

Kate Brown
Governor



Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
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MINUTES
Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
Saturday, August 20, 2016, 9:00 AM-11:00 AM
PCC Cascade Campus, Terrell Hall, Room 112
705 N. Killingsworth St., Portland 97217

ATTENDANCE:

Chair: James Morris
Vice Chair: Robin Morris Collin
Commissioners: Mariotta Gary-Smith (phone), James I. Manning Jr. (phone), Musse Olol, Senator Monroe, Representative Frederick
Absent: Kayse Jama, Gwen Trice
Staff: Lucy Baker, Nancy Kramer, Ty Schwoeffermann

I. Meeting Called to Order - Chair Morris called the meeting to order at 9:13am. 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 2016 Meeting minutes

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

IV. Public Comment – There was no public comment.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. OCBA Commissioner recruitment

There are currently two vacancies on the OCBA. Commissioners continue to reach out to people. There is currently one person from Portland under consideration and also a prospect from the Medford area in Southern Oregon. Chair Morris will connect Rep Frederick with Serena Stoudamire about prospects.

B. Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) Isolation Committee update

Chair Morris is on this committee. OYA is now tracking which staff are sending youth to isolation, as well as what triggers might involve a youth requesting to be placed in isolation. If it is determined that particular staff are most often sending youth to isolation that staff person will be receive additional training to lower the frequency. Recently Chair Morris participated in a national conference call with six other states regarding the use of isolation on juveniles. Oregon is a leader in tracking data which staff send youth to isolation. Rep Frederick has been championing better documentation of youth being sent to isolation for some years. Chair

Morris will continue to provide updates to OCBA about the work of this committee. OCBA is interested in granular data on each youth sent to isolation and the possibility of a public policy research internship to analyze this data and examine how it connects to disproportionate discipline.

Commissioners engaged in discussion about what causes of difficult student behavior. The community experiences multiple stressors, it is not just a single issue. Lead poisoning is one theory - there has been a big uptick in house renovations and demolishing of old homes, and quite frequently lead from paint is not disposed of properly. Poverty, unsafe homes and homelessness have been shown to negatively impact a student's ability to focus and learn. OCBA does not currently have the capacity to convene the different government agencies these factors encompass, but would like to see a larger organization, such as a county health department, look closely at the interconnectedness of these stressors, the collective impact they have on students of color and what can be done to improve student outcomes. Educating communities about the hazards of lead paint and proper disposal would be a start.

IRCO and the Coalition of Communities of Color are two community organizations currently developing community curricula about environmental justice/equity, and may be open to including information about lead poisoning in their materials.

C. Determination by Oregon State Bar re: OCBA/OAC's letter of complaint to the Oregon State Bar about Washington County Deputy District Attorney

Chair Morris summarized the OSB's determination not to discipline DDA Smith any further for posting racial profiling comments on her personal Facebook page. It was agreed that it was of great importance for OCBA to take a stand and hold people accountable for their action. Commissioners thanked Vice Chair Collin for writing the letter.

The American Bar Association (ABA) now has a new precedent regarding lawyers who exhibit racism. Representative Frederick met the new President of the OSB who is also concerned about implicit bias in the justice system. Commissioners agreed that it is important for those in leadership positions to take a stand against racism. It was proposed that OCBA will send a letter to the OSB President congratulating the ABA for adopting the new misconduct rule, and inquiring if Oregon will adopt it as well. Vice Chair Collin offered to draft the letter.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Next steps for replicating White House Roundtable for the community

OCBA's sister commission, OCAPIA (Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs) partnered with the White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI) on two community Roundtables that connected community members with federal agencies in an effort to learn about the communities' needs and for the community to learn what federal services are available to them. OCBA is interested in replicating this model, ideally in partnership with the White House. For the Black and African American population, the federal government has Educational Excellence for African Americans and the My Brother's Keeper program, but not an analog to WHIAAPI. The Black Male Achievement group is a potential partner.

B. Ratify e-vote for OCBA to send a letter of support to Gov Brown to appoint Kellie Johnson as a Circuit Court Judge in Washington County

1. Ratify e-vote for OCBA to send the letter.

MOTION (Olol/Gary-Smith): To ratify vote for OCBA to send a letter of support to Gov Brown to appoint Kellie Johnson as a Circuit Court Judge in Washington County.
CARRIED.

2. Follow up letter – Governor Brown appointed Ramón Pagán as the new Circuit Court Judge for Washington County. The Commissioners appreciated Governor Brown’s selection of a person of color and for making an inclusive culture in Oregon and particularly in Washington County and may choose to send her a note of appreciation.

Commissioners reflected with great appreciation on the work of Kendall Clawson, the previous Director of Executive Appointments, and her efforts to substantially increase the number of leaders of color who serve on Oregon’s boards and commissions. They would like to carry on her work, by becoming more aware of openings on boards and commissions, and of people of color who are willing to throw their hat in the ring for leadership positions.

C. Legislative discussion

1. Webinar training: *How to Be Effective in the Interim*, 7/7 Debrief

The OAC’s first webinar on *How to Be Effective in the Interim*, presented by OCAPIA Commissioner Senator Dembrow was a success. Commissioners learned how to best stay in touch with legislators between sessions (as well as what not to do) and gained an overview on the many steps it takes for a public policy idea to go from an idea to becoming a law, and what they can do to have the process go smoothly. OACO plans to offer a follow up training with Senator Dembrow on how to be effective during session.

2. OAC’s Budget Priorities

Ty identified a new opportunity for the OAC’s: To develop and identify their budget priorities for the upcoming legislative session and submit them to Joint Ways and Means Committee in advance of session beginning. The importance of using an equity lens will be part of the document the OAC’s submit. Ty will send information about developing budget priorities to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the OACs.

3. Legislative Days are September 21 – 23. Ty will be in Salem for those days and will gladly carpool with any Commissioners who are interested.

4. The OAC’s new Joint Legislative Committee - This committee will have representation from each OAC and will set and establish priorities for the upcoming legislative session, in addition to each individual OAC’s legislative discussion. Ty will coordinate this meeting – more info is coming. This Committee will help plan the December Joint Legislative Committee Meeting of the OACs. Invited state agencies (BOLI, DOJ, ODE and more) and community partners will share their slate of equity legislation for the session. It will be on Tuesday, 12/6/16 near Lloyd Center. All Commissioners are invited.

5. OAC’s new Joint Health Committee – The individual OAC’s all have a champion for health and healthcare issues and there is momentum to establish the OAC’s first Joint Health Committee. This committee will have representation from each OAC. Refugee health will be first topic. The organizational meeting will be in September.

6. The federal Department of Justice and Attorney General Loretta Lynch announced that federal prisons will no longer work with privatized prisons. There is also support from DOJ

on a ruling challenging the constitutionality of court fees owed by inmates – fees accrued while an inmate is serving their sentence. These fees may be in violation of the 14th amendment. Ty will send Commissioners an article and continue to track these news items.

7. Senator Monroe added that transportation funding is a major issue this upcoming legislative session. He is one of seven legislators sitting on a special committee on Transportation. Hearings being held statewide about this. A major portion of the funding package needs to include transit, not just bridges and roads. It is important that the needs of lower-income communities be included in this package.

D. Public Policy research update

Disproportionate Discipline public policy internship – Dr. John English, OCBA’s contact at the OSDAC (Oregon School Discipline Advisory Committee), has moved to another position and will be handing this project off to his replacement. This internship will be reactivated in the spring.

VII. Commissioners’ Comments

Commissioner Gary-Smith appreciates the work of the OCBA and that they are taking a strong stand in important issues to the community.

Commissioner Oloj spoke of a recent study that presented information about African immigrants’ incomes versus immigrants from other countries. After 5 years African immigrants’ wages dropped but all others rose to about the average of the dominant culture. Ty was familiar with the study and will send it to Commissioners.

Rep Frederick - the Educator Equity report is available on the ODE website, and the Task Force is meeting this week. Regarding prison fees related to court fees: Senator Dembrow is Chair of Task Force on Re-entry. The Task Force is looking at inmates’ fees, which may reach as much as \$10,000, and they are required to pay these fees within 60 days of reentry. If they are not paid within that time frame they go to a collection agency. They may incur additional fees for meeting with a parole officer. These fees differ from county to county. There is interest in reforming these practices. Regarding expunged records: an expunged record is not actually expunged any longer because all the records are now electronic. He would like to see less punishment and instead look to motivating and supporting people.

Vice Chair Collin provided an Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) update: the Environmental Protection Agency has a plan for remediation of the Portland Harbor brownfields, called a "wait and see" approach. She has a copy of the plan for those who are interested. Regarding the discussion about the Cap & Trade bill in California: the revenue stream has failed to perform as predicted and Cap & Trade may become a carbon tax. Vice Chair Collin favors a fee rather than a tax. She will be watching this issue closely during legislative session. A recent Ban the Box study reported that this law is having an unexpected negative effect on the African American community. Implicit bias is having a huge impact, as employers are assuming prospective hires of color have a conviction instead of presuming them innocent. Racism is not being addressed. Commissioners are interested in seeing this article.

Chair Morris noted that for a period of time there were Black directors and women leaders in Portland and Oregon, but as those people termed out or stepped down, white men are replacing them. Retention of people of color continues to be a problem. People of color need to be placed in power.

VIII. Administrator's Report

A. Update on the 2017-19 OACO Budget

The OACO's budget request was submitted. Lucy reviewed the new staffing and other budget requests approved by the OAC's:

- POP 1 – Increase the Policy Analyst position to full time (.5 FTE). \$125,000 for the biennium.
- POP 2 – Adds a .3 FTE Office Specialist to take on processing the growing number of Commissioners' stipends and travel reimbursements. This will allow Nancy to Project Manage Policy Research in collaboration with the Policy Analyst. \$35,500 for the biennium.
- POP 3 – Increase Commissioner Travel funding by \$4,000 for the biennium. Ten more trips a biennium to Salem or bring in outlying Commissioners to meetings.
The additional budget request (POP's) for added staffing and travel is under 20% increase in total budget.

IX. For the Good of the Order:

Next mtg Saturday, 10/15/16, Concordia University, White Library Room 120, 9am–12pm

X. Adjourn - Chair Morris adjourned the meeting at 11:27am.