

Diversity Equity & Inclusion Council Meeting - Meeting Minutes – May 26, 2022

Members Present: Eileen Soisson, Dr. Jessica Greene, Sean Bailey, Darlene Borges, Atiya Stokes-Brown, Sophie Calhoun, Cecilia Evans, Susie Fryer, Tamesha Keel, Becky Large, Angie Marshall, Mark Smaizys.

Staff Present: Cindy Gettig, Amanda Bailey, Diana Greene, Bob Harris, Nancy Maloney.

Meeting called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Cindy Gettig

Welcome & Introductions:

Cindy Gettig requested we do introductions, so everyone introduced themselves.

Minority Business Updates

Speaker: Cindy Gettig, Dr. Jessica Greene

The Minority Business Initiatives sub-committee has met twice now. Part of the goal is to look at initiatives the chamber would like to accomplish this year. A part of the TD Bank sponsored EVOLVE series initiative was to sponsor four chamber memberships for small minority owned businesses. There have been more than fifty businesses to apply for the minority owned business contest. Cindy mentioned, she thinks this is a good group to start with for the minority owned business survey. She asked the council how many questions they think would be beneficial on the survey. The council agreed that the survey needs to have a limited number of questions. Hopefully people will be interested in taking the survey if it's short, the council thinks it would be best to keep it to five to seven questions. The goal is to determine what the needs are for minority owned businesses and how the chamber can support them. It's important to spread the message about this survey and the goal behind it. Business Development is working with Kevin with the City of Myrtle Beach, churches, and businesses to get the survey in the hands of as many people as we can. In the sub-committee meeting, there was also discussion about hosting an after-hours mixer for minority owned businesses. This would allow for networking and for others to meet the DEI council. Currently looking at August to host the mixer. Cindy is waiting to hear back from the SBA for more information on business certification classes. The original person who taught the certification classes retired, so now Cindy is trying to find out who the new contact is. Jessica reiterated the surveys and making sure the language in the survey is appropriate for everyone. Want to make sure we connect with the Hispanic population. Jessica mentioned the sub-committee spoke about reaching out to Tim McCray and Reggie Dyson regarding the local churches within the community. The sub-committee thought it would be a good idea to include the surveys at the mixer, giving everyone an opportunity to complete the survey. If the contest is continued, next year we could add an area for individuals entering the contest to add two other minority businesses that they think would benefit from a chamber membership. Susie Fryer mentioned she's meeting with Reggie Dyson and offered to speak with him about any initiatives we would like to discuss with him. Cindy thanked the members of the sub-committee and for the time they've invested in serving

on the committee. Eileen asked if Cindy would send the survey questions to the council first and Cindy agreed. Eileen said she would be curious to see what Dr. Atiya and Sophie's thoughts were on the questions coming from an academia background. Academia focuses on how the questions are asked to get responses, so she thinks they would be helpful resources.

Ignite Women's Conference:

Speaker: Cindy Gettig

The chamber has wanted to add another signature event in the fall. The WIPL conference is not being held this year and not sure if it'll continue in the future. Cindy along with others decided the chamber should host a women's conference. From this conference, a women's council/committee will be created. The goal is to make this an annual conference, but host lunch & learns and have guest speakers discuss various topics. A smaller committee has been created to plan this conference. The conference and committee are going to be called IGNITE. The event will be held on October 13th. This will be an all-day event held at the Sheraton Convention Center hotel. Details are being discussed now on who the speakers will be, and what topics will be discussed. Sponsorships are available for the event. Our graphic designer is working on the creative for the event. Eileen requested input from the council on what people have experienced as a woman or working with women and what individuals want to hear about right now. She also asked for any knowledge anyone had on great speakers for the conference. Becky mentioned topics on how to say no, self-care, and work life balance. She said, "As women we are either afraid to let our light shine or ask for help." Eileen said both topics have been brought up in the women's sub-committee planning meetings. Dr. Atiya mentioned burnout, building affinity groups in workplaces, equity minded policies in the workplace, equity minded leadership-challenging male centric frameworks of leadership. Her speaker suggestion was Avis Jones-Deweaver. Nancy thought it would be good to speak about caregiving and the struggles that come with it. Sophie suggested career-building, upward movement, negotiation strategies specific to women. Tamesha's suggestions were access to funding, accountability coaching, branding/marketing. Tamesha's speaker suggestion was Elisabeth Steele. Susie suggested long term care planning and Sean mentioned adapting to being a mom but also being a leader in your company.

Upcoming EVOLVE class

Speaker: Cindy Gettig

The EVOLVE Series sub-committee met once and was able to schedule the entire year of classes. There are now four classes scheduled, dates and topics have been sent over to all DEI members. Cindy thanked Becky for teaching her EVOLVE class on the topic of autism. The next class is June 16 at 9 a.m.; Amanda Masterpaul will be the speaker. The topic is inclusive workplaces and why pronouns matter. Cindy requested the council share the class dates with their networks and other individuals they think would benefit from this series. The next series after Amanda's class will be September 20 on the topic of DEI vocabulary and key terms. This class will be facilitated by Dr. Robert Wallace. The last class will be on November 1 and discuss

DEI vocabulary words taught by Dr. Franklin Ellis Jr. All classes are held in the chamber boardroom and streamed live via Facebook.

DEI Book Club

Speaker: Eileen Soisson

Eileen said not much has been done to work on details for the club. This is because most of the focus has been turned towards the women's conference. Atiya mentioned they have a book club currently going on at Coastal Carolina. Dr. Jessica Greene mentioned the book "Overcoming Biases". Eileen requested a timeline from Cindy for determining a book and hosting an event. First book could be determined in the summer and event will be held at the end of summer to allow people time to read the book. Want to make sure there's enough time to promote it. It also allows an opportunity to announce club event date at the women's conference.

Other Discussion Items

Diana Greene mentioned that LGS applications are out, and individuals can apply now. All scholarship applicant information will be provided at the end of June. Through the chamber foundation, the Bennie Swans scholarship was created and is awarded every year to an LGS member. Anyone who applied for the scholarship the DEI council will review and vote on a scholarship recipient. Eileen told DEI council members to encourage other minority business individuals to apply for LGS. Becky requested Diana to discuss a general description of what LGS is for the new individuals in the group. Diana said LGS's goal is to get great businesspeople engaged to serve the community through leadership. The program is ten months long and the group completes seventy-five community hours over the course of the program. The group meets the first Thursday of every month. The LGS board retreat will be hosted next week to discuss details for the upcoming year.

Angie asked if we had any support services for LGBDTQ community. Cindy said Craig is on the DEI council and he represents PRIDE Myrtle Beach. This would be a great contact to reach out to for more information about LGBDTQ services.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.