



EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION

**Thursday, August 23, 2018
6:30 to 8:00 p.m.**

**Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
2100 Ridge Avenue, Evanston
Aldermanic Library**

Present: J. Grover, J. Corbier de Lara, Ald. Wynne, A. Ibañez, D. Holmes, K. Lyons, T. Eberhart, M. Dillard

Absent: M. Vela

Staff: P. Efiom, P. Martínez, K. Danczak Lyons

1. Call to Order/Declaration of a quorum

Commissioner Grover called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

2. Approval of meeting minutes of July 28, 2018 meeting

Comm. Eberhart moved to approve the minutes

Comm. Holmes second

Approved 8-0

3. Public comment

4. Items for Discussion

a. DeEtta Jones Consulting

Dr. Patricia A. Efiom explained Ms. DeEtta Jones, the consultant, was hired by the Evanston Public Library (EPL) to conduct an equity assessment. Ms. Jones shared the plan with the Commission to solicit feedback before she presents the plan to EPL in October. The goal is for EPL to create an equity plan, but the idea is to implement the plan citywide.

Ms. Karen Danczak Lyons, EPL Director, introduced DeEtta Jones from DeEtta Consulting and her work on equity and inclusion worldwide. Ms. Jones commented she is from Waukegan, Illinois.

Ms. Jones explained her consulting firm has been working with EPL since 2017, the process she has followed since working with EPL, which includes interviews with staff and community members, and how her work is ongoing, especially because she is trying to reach underrepresented populations.

Some of the themes she has encountered are concerning the branch locations, and how the City of Evanston has been wrestling with the issue of race for a long time.

Comm. Grover asked how she identifies the right people in the right proportions. Ms. Jones indicated she started by reaching out to allied organizations/individuals. From those initial connections, recommendations of other organizations and individuals have grown organically.

Commissioner Ibañez asked what are the outcomes EPL is expecting to obtain. Director Danczak Lyons Karen explained EPL wanted a seasoned professional to assess where EPL stands and where it needs to move in order to be welcoming and diverse to better serve the Evanston community. Some of the topics include how to recruit and retain a diverse staff, to improve engagement, conduct concentrated library card sign-ups, and understand better how the library can help families that do not use the library services.

Dr. Efiom asked how Ms. Jones identified the Latinx community as being an underrepresented community. Ms. Jones explained that it started by asking questions and being referred to other individuals that are part of the Latinx community. People are indicating that if the EPL was physically accessible they would take advantage of it more.

Dr. Efiom asked why EPL ended up hiring the consultant. Director Danczak Lyons explained it stemmed from a personnel issue that became very public.

Comm. Eberhart asked what is the scope EPL is trying to work with. Director Danczak Lyons clarified EPL is focusing on the lenses/scope of race, class, and ability.

Commissioner Corbier de Lara suggested that EPL offers free dyslexia tests.

Commissioner Ibañez asked is there is a review of hiring practices as part of the consultant's jobs. Dr. Efiom clarified that the process aims to uncover where the issues lie and how to move forward instead of assuming that the hiring practice was the problem.

Member of public asked if any of the engagement sessions with the Latinx community have been conducted in Spanish, Ms. Jones said no, because they have fallen through.

Comm. Grover asked if the report will be made public. Director Danczak Lyons said yes, and they will also gather feedback from the community.

Dr. Efiom explained that Ms. Jones has been working with EPL staff to train them in diversity and cultural competency and that she is working to

develop a curriculum to implement citywide.

Comm. Grover offered for the commission to review the draft report and provide feedback.

b. Translation services policy

Comm. Grover clarified the purpose is to set the degree to which the City should offer translation/interpretation services, but moved to hold the item until the next meeting.

Dr. Efiom explained the City has a contract with Multilingual Connections.

c. Framework

Dr. Efiom

Comm. Grover asked if the budget of the workplan would be for the commission to implement work or for staff training. Dr. Efiom answered that it would be for both, including data collection, etc.

Comm. Grover asked if a business unit (BU) has been assigned. Dr. Efiom replied, "yes, as of three days ago." Ten thousand dollars has been budgeted for next year.

Dr. Efiom introduced and explained her action plan for the development of the equity framework, which will be based on the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The commission unanimously approved to adopt the action plan.

Comm. Dillard indicated he wanted to make sure the plan includes a tool to measure the success of the plan.

Comm. Eberhart asked what is the role of the commissioners in the development of the plan. Dr. Efiom replied that the commission has to define priorities, strategies, etc.

Comm. Grover explained a sub-committee can be created to work closely with staff to create core definitions and framework of action plan to be reviewed by the rest of the commission.

M. Dillard and D. Holmes volunteered to work on the budget sub-committee.
A. Ibañez D Holmes volunteered to work on the community engagement sub-committee.

K. Lyons volunteered to work on the demographics committee.

J. Grover and A. Ibañez volunteered to work on the work plan sub-committee.

5. Items for communication

- a. 2019 Budget Update
- b. Commissioner reports
- c. Next meeting

6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Next meeting:

Thursday, September 27, 2018

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

YWCA Evanston Northshore

1215 Church St, Evanston, IL 60201

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