

**EQUITY STEERING COMMITTEE**

City Hall: Community Room

**NOTES**

February 22, 2024

- The meeting began at 6:03 p.m.
  - In attendance were Seyona Belai, Aneesa Turbovsky, Shian Gutierrez, Nikki Storm, Sara Vasquez, Dennis Ward, and Corey Hester. Staff present included Gabriela Santoyo Gutierrez (Equity and Inclusion Coordinator), Jason Wachs (Community Engagement Coordinator), and Daniel Harris (Events and Emergency Management Coordinator).
- Gabriela Santoyo Gutierrez introduced herself and asked the group to do a roundabout of introductions. Gabriela then have a short overview of the agenda for the night.
- The conversation then transitioned to Jason Wachs to discuss the history and incoming changes to the Neighborhood District Associations (NDA's) community events and funding process. More information about NDA's community grant program can be found [here](#).
  - One ESC member asked about process to become involved and join an NDA.
  - Another ESC member asked about the racial representation and diversity in NDA's and Jason clarified they are still predominantly white.
  - An ESC member asked about recruitment practices and communication strategies.
  - Gabriela mentioned meeting with the Communications Manager next meeting.
- We then transition to Dan to give a recap of our last meeting related to the [event survey on Engage Milwaukie](#) and how this informed council's decision to replace the biannual Carefree Sunday event with an annual summer festival in 2025, increasing funding for multicultural events, and strengthening other city events.
- Dan then presented a pie-chart of the funding broken down into four different quadrants designated for Multicultural events twice, community support 2024, and summer event 2025.
  - Dan shared a few ideas of proposing a grant program administered/guided by ESC that could potentially modeled on NDA community grants and would need some guidelines for application/award/reporting criteria.
  - An ESC member asked for further clarification around budget timelines and deadline, specifically if it is a "use it or loose it" funding.

- Dan clarified that city is organized under a biennium budget cycle, so the deadline is July 2026.
  - Another ESC member asked if funding must only be spent on large events rather than small events.
  - The same ESC member asked could they potentially create an event proposal and share with the group and city staff,
  - Dan reaffirmed that could be up to ESC to decide. Gabriela followed-up with getting asking the group if there was a general consensus in support of ESC managing the program.
  - Three ESC members talked about this being a opportunity to create great community impact.
  - Then one ESC remembers pushed back against calling the program community grants because of the potential barriers it may create for community members, instead to move forward with calling it community event funds.
  - They also raised the issue of communication and public outreach. , including how two of our ESC members didn't even know they could ask NDA's for community funding.
  - One ESC member asked the groups if funding was only allowed to be allocated for multicultural events and what would happened if a community member asked for funding from NDA's AND ESC?
  - Dan clarified criteria can be discussed and established by ESC in the coming months.
  - One ESC member ended with excitement around changing up events.
  - Dan mentioned circling back to meet with the group again soon.
- Dan and Jason both left, and Gabriela and ESC transitioned to business items on their agenda. While transitioning, one ESC member was not feeling well, so the committee took a short break while some members were checking on the ESC member. The ESC left the meeting to care for themselves.
  - When the group reconvened after, business items included:
    - Gabriela shared with the group how her and Seyona partnered together to present the Black Excellence Month proclamation on February 20<sup>th</sup> to council. (link here)
    - Gabriela reminder the group about Committee Term limits reappointments and to contact her for those who haven't yet. Gabriela clarified once confirmed that ESC staff want to renew that no additional steps are needed and OCR may follow-up with a thank you or congratulations email!
    - Gabriela and Corey shared Transportation system plan (TSP) updates related to narrowing their priorities down to four and shared their [Transportation System Plan Community Workshop](#) taking place, March 21<sup>st</sup> at 6pm. ESC members are

invited to attend. Gabriela mentioned sharing more details in their follow-up email after their email.

- Gabriela then asked the group how many preferred meetings on the 21<sup>st</sup> the week before rather than the 28<sup>th</sup> during Spring Break, and majority of the committee preferred the 21<sup>st</sup> or were available for until Corey reminded the group that was the TSP meeting date. Gabriela then mentioned will follow-up with a new proposed date in their group email.
- Gabriela then transitioned to looking at our Equity plan for next meeting with the City's communications manager and Library director.
- One ESC member asked for further clarification about the library's goals with the community and what resources are offered.
- Another ESC member expressed interest in support The Pilot development and planning.

Gabriela shared the Canva document Liz Start put together for a more engaging voting approach to Continuing Group Agreements and Commitments to go over next meeting together.

- The meeting adjourned at 8:01pm.

