

Equity Committee
Record of Action for May 20, 2024

Committee Members Present: Supervisor Federal D. Glover, BOS District 5, Committee Chair;
Supervisor John Gioia, BOS District 1, Committee Vice Chair

Staff Present: Kendra Carr and Peter Kim, Co-Directors, Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (staff to Committee); Carrie Ricci, Deputy Director, Public Works Department; Cindy Shehorn, Procurement Services Manager, Public Works Department; Monica Nino, County Administrator, County Administrator's Office; Lara Delaney, Senior Deputy County Administrator, County Administrator Office; Emlyn Struthers, Deputy County Administrator, County Administrator's Office; Ann Elliot; Nicole Bilich; Gilbert Salinas, Chief Equity Officer, Health Department; Shannon Ladner-Beasley, Program Manager, Health Department; Peter Myers, Deputy Chief of Staff, BOS District 3; Alejandra Sanchez, District Representative, BOS District 4; Sonia Bustamante, Chief of Staff, BOS District 1; Jill Ray; Jaime Jenett, H3, Health Department;

Public Attendees: Gigi Crowder; Desiree Rushing; Wanda Johnson; Maria Dominguez; Chaplain J. Blueford; Kerby Lynch; Angela Irvine; Alonzo Edwards; Phil Arnold; Marc King; Audrey Neal; Solomon Belette; Ida Shibiru; Liliana Gonzalez; Maureen Brennan; Ogie Sragetz; Isabel Lara; Mahvash Hassan; Naomi Gashaw; Shantell Owens; Stephanie Taddeo; Desirae Herron; Teki Flow; Latrece Martin; Cyndi Mallory; Roxanne Carillo Garza; Willie Robinson

1. Introductions

Supervisor Glover convened meeting at 10:30 AM.

Committee Chairs introduced themselves and staff assigned to the committee, Kendra Carr and Peter Kim, Co-Directors of the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ).

2. Public comment on any matter under the jurisdiction of the Committee and are not on this agenda (speakers may be limited to two (2) minutes).

Gigi: Regarding the procurement process for the Measure X H3 Program funds, I'm concerned that normal, larger agencies are getting funded rather than grassroots organizations that possess the lived experience and cultural relevance needed to do this work. The people who are reviewing and selecting the awardees must have the perspective and experience of the work on the ground, but too often the larger organizations have the favor of the County.

Desiree Rushing: I knew well the unhoused Black man who was killed recently, and we are on the ground every day in these communities, he would even call me "mom" so it broke my heart when his mother called me to share her grief; he slept at the Chevron station on Lone Tree, and he was beat brutally; where did the money that was promised Black communities go?

Wanda Johnson: Concerned that those out there doing the work on the ground are not being funded; BOS and selection committee must reevaluate the funding that has been given and instead allocate funding to the right organizations on the ground doing the job; it's disheartening that our Black communities are struggling, employment and graduation rates are down, people are hurt and need to heal.

Barbara Howard: I would like to sit with the word 'humanity' and consider why the organizations out there doing the work are not being funded; we are in a state of emergency and we need the support of our government leaders. It is your responsibility as elected officials to make the decisions necessary to support the organizations doing the work that is critical, the smaller groups on the ground, and not just the large organizations that are not part of the Black community.

Chaplain J. Blueford: Disappointed by the decision to not fund the people out here doing the work. We are bringing them food, coats, needed items, praying with them, and we need to be funded. I spoke to the mother who lost her son last week and she is broken; we need to do better and we need the funding to do the real work out on these streets. Please reconsider and re-allocate the funds

Shantell Owens: My heart is broken, as I saw the score card of our proposal, and we were given a 6.3, which is ridiculous. We are on the ground working in the trenches, actually making a difference. Why are we overlooked while the larger groups continue to get the funding;

Marc King: I knew Rahim, I brought him shoes, my wife cooked him food. I can introduce you to the people out here who are unhoused. These folks need people who love them and who have compassion and who do it because it's just what we do out of love for our community, not for a contract.

Alfonzo Edwards: We are out there serving the unhoused, we know what they need. During COVID, many organizations emerged but have since gone under. But No One Left Behind is still here, and folks rely on us; but to be consistent we need the funds, esp here in the City of Antioch, where APD told us not to serve the unhoused because Loaves and Fishes and others are out here but the food they are serving is not what our communities want or need.

Stephanie Taddeo: BOS, please follow the lead of the people on the ground who knows what is needed, you have the information that you need to make the right decision.

3. RECEIVE and APPROVE the Record of Action for the April 15, 2024 meeting of the Equity Committee, with any necessary corrections.

Supervisors reviewed the Record of Action (included in Agenda Packet).

Public Comment:

No comment.

The Record of Action was approved as presented.

- 4. ACCEPT** the Small Business Enterprise, Outreach, and Local Programs Report, reflecting countywide departmental program data for the period of July 1 through December 31, 2023. [3737] (Cindy Shehorn, Carrie Ricci, Public Works)

Cindy Shehorn, Procurement Services Manager for Public Works, and Carrie Ricci, Deputy Director for Public Works Department, presented an annual progress summary of the Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program. See attached memo.

Gioia: Thanks for providing the history and context of this effort to increase the County's contracting with small local businesses, women owned, minority owned, supporting veterans. A lot relies on how we do outreach; can you talk about that? And do we have a breakdown of the kinds of SBE businesses that are in our County? I suggest that you track and assess that, it will be useful to know the breakdown of the kinds of small businesses that we contract with.

Cindy Shehorn: We developed a brochure in two languages, English and Spanish, and posted it to our website, letting people know how to qualify for those transactions. We also rolled out the Business Finder online application to help County staff identify and know what SBEs are out there in the County.

Carrie Ricci: We're also working with Communications to develop a video on how to publicize this program more widely and will share with all the departments once completed.

Glover: We have requested this information in the past, so please provide at a future meeting.

Gioia: Having doubled the threshold for SBE contracting to \$200K should open the field. We would like to see the report sooner than later, in 2 months, that includes the kind of outreach being done and a breakdown of the SBEs that we are contracting with.

Public Comment:

Gigi: Can we please have the Equity Committee look at the recent MX H3 funding and see if the agencies awarded qualify as SBE? Can we also look at the breakdown for ethnicity? And given our County's diversity, we need way more than 2 languages, beyond just Spanish, for outreach materials. That completely overlooks Asian Pacific Islander and other immigrant communities and businesses.

Committee accepted this report with direction to staff to work with SBE team to come back in 2 months with updated report.

This item was passed.

5. RECEIVE updates on the African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub Feasibility Study process.

ORESJ Co-Directors presented updates on process to establish an African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub including:

- RFP released on 4/24, closing this Friday 5/24. Staff has responded to questions via BidSync. Plan on coming back to this committee in June with recommendation after having Steering Committee review and score proposals and craft their recommendation.*
- Also having discussion in steering committee around short- and long-term outcomes and indicators for success for Black health and wellness, to help inform the contractor in conducting the feasibility study and assessing community needs. Provided the steering committee with County-level data and research on health and wellness conditions in Black communities.*

Public Comment:

Gigi Crowder: Hoping that African American men are a priority population as they are a highly impacted group in regard to housing discrimination, criminalization for mental health issues, unfair arrests. We want East County, esp Antioch, to be prioritized. Thinking of the unhoused AfAm man killed recently, I'm hopeful that the African American Holistic Wellness Hub will be up sooner than later to meet the urgent need, especially now that \$7.5M has been allocated.

Phil Arnold: We should be moving faster with this process. I'm not opposed to having a Steering Committee 2, or even 3, times a month; the work is too important. I ask that Staff consider more frequent meetings, and would like to see more momentum.

Desiree Rushing: Rahim, the man that was killed, did not have the resources needed as a young man and had no where to go for support; if he had an African American Holistic Wellness Hub to go to, that possibly could have provided what he needed. We talk about the wellness and health of African American community being a priority, so expedite what you say you are going to do.

Shantell Owens: excited that \$7.5M has been allocated to an African American Wellness Hub, but again, the urgency and dire need must be met. We opened up Hope House recently, and we have over 120 requests for only 7 beds available; we have a mother with 5 children who is fleeing domestic violence, and we have nothing for that family. We need more resources and funding now.

Wanda Johnson: I compel you all to not allow the funds to take too long; 2 years is too long, 1 year is too long. The longer we delay the funds, the longer the community suffers.

Barbara Howard: This is a state of emergency for African American wellness, and the hub will be the wellness center that we need now and cannot wait for. Other ethnic groups have centers that help their communities, and we need ours to focus on healing for our children and seniors.

Gioia: I believe we are doing what's right; we've established a 13-person steering committee to inform the process; we've turned over a lot of this process to a community-led group. The speed of community is sometimes faster, sometimes slower, than the speed of the County. We want to do this right and as fast as possible, and community input takes time, similar to the process to establish ORESJ. I encourage the steering committee to consider meeting more frequently.

Glover: It is important that this is a community-driven process, which takes time. If there is a way to expedite this, please bring this to the Board and to this Equity Committee; we will wait for the steering committee to let us know.

Supervisors received updates and directed Staff to bring an update at the next Committee meeting about frequency of the Steering Committee.

This item was passed.

6. RECEIVE updates on the \$1M Measure X allocation for existing African American Wellness Services..

ORESJ Co-Directors presented updates on the process of developing a plan for distribution of \$1M allocation for existing services toward African American holistic wellness that includes:

- seeking a community foundation partner to serve as a contractor to support with procurement process and distribution of funds to service provider sub-contractors over a two-year contract period from FY 2024-2026 with a total of \$500,000 awarded each year*
- releasing an RFQ on June 5 that will be open for 2.5 weeks and close on June 21*
- Staff has spoken with County Counsel and CAO staff requesting review of RFQ language*

Public Comment:

Gigi Crowder: Concerned that the \$1M will be distributed over 2 years, rather than over 1 year, which is what advocates pushed for, along with advocating for an exclusive focus on East County which is also not being honored. I also want to clarify whether or not if the Steering Committee has the authority to make decisions on this \$1M?

Glover: Steering Committee has nothing to do with this \$1M funding.

Chaplain J. Blueford: I would like clarity on the \$500K being distributed over 2 years. I'm glad that BOS is reconsidering this decision, now that we have the \$7.5M allocated, and is revisiting the idea of putting out the \$1M all at once. We need the funds now.

Glover: I did not say that this is open for changing, I said we could revisit and discuss. That is not the same as committing to any decision of how to distribute the funds.

Desirae Herron: Supervisor Gioia just said that the Steering Committee has authority to advise and make recommendations to Equity Committee, but at end of the day the Equity Committee is making the decision; we need to be clear with community and transparent about this, and that

the recommendation is the Board's alone. We [the steering committee] have made recommendations in the past that have been ignored.

Gioia: Yes, you're right, under the law the BOS makes final decisions; but we do not make any decisions without hearing first from our advisory boards and from the community. And yes, the steering committee has oversight over the feasibility study, not the \$1M.

Audrey Neal: the urgent need for the wellness hub is important, while we wait our black men are dying, they need someplace to go for support.

Shantell Owens: There has been a play of words, I apologized to the Steering Committee because I was under the impression that the Steering Committee had authority to select an organization to deliver the services, but the decision is with Supervisors, I understand that now. The desperation of our communities, the hunger, the violence, the homelessness that they are experiencing, is dire.

Stephanie Taddeo: I'm asking that the Supervisors acknowledge the ongoing harms and injustices experienced by Black communities in East County; please hold that close as you make your decisions.

Glover: We are working to identify a non-profit to do this work of procurement. Staff, please explain and provide an update.

Staff: We are crafting the RFQ to select a community foundation to help distribute the funds, including a procurement, review and selection process that involves community members. We are also asking that the contractor provide TA and technical support to the service provider grantees. The RFQ also requests applicants to list any possible matching funding, and explains that preferential scoring will be awarded for that. We will release this RFQ in about 2 weeks, it is still under review by County Counsel and CAO.

Staff provided the list of community foundations that they contacted and met with to explore the possibilities and potential for effective partnership with County.

Glover: I think the RFQ looks good; We would like to see the edits from Counsel and CAO.

Gioia: Yes, we're okay with it.

Gigi Crowder: I only noticed 2 black-led foundations listed. I suggest the Tides Foundation and the Sierra Foundation, as well. It is important to have black-led orgs at every-level of this effort.

Solomon Belette: The California Endowment is also worth considering

Desiree Herron: I would like to lift up that we need a community foundation that has the insight and experience of being black-led and serving black communities.

Supervisors received updates and wants to see the edited version of the RFQ before forwarding to full BOS, and directed Staff to bring an update at the next Committee meeting.

This item was passed.

3. RECEIVE updates from the Co-Directors of the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice.

ORESJ Co-Directors presented update on the development of the Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB) including proposed selection process, training/capacity building, stipends/honorariums for participation, and anticipated timeline. (See attachment in Agenda Packet.)

Also spoke to CAO and County Counsel about whether a board order or a resolution is most appropriate.

Gioia: I support what's being proposed.

Glover: I'm fine with it too, but will probably need to be a discussion item, as it may impact and inform other commissions. Will want our BOS colleagues to weigh in and offer thoughts and ask questions.

Public Comment:

Roxanne Carillo-Garza: I support this proposal for honorariums for LEAB. I am impressed with the idea of Leadership Fellowship, and like the idea of Urban Habitat as a possible trainer, we've had two team members go through their program. This is a solid and thoughtful plan, and this is a first for County commissions to look at how policy is created across depts and to see it through an equity lens.

Willie Robinson: I support this idea of a lived experience advisory board. I've served on boards here at the County for many years, and I can attest that a stipend makes a significant difference, especially for those with limited resources.

Solomon Belette: I would like to fully endorse the proposal, I support the creation of an LEAB, one that integrates the perspectives of those most impacted by inequities and systemic barriers, and one that mitigates financial barriers allows community to participate fully. The LEAB can help the County adapt to the communities' shifting needs.

Isabel Lara: I'm filled with gratitude to see how far this work has come. I fully endorse this proposal for such a LEAB; this has been made possible by the leadership of Supervisors Gioia and Glover, and it will continue need their support to move this forward.

Supervisors agreed to accept this update and directed Staff to draft a Board order and to bring an update at the next Committee meeting.

This item was passed.

6. Next Committee meeting is currently scheduled for June 17, 2024 at 10:30AM.

The June 17, 2024 meeting at 10:30AM was confirmed.

7. Adjourn

Committee meeting was adjourned at 11.56 AM