

MINUTES
WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 23, 2009 3:30 P.M.
BEVERLY LIVESAY CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: L. McBean-Clairborne; S. Martel Moore; K. Belanger; M. DeSouza; C. DeMarco; B. Doling
Excused: L. Roberts; A. Fitzpatrick M. Lynch; P. Carey; L. Holmes; K. Herrera, K. Kephart
Staff: K. Fuller, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Guest: S. Reistetter, S. Estes

Call to Order

The meeting opened at 3:30 p.m.

Introduction

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne introduced newly hired Project Assistant Sarah Reistetter. Sarah will be located the Human Rights Commission offices. Ms. Reistetter noted she has a Human Resources background and provided a brief history of her previous work that included consulting work in Westchester and Connecticut area as well as having briefly worked at Cornell University. She looks forward to the opportunity to work on the foundational aspect of diversity and inclusion.

Diversity Plan

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne spoke of Department Heads and Supervisors requesting information on how to move forward now that their diversity training is completed. This is an area to assist the Personnel Department on refining and implementing the diversity plan.

Civil Service Project

Last week the first meeting with Cornell Institute of Public Affairs (CIPA) class at Cornell University occurred. In attendance were Shelly Michelle-Nunn, Joe Mareane, and Steve Estes. The meeting provided a history of civil service testing as well as an explanation of the proposal and what the issues regarding testing are, including cultural bias. The class has broken out into five groups, each being designated a particular area. Thus far, the County has met with the group dealing with the historical aspect of civil service testing and reform and provided documentation and references regarding previously recommended amendments to the process. Included in this information was case law on Section 61 and the Rule of 10 legislation and others. He suggested reviewing the documentation to determine why they were not successful and see if a better approach could be used at the present time. Additional meetings are scheduled with each of the other groups to review their specific assignment area. The next meetings will be with the cost benefit analysis and the legal/political groups.

It was asked to have regular reporting on the meetings be made available to the Committee membership.

It was noted the draft work would be reviewed after four weeks to determine the focus is in the right direction.

New York State Association of Counties Conference

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne spoke of her attendance at the recent New York State Association of Counties conference. One item that received a good deal of discussion was how to keep young people in New York State. A panel of young people spoke to the participants and noted their adversity to civil service exams is one reason they do not desire staying within New York State. Other counties expressed

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a desire to share information regarding our efforts and indicated they would like to join in the effort to amend the testing procedures.

Mr. Estes noted students at Cornell University also expressed the same feelings regarding civil service testing and are interested in possibly becoming involved with the politically active CIPA group.

Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said the Diversity and Inclusion Plan would be reviewed in the near future. Once revisions are made it will be brought back to the Committee for review. The goal is to have the draft plan submitted by the end of the year to Government Performance and Workforce Relations Committee and the full Legislature. An area to be reviewed will deal with accountability regarding the plan. It was noted the City of Ithaca has developed specific attributes for Department Heads to follow; this topic is included as part of the annual review. Ms. Reistetter noted all plans she has seen have an accountability section as well as other items relating to diversity and inclusion. It was noted the best results are when there is a proactive approach.

The Committee briefly spoke of recruiting events held at the colleges and indicated a desire to have a more professional outreach appearance.

Disability Disclaimer

The Committee briefly discussed the need to be prepared to assist disabled individuals participation at meetings. It was noted that Ms. Lynch was looking into several options. Due to her absence it was determined to postpone the discussion to a future meeting.

Budget Effect on Staffing

Mr. DeLuca noted the budget reductions will impact all departments. He said the diversity initiative should have discussions and plans for how it will effect recruitment of personnel. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said this discussion has taken place with Mr. Mareane at the beginning of the budget planning period.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.