

Kate Brown
Governor



Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
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MINUTES

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
Saturday, August 15, 2015, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM
Portland Community College Cascade Campus
Terrell Hall, Room 112
Portland, OR 97217

ATTENDANCE:

Chair: James Manning
Vice Chair:
Commissioners: Robin Morris Collins, Musse Olol, Sen. Monroe, Rep. Frederick
Absent: James Morris, Gwen Trice, Kayse Jama
Guests: Robin Johnson and Janet Soto, Governor's Office; Julienne Poppinga, Capitol Gateway Project; Reyna Lopez, A Better Oregon campaign
Staff: Lucy Baker, Nancy Kramer

I. Meeting Called to Order – The meeting was called to order at 9:07am. A quorum was established.

II. Review and approval of agenda

MOTION (Monroe/Collin): To approve the agenda as written. CARRIED.

III. Review and approval of OCBA June 2015 Meeting minutes.

MOTION (Colin/Frederick): To approve the minutes as written. CARRIED.

IV. Public Comment – None.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Updates from the Governor's Office

The Commission welcomed Robin Johnson and Janet Soto from the Governor's Office. They reported on information about the Governor's newest Sr. Policy Advisor appointments which was embargoed at the time of the meeting pending press releases on the subject the following week, but that is now available to the public in these minutes.

They announced that as part of the Governor's integrated model for Diversity and Inclusion that Governor Brown has appointed Ms. Johnson and Ms. Soto as her Inclusion Policy Advisor and Economic and Business Equity Policy Advisor respectively.

The new roles of the Inclusion Policy Advisor include issues of workforce parity and inclusionary efforts across state agencies (ripple and following the model). The position will work to update the 25 year old parity data from 1990 census and lead projects with the COO on developing a strong leadership pipeline. One of the first efforts will be to meaningfully embed diversity & inclusion with DAS enterprises, leveraging cultural and accountability measures in DAS and expanding to all state enterprises and across policy areas.

The Equity Policy Advisor will provide the state of Oregon's intentional outward facing piece. This Advisor will look at opportunities to leverage and partner as a clear entry to opportunities and other access: not as a gatekeeper. Contracting and improving outcomes for minority, woman owned and emerging small business will be part of the Equity Policy Advisor's work.

While Ms. Johnson and Ms. Soto meet with agencies and partners on D&I and Equity, the Governor plans weekly conversations with them using an equity lens to focus initiatives and set outcomes.

The Commission thanked Robin and Janet for their excellent report and Commissioner Collin voiced the OCBA's support of commitment to equity at the deepest levels of state government.

Ms. Johnson and Ms. Soto encouraged the OCBA to continue submitting names to them for any of the Governor's key positions including Diversity and Inclusion.

B. Reyna Lopez, Our Oregon, A Better Oregon presentation

Ms. Lopez discussed the impact that the "A Better Oregon" campaign would have on state revenues and its focus on ending certain tax deductions now available to the largest corporations and raising the minimum business tax from \$150 in Oregon. The campaign is being conducted by a coalition of community groups and is currently focused on proposing a ballot measure for the November, 2016 elections or in May, 2017 if necessary.

C. Subjects/bills of interest for 2016 Session

The Commission considered its work in preparation for Short Session, including potential bill concepts and community groups supporting specific legislation. Senator Monroe noted that short session is often focused on updating the budget and fixing anything unresolved from long session or bills that came close to being passed. He expects that the transportation package will be back on the floor in short session including elderly transportation.

Rep. Frederick reminded the Commission that each legislator is only allowed 2 bills during short session. One of his will include a bill regarding assessing fees when incarcerated. He also asked the Commission to approach legislators now with concept ideas for the 2017 long session. Now is the time to discuss them with legislators during session and during interim periods and in legislative committee work. 2016 is an election year and legislators will be thinking about running for office. OCBA has set a great track record of visibility and needs to remain relevant and in the forefront with community partners.

Discussion followed. Interest was expression in hosting a joint OAC discussion with partners on upcoming legislative issues, possibly as part of the upcoming Joint OAC meeting in October.

D. Black Heritage Month at the Capitol

Juliene Poppinga, Coordinator of the Capitol History Gateway project the program, addressed the Commission. She is developing a series of events and displays at the Capitol that celebrate Oregon's history and the legacy of contributions from all of its citizen communities, their heritage and leadership. The goal of the program is to engage citizens in democracy and involve them in these events at the capitol. The message: it is their building, what happens in the building is important. She is initiating a two year program of diversity heritage and cultural events.

Ms. Poppinga invited the OCBA to partner with her around Black history month by suggesting displays, resources, and speakers. The Commissioners thanked her and agreed to help with resource ideas. Juliene looks forward to working with the Commission and engaged the Commissioners in a short conversation on potential resources for her to consider. In response to Commission interest, she shared that 15,000 school children visited the Capitol between Feb – June, 2015. The Commissioners' ideas for resources included:

- OCBA Commissioner Gwen Trice around her leadership in preserving the history of Black lumbermen in Oregon's history.
- Engaging the refugee community. Suggested organizations including CIO.
- Including the Roosevelt Rough Writers' display of living history compiled by High School Students from interviews with community elders and leaders.
- Working with Urban League to create a display from the State of Black Oregon Report.
- Access to Portland Public Schools essays by students of color which are available on line. Would be something to share from the Capitol Gateway project with schools statewide to help promote the event at the capitol.
- Daryl Milner, former faculty at PSU, is an excellent presenter on the history of people of color in Oregon.
- Sen Winters and Rep Frederick have a list of history resources that they compiled in 2013. Coordinate with ODE and their Oregon History Project.
- Connect with the Oregon History Project coordinator at the State Historical Society.
- Including information on Oregon's black cowboys would be good.

Lucy Baker will connect Juliene with Commissioner Trice, and the Rough Writers. Would like to have a meeting via conference call.

E. Urban League of Portland's [State of Black Oregon Report](#) –

Katie Sawicki, Legislative Policy Director for Urban League of Portland presented the executive summary of the State of Black Oregon report. OCBA participated on the work group that helped Katie and Midge Purcell identify the issues and stories that became part of the report and OCBA's research on disparities for Apprentice to Journeyman graduation for tradespeople of color also contributed to the economy and jobs section of the report. Ms. Sawicki thanked the OCBA for their contributions and for the sponsorship they provided in

printing and distributing the report in the summer of 2015. She reviewed the major sections of the report and asked the Commission if they would like to continue their partnership with Urban League in selecting areas of the report that would benefit from further research to prepare policy recommendations. The OCBA replied that they support such an idea and look forward to exploring the concept further with Urban League. They noted the importance of the State of Black Oregon Report and thanked the Urban League for taking on this blueprint for future policy work. Lucy Baker will coordinate schedules with the OCBA and the Urban League to discuss further collaboration.

F. OCBA Committee updates were tabled to the next meeting of the Commission in the interest of time.

G. Apprenticeship to Journeyman public policy

Maurice Rahming, President, O'Neill Electric, presented an overview of the challenges to the trades. Projections by BOLI indicate that 10K new construction jobs are expected in Oregon over the next 5 years, but there are also many people retiring in the same period. Even now, it is becoming more difficult to find individuals in the trades to keep up with demand. The Trades provide living wage jobs and are getting a boost from recent legislation and investment in training at the high school level but that is not enough to keep Oregon construction businesses from needing to import workers from other states to keep up with the pace of construction skills needed. Contractors need journeymen electricians and it is important that all Oregon apprentices graduate into journeymen, but this is not the case. Apprentices of color are letting go of their pursuit to become Journeymen at very high rates because they can't get the work hours needed to become Journey level workers. Most goals for diversity in the trades that are set by city and state contracting goals are focused on having diverse apprentices. This has caused good diversity among apprentices in the trades, but there are very few if any goals set to achieve diverse journey level tradespeople. This is the next policy challenge. City and state contracting for construction requirements must build a diverse pipeline that have leaders of color at all levels in construction involved with hiring and job management. Other challenges include huge wage disparities for African American construction workers. Unions have been among the most successful in assuring wage equity for minorities in the trades. They have used successful models of commitment that others large corporations could use to assure that minority tradespeople are more fully included in the trades and the construction workforce.

Discussion followed. The OCBA is committed to pursuing the policy research it has begun with BOLI on apprentice to journeyman disparities for tradespeople of color and would also like to partner with Mr. Rahming and his group with City of Portland. Vice Chair Morris could not be present at the OCBA meeting but will work with the office and with Mr. Rahming to explore a public policy research internship at the city level.

Mr. Rahming thanked the Commission for their interest and the research they have done to-date. He described a collaboration with Hoffman Construction that he helped lead that resulted in much higher journey work for tradespeople of color with Hoffman, and also resulted in that firm becoming a champion for the approach. He will share the documents that support that work with the Commission and looks forward to partnering with OCBA to further the effort. It is predicated on the great value in helping contractors assure that they

have the skilled workforce they need to take on new contracts and grow their competitive edge.

Chair Manning thanked Mr. Rahming for his presentation.

VII. Commissioners' Comments. There were no further comments.

VIII. Administrator's Report

- A. Update on hiring for new OACO Policy Analyst position and reclass of Executive Asst. Position. Lucy reported that the hiring process for the new policy analyst will begin in September and that the reclassification of Nancy's position was implemented in July. It is a very exciting time for the OAC's to welcome their first policy analyst who will support the Commissions' research and legislative work and partnerships. The hiring panel will include representation from each commission. More to come.
- B. The OCBA is scheduled to tour the MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility on September 3rd. Driving directions and security requests from the facility for Commissioners during the tour will be e-mailed shortly.

IX. For the Good of the Order:

Next mtg 10/17/15, PCC Cascade Campus, exact location TBD 9am–12pm
The Chair thanked everyone who presented to the Commission.

X. Adjourn - the meeting was adjourned at 12:05pm.