADVISORY NETWORK

MEETING MINUTES

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| January 30, 2018 | Bellevue City Hall |
| 6:00 p.m. | Room 1E-121 |

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anthony Austin, Mareth Flores, Jennifer Karls , Haruka Kojima, Alaric Bien, Chinar Bopshetty, Mohamed Bakr , Andrew Kelly , Aleksandra Poesukova , Tom Brewer, Aisha Kabani, Eloisa Tran, Edilberto Flores, Justin Daigneault

MEMBERS ABSENT: Beabe Akpojovwo, Linda Whitehead, Jingdong Yu, Margie Ye, Maria Batayola

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Manuel

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Chair Austin who presided.

A. Roll Call of Members

All members were present with the exception of Beabe Akpojovwo, Linda Whitehead, Jingdong Yu, Margie Ye and Maria Batayola.

B. Adoption of the Agenda

A motion to reverse the order of items 3 and 4 and to approve the agenda as amended was made by Mr. Bien. The motion was seconded by Ms. Flores and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Adoption of the Minutes

Mr. Bakr called attention to the second paragraph on page 4 and asked that the second sentence be revised to read “Ramadan will be on Christmas Day after more than 15 years….”(?)(?)(?)(?)

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Mr. Bakr. The motion was seconded by Ms. Karls and the motion carried unanimously.

2. 2018 TIMELINE

A. Gracious Space

B. Review and Discuss

C. Group Milestones

Mr. Manuel commented that one major challenge during 2017 was not knowing exactly how to tackle the work of the BDAN. He said in order to better address the issue for the coming year he drafted a timeline to help provide some clarity. The draft timeline was shared with the group and in explaining it Mr. Manuel noted that they had been primed to be part of the Bellevue Diversity Institute public outreach and program concept study. He said six firms responded to the RFP and one of them was ultimately selected. Currently the focus is on getting a contract signed and the hope is that will be accomplished very soon.

Mr. Manuel said feedback will be sought from various groups regarding the plan the consultant puts together. In particularly, the focus will be put on identifying intra-cultural and cross-cultural co-creation and engagement. The BDAN will continue its diversity mapping work to expand the general understanding of who is out there, and the consultant will use the work to tap into and connect with other groups in order to receive feedback from them for the Bellevue Diversity Institute. The BDAN will also get into some support around engagement and feedback with those groups.

Continuing, Mr. Manuel noted that the internal city team has met with the Culturally Responsive Government subcommittee. The internal city team is focused on defining and operationalizing shared purpose and value add. Additional meetings are planned and the hope is that within about five months a plan will be drawn up, and that will be followed up with implementing them.

The BDAN has the opportunity to throw down whatever it wants as part of the community check-ins with the City Manager. The issues raised should, of course, be representative of the various communities served by the BDAN members. Meetings with the City Manager have been slated for March and July as part of regular BDAN meetings.

Ms. Bopshetty suggested that meeting time should be taken ahead of meeting with the City Manager to agree on the issues to be raised and the questions to be asked.

Mr. Manuel pointed out that there will be several opportunities throughout the year for BDAN to participate in some meaningful public programs. He noted that BDAN members participated in the Dr. Martin Luther King celebration, and said the Eastside Racial Leadership Coalition Summit in March will involve some BDAN members. The BDAN has been asked to participate in a workshop in association with the summit.

Mr. Bakr commented that the Crossroads event served as a good opportunity to hear stories from different people who have been in the area for a very long time.

Mr. Manuel said the schedule anticipates having the BDAN supporting the Bellevue Diversity Institute from March through May, including through participation in community gathering events. In September Welcoming Week will serve as another opportunity for engaging with the public, as will the student-parent engagement conference in the fall which falls into the broader definition of diversity.

Mr. Brewer asked if consideration had been given to including the two-day civic education training program offered by the Pacific Education group in June on the calendar. Mr. Manuel said he has begun compiling a list of events and opportunities that are related to diversity and equity. He said he had not included that program because he was not sure exactly how the BDAN could figure in, and also because of concerns about over committing the BDAN members. Mr. Brewer said there will be a pre-summit event produced by the Eastside Pathways Racial Equity Team on June 26. The two-day civic education event is slated for June 27 and 28.

Mr. Manuel noted that the timeline included several milestones for the BDAN to focus on.

Ms. Flores suggested that at the two-year anniversary of the BDAN a milestone report should be given about the number of community events at which committee members participated.

Mr. Manuel noted that at some point he would raise with the BDAN members the issue of serving two- or three-year terms. He also agreed that some attention should be paid to the fact that some who were appointed to the BDAN are not attending the meetings and may need to be replaced.

Mr. Manuel directed the members to identify someone on the committee with whom they had had the least interaction to date and to discuss together an instance in which their frame of reference or state of mind changed as a result of coming into contact with someone. Mr. Manuel then asked for one or two shares with the full group.

Ms. Poesukova shared that in her homeland there are many biases and stigmas against homosexuals who were viewed the same as sexual predators. She said after immigrating to the United States the person who always went the extra mile in helping her adapt to her new surroundings and work was gay. She said her perceptions changed dramatically as a result and her prejudices vanished.

Ms. Kabani said she is an employer and one day hired a very tall and masculine lady. The chatter around the office was whether she was a woman or a man, and there were concerns because she was using the ladies restroom. She said in a conversation away from work the lady began talking about what it had been like to go through the transition. The fact that the lady opened up and discussed her life helped her to better understand what it meant to be transgender.

4. Bellevue Diversity Institute Public Outreach

Mr. Manuel stated that until the calendar is finalized with the consultant, the next steps relative to the Bellevue Diversity Institute will not be clear.

3. BDAN COMMITTEE WORK

A. Engagement Committee and Outreach and Communications Committee

B. Culturally Responsive Government Committee

Mr. Manuel noted that good progress had been made toward community cultural group mapping. He asked the Outreach and Communications and the Engagement committees to fill in what could be filled in and to where possible focus on the edge groups that are not as well known. He said the charge for the Culturally Responsive Government committee was to come up with an agenda for the next meeting, to note down current studies and various means of receiving feedback and input.

C. Reconvene for Group Work

Ms. Karls reported that the first meeting with the internal team was marred by the fact that several members were sick. The next meeting has been slated for February 15. The plan going forward is to identify projects in each department that are in the planning stage or under way and to seek an understanding of what the culturally responsive needs are and to tag onto the outreach efforts.

Mr. Kelly added that the desire is to get on board with projects as early as possible in order to have the greatest impact possible. That will to some degree entail learning about city processes and how they operate.

Ms. Flores said her group members agreed to set as a milestone or goal to participate in at least four community events.

Ms. Karls noted that the best outcomes will be achieved where the group is able to participate in projects from their very start. Mr. Manuel said that will be the case with the Bellevue Diversity Institute.

Mr. Kelly said he would be taking care of scheduling group video chats to hash out the agenda and to let the internal team know ahead of time what projects to bring to the meeting.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Manuel encouraged the BDAN members to participate in community conversations. The events are primarily for women and are focused on specific themes. Once a year they are open to all genders and the next open conversation will be on February 7.

Chair Austin announced a workshop focused on how to talk to kids about race and other difficult topics. He said the free event was scheduled for February 3 in Seattle. He said kids are welcome to attend as well. A similar event is planned for March with the Bellevue School District. The events are sponsored by the Parent Alliance for Black Scholars, but the focus is not on African-American families.

Mr. Manuel distributed copies of Bellevue By The Numbers, which he noted had been translated into Spanish. He encouraged the members to hand them out freely.

Mr. Bien pointed out that information distributed in various languages will not be all that effective if when people actually do call the city with questions or seeking help they are connected only with someone who speaks English. Mr. Manuel agreed and said there is also a need to carefully review materials once they have been translated to assure accuracy.

6. ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Kelly. The motion was seconded by Mr. Daigneault and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Austin adjourned the meeting at 7:54 p.m.