

## Equity and Inclusion Leadership Team (EILT) Meeting Notes – 12.16.20

Present: *Mari Lee, Roger Wilson, Rose Chaney, Sherry Angeletty, Dr. Keith Harris, Rev. Ronnie Henry, Rev. Darren Gerald, Maria Herrera, Toni Shindlecker, Akiyyah Billups, Dr. Terry Scott, William Reid, Veronica Lowe, Aje Hill, , Solash Aviles, Wayne Howard, Michael Blue Katie Hall and Margaret Nusbaum.*

Regrets: *Thad Goodman, Peter Brehm, Xavier Bruce, Latrice Lewis and Maria Shuck*

County Executive Office Attendees: *Jan Gardner, Michael Hughes and Leyda Navarro.*

### Welcome and Introductions

County Executive Gardner welcomed all in attendance and thank them for participating on the team. Members introduced themselves and the organizations that they represent.

### Purpose/Charge of EILT

Many people from different backgrounds have asked for systemic change. This past year broadened and awakened a call for action for racial, social justice and equity. There is a need for fairness, equity and opportunity for all. The County Executive (CE) has committed to providing programs, policies, resources and services that promote Inclusion. Her goal is about people and making things better so everyone can have equitable opportunities.

She hosted a town hall, “A Conversation about Racial Equity” in July which received mixed feedback. Afterwards, the CE conducted small informal listening focus groups to hear from people in the community. Consistently, four topics were highlighted in all of the discussions. They include teaching African American history in our schools, addressing implicit bias, economic empowerment and addressing racism in our community.

The best ideas from the public, members of the community. During her administration she has formulated short-term community based leadership teams to help formulate high level priorities and goals for the County government to pursue. In the past these teams focused on education, jobs, community needs, seniors and growth. This new Equity and Inclusion Leadership Team will meet for several months to develop priorities, initiatives and actions items to serve as a foundation for an action plan to advance equity and inclusion in our community and government.

The CE has recognized that in order to the County focus on diversity, equity and inclusion, a staff position was needed to help coordinate these activities and to begin to implement change. Therefore a recruitment was initiated to hire our first Equity and Inclusion Officer. Michael Hughes came on board on November 30.2020. Michael will work with all division in the County Government and with members of our community. His work must be strategic, data driven, and include the measurement of outcomes. The CE wanted someone with a passion for the work and for the people who want and need to be heard. Michael fits the bill. He will

represent the community in the County administration and will represent the County administration in the community he will serve as the bridge between the two.

### Discussion

Members expressed ideas and suggestions for the team to consider. They are listed below in no priority order.

Consider other areas of our community be represented on the EILT, such as housing, law enforcement, people with disabilities, transportation/Transit, health professionals, people of Muslim faith, minority veterans, etc..

Work towards understanding language and definitions of words used in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) discussions. It is important to develop a common understanding. What will DEI look like in Frederick County?

Mental health services and housing issues are important to the well-being of our community. There are health disparities and housing disparities to consider.

Finding ways to help businesses maintain their business and stay in the community is important.

Use data to help make priorities and decisions. (Employment, health, business, etc.). Define the metrics that will allow us to measure outcomes.

Will the EILT influence or overlap other DEI initiatives in the county such as the FCPS diversity committee? It was suggested that team have the FCPS diversity committee attend a meeting to share their work for information and possible collaborations.

During this COVID pandemic, planning for and administering vaccinations must be equitable. Concerns in health disparities and how the vaccinations will get to parts of the community.

Communication to the diverse communities in our county is important. Include communication with those who may not want or agree with DEI.

It is important to build relationships within the EILT as well as outside of it. Consider subcommittees if necessary.

Inform the EILT on what Frederick County Government has already done, what has worked and not worked.

### Preparation for Next Meeting

Members to talk with their respective communities and ask what is needed or important to them. Find out what are the significant needs and topics.

Reports from earlier leadership teams will be shared with the EILT.

Themes from the CE's listening sessions will be distributed to the EILT also.

### Public Comments

- First Call: Ms. Yewande Oladeinde, President of the Nigeria Association in Frederick, MD
  - Ms. Oladeinde said that it will be wonderful to speak with members of the community to get that input, but at the same time she thinks it will be really critical when defining the outcome. All the members of the Committee are very well experienced, but you all cannot define outcomes that are important to community members. Please reach out to the community to make sure that you will develop those outcomes that are important to the community and how those outcomes should be measure to determine whether or not a progress has being made.
- Second Call / Voicemail: Mr. Willie Mahone
  - The County should take step on the Economic Equity, so we can have an Economic Inclusion.
- Third Call / Voicemail: Ms. Frances from the Frederick County Public Library
  - Congratulations to Frederick Government for this group. We all looking forward to working with you.

### Adjournment

Future meeting schedule will be forthcoming.

Submitted by: Leyda Navarro, Administrative Coordinator, County Executive Office