

Minutes of Monday, June 11, 2018, 6:00 PM

Present:

George Cortes – District 2
Greta Kenney – District 5
AiVi Nguyen – District 1
Nicole DiCello – District 4
Florette Willis – District 4

Absent:

Shirley Konneh – District 3
Patrick Hare – District 5

Staff:

Suja Chacko, Chief Diversity Officer

1. The meeting was officially called to order at 6:03 PM.
2. The Chairperson called for a motion to approve minutes on 5/14/18. On a motion by AiVi Nguyen and seconded by Nicole DiCello, the minutes were approved.

3. Public Comment:

Zena Link, a community member, congratulated Worcester Public Schools (WPS) for the Strategic Plan and goal to increase diversity in the workplace. She noted that it would be an important opportunity to highlight hiring and retention of teachers of color. She also noted that evaluations and support should be in place for teachers of color, so they are setup to succeed in their positions.

Kevin Ksen, a member of the Carpenter's Union and Worcester Community Labor Coalition, noted his interest in learning about the work of the Diversity and Inclusion Board and also highlighted the work of the Labor Coalition. He stated his interest in coming to the meeting was to learn about demographics in regards to diversity from WPS. He also wanted to highlight the Disparities Report that has been funded by the City of Worcester in regard to construction, and looks forward to the goals set towards Worcester Public Library and South High construction. He believes the Disparities Study will set the precedence for further studies in other areas for the future.

4. **Mark Brophy, WPS Director, Instructional Support Personnel and Dori Vecchio, Assistant Director of Human Resources- Department Presentation:** Mark Brophy and Dori Vecchio joined the meeting to discuss the Civil Service Process, and how it translates into departments such as Worcester Public Schools.

Dori stated that since the last board meeting she attended on behalf of the Human Resources Department, she has learned from the board members the need to look at the Civil Service Process and how the process affects hiring of diverse populations. In departments such as WPS and DPW, the hiring process and timeline is lengthy.

Mark introduced his role with WPS and how his role works with the personnel side of the department. He provided the board with documents on the overall organizational layout, including types of positions available with WPS. He stated that he would provide a Diversity report to the Chief Diversity Officer and HR Director, since he didn't have the report with him at the time of the meeting. He was invited to speak on the civil service process, so he wasn't prepared to have such a report. Mark stated that the teacher workforce needs to be improved in its diversity, to be more representative of the community and there is clear shortage in this area.

Mark talked about the history of Civil Service in WPS and what positions fell under the Civil Service, including custodians and secretaries. He stated the WPS is one of the largest departments that have non-safety, civil service components as well as non-civil service components. He discussed the pros and cons of the Civil Service process, as it pertains to WPS positions. There is a lengthy process that includes a Civil Service list, which includes positions such as custodians and secretaries, where such positions are only provisional. Mark stated that the department wants provisional appointments positions to become permanency, considering both initial hiring and promotional hiring, but having the Civil Service process restricts the process. Mark stated that WPS and the School Committee have voiced the need to eliminate the Civil Service process for non-safety positions and to create a promotional system. Mark stated that performance and attendance are determining factors for promotion to permanent positions. Zena asked if there is implicit bias involved in the promotional process, and Mark stated he didn't believe that was the case. Greta followed-up Zena's question with stating that implicit bias training is needed for managers involved in hiring, since research has shown that there is implicit bias involved in hiring and if managers are not trained on recognizing their implicit bias, they could be performing performance

evaluations where implicit bias shows through. Mark stated in agreement that this point is very much true.

5. Civil Service Process Recommendations

Civil Service Process Recommendations will be the next agenda item for the board. It is important for the board members to be aware of the pros and cons of the civil service process and how it affects hiring processes, including diversification of the workforce. A request has been made at a previous meeting to the Assistant Director of Human Resources to obtain demographics data for each department that has the civil service process, so it will be helpful to the board to make recommendations about the process. The Chief Diversity Officer noted that a report on demographics for each department that has presented will be given to the board, per their request from the past meeting.

6. Updated Agenda Items for FY18-FY19

Affinity Groups program is also another agenda item the board will be tasked with, which was discussed as a deliverable for fall 2018. Board members suggested that this program occur at a grass roots level, with seed money given to each group to kick-off the program. The board suggested we come back to planning logistics of this program for the fall.

7. Announcements:

- Juneteenth Events
- 15th Annual Asian Festival, Sunday, June 24th, 2018 12pm-5pm, WSU Wellness Center
- Scripted Mock Trial- June 26th, 5-7pm City Hall Levi Lincoln Chamber
- Frederick Douglas Community Reading July 3rd, 12noon City Hall Common
- Worcester Pride Events- September 2018

8. The Meeting was adjourned at 7:43 PM.

C/o Suja Chacko, Staff Liaison
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