

African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub (AAHWRH) Steering Committee
Record of Action for **Monday, March 11, 2024**

Attendance:

Steering Committee Members:

- In-person (CAO Building, Martinez): **Jacqueline Smith; Taylor Sims; Vanessa Blum; Rohanna Moore; Patt Young; Ashley Green**
- In-person (Genesis Church, Antioch): **Desirae Herron; Alfonzo Edwards; Phil Arnold;**
- In-person (Black Parent Resource Center, Richmond): **Zelon Harrison; Sheryl Lane; Chinue Fields**
- Online: **N/A**
- Absent: **N/A**

County Staff:

- In-person: **Kendra Carr and Peter Kim, Co-Directors, Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ)**
- Online: **Jill Ray, BoS District 2 Representative; Alejandra Sanchez, BoS District 4 Representative)**

Public Attendees:

- In-person: **N/A**
- Online: **Mark McGowan; Rena Moore (Reimagine Antioch); Latrece Martin; Teki Flow (Reimagine Antioch); Antoine (Reimagine Antioch); Amani (SRP); Gigi Crowder (NAMI); Stephanie Taddeo; Leslie May; Kamilah Miller; Shantell Owens (Genesis); Nicole Arrington;**

1. Roll Call and Introductions

(Staff announced that meeting would begin once a quorum of members were in attendance.)

Staff convened meeting at 5:34 PM and welcomed those in attendance. Introductions were completed. Staff reviewed the meeting agenda.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. RECEIVE and APPROVE Record of Action for February 11, 2024 meeting of the Steering Committee for the African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub Feasibility Study, with any necessary conditions

Taylor Sims made the motion to receive and approve the Record of Action as submitted. Vanessa Blum seconded the motion.

Conducted roll call vote to receive. 10 (all present at time of vote) voted yes. Item passed.

Public Comment:

None.

4. RECEIVE update on the geographic focus of the feasibility study, as well as the geographic focus of the \$1 million allocation for existing services, as discussed by the Equity Committee

Staff shared updates:

Equity Committee confirmed that the focus of the study is to be on needs and opportunities of African American communities throughout whole county. While the goal is to, over time, establish hubs throughout the county, because the impetus of the advocacy for and allocation of these funds was the need to address the pain and trauma experienced from Antioch and Pittsburg police scandal, the initial hub will be located in east county.

In terms of the more recent allocation of \$1M for existing services, Supervisors made clear the funds will be available for entire county, though east county will be prioritized, and that funds will go out in phases rather than all at once. Role of this steering committee is to focus on the feasibility study, as approved by Bos, and not on the \$1M allocation. Any changes to focus, role and/or function of the steering committee requires full BoS approval.

Steering Committee members commented:

Multiple members expressed concern over phased approach to distributing funds, fearing fewer funds at one time will decrease impact and outcomes. Some suggested that the entire \$1M should go out in one phase and immediately, in order to meet the urgent need in the Black community. A few encouraged the County to not reserve any of the \$1M for future use towards the hub, and dedicate the entire sum to services as initially envisioned by the community.

Relatedly, a couple of members felt that the entire sum was better used by going to a single provider rather than multiple providers, so that single grantee could play a central role in delivering and/or coordinating the services for maximum impact.

One member suggested that in regard to categories of service to be funded, the Equity Committee should look to the recommendations of priority needs that the MX CAB has already developed, which include mental health, youth services, and food insecurity. Another member emphasized need to these roles of feasibility study separate from \$1M.

Multiple members emphasized that, ultimately, \$1M is not a sufficient amount of funding to meet the needs of Black communities in the county and that substantially more funding that can be sustained over time is needed.

Members agreed that it is critical that a decision is made and clarity is given regarding the timeline, projected funding amounts and distribution phases, and categories of service.

Staff agreed and will bring these concerns to the Equity Committee, along with a more developed proposal for their consideration that reflects the concerns of the steering committee and community members.

Public comment:

Gigi Crowder: Distressed at the delay which is typical of County processes; reminded the group that the \$1M was to address the pain created by Antioch PD scandal which to this day, and that the funds were to go to agencies already doing the work in east county; ultimately this \$1M is insufficient once it gets dissected.

Mark McGowan: Recognizes an overwhelming need and urgency for funds to be disbursed, and that the \$1M is not enough for long term investment, regardless if divided across many or just to one. Asked, How can we build something solid now that can be sustainable and grow over time, and at same time, how can we make the most of the \$1M and be measured in how we use those funds?

Leslie May: Shared that as a Mental Health Commission member, she advocated for investment in East County and Antioch specifically, for years even before the police scandal, emphasizing the need in that region. Agreed that \$1M is not enough, definitely not enough for a building, and that there is clear need for sustainable money year after year to fund multiple hubs with skilled people working to deliver quality programs. Expressed the need for healing from more than just the police violence surrounding the recent text message scandal, and the need of a commitment from the County for a long term investment.

Shantell Owens: Emphasized the focus on Antioch and the harm that its Black residents have experienced, and a desire to keep the boundaries of the conversation around what was promised when the funds were allocated. Expressed frustration that the steering committee meetings have sounded the same, urging the steering committee and Staff to present in clear terms the frustration, concerns, and suggestions discussed to the BoS.

Nicole Arrington: Echoed that the communities in Antioch are in dire need for these resources, and that more than \$1M is needed.

Phil Arnold: Reminded the group that the County has shown an ability to make decisions and move funds quickly when needed, with the COVID crisis as a recent example. He stated that the conditions of harm and trauma among Black communities in Antioch is a public health crisis that demands similar attention.

Kamilah Miller: Shared that as a 20-year resident of Concord and then 25 years in Antioch, she feels that there is not a single place in the region where a Black person can feel safe, not even in their own homes; there has never been a public space where Black and Brown people can gather and not be judged but instead feel joy and feel safe, for youth to go for recreation and support. She urged the County to use this opportunity to make progress towards rectifying this.

Desirae Herron: As a committee member, feels like we are “chasing our tails” and urges the committee to hold the County accountable to what was said and committed to upon allocation of \$1M; urged Staff to represent the voice of the committee and our communities.

Ashley Green made the motion to receive and approve, Vanessa Blum seconded the motion.

Conducted roll call vote to receive the updates. 12 voted yes (all present at time of vote). Item passed.

5. REVIEW and DISCUSS adoption of the revised bylaws.

Staff shared the revised bylaws. Members reviewed and discussed the edits proposed by the ad-hoc committee. Committee agreed with edits and had no further comments.

Public comment:

None.

Ashley Green made the motion to approve the revised bylaws and move forward to Equity Committee. Patt Young seconded the motion.

Conducted roll call vote to approve item. 12 voted yes (all present at time of vote). Item passed.

6. UPDATE on the responses received for the Request for Qualifications by the March 4th deadline

Staff provided update on RFQ for the feasibility study. Proposals were due by 3/4/24 deadline, and the County received one application. Prior to the deadline, Staff had met with five other potential applicants, four of whom expressed concerns about the contract amount being insufficient to deliver a fully comprehensive process and analysis as outlined in the RFQ; one requested that the timeline for submission of qualifications be extended. For these reasons, Staff recommended that the County re-issue the solicitation as a Request for Proposals with an increased total contract amount of \$180,000 (from the original \$80,000).

Ad-hoc committee met to discuss the one application received, not as a formal review and scoring, but as a way to assess the RFQ and its effectiveness in soliciting enough detail from applicants. Ad-hoc committee determined that the re-issued RFP should include more detailed questions around project design, particularly in regard to community engagement, timeline, and costs/time of each phase.

Ad-hoc committee shared their thoughts and reflections on the process with the whole committee. Members agreed with recommendation to re-issue as an RFP, emphasizing the need to continue with urgency. One member suggested that the additional funds of \$100,000 should not be drawn from the \$1M allocation for services.

Public Comment:

None.

Taylor Sims made the motion to receive the update, Ashley Green seconded the motion.

Conducted roll call vote to approve item. 12 voted yes (all present at time of vote). Item passed.

7. DETERMINE the date, time, and location of future meetings

The next meeting is currently scheduled for April 8, 2024 from 5:30-7:00PM.

The meeting will take place at County Administration Building at 1025 Escobar Street, Martinez, CA 94553. Additional locations will likely include same sites as today (to be confirmed).

Public comment:

None.

8. Adjourn

Taylor Sims made motion to adjourn. Vanessa Blum seconded.

Conducted roll call vote to adjourn. . 12 voted yes (all present at time of vote). Meeting was adjourned at 7:03 PM.