

Diversity Equity & Inclusion Council Meeting - Meeting Minutes – August 25, 2022

Members Present: Eileen Soisson, Dr. Jessica Greene, Sean Bailey, Darlene Borges, Atiya Stokes-Brown, Cody Bunch, Susie Fryer, Diana Greene, Danielle Lewis, Amanda Masterpaul, Lauren Morris, Diane Platt, Mark Smaizys.

Staff Present: Cindy Gettig, Amanda Bailey, Bob Harris, Danette Patton.

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Eileen Soisson

Welcome & Introductions: Eileen Soisson

Eileen Soisson requested we do introductions, everyone introduced themselves. Eileen asked Cindy Gettig to introduce Danette Patton, DEI Director.

Introduction of Danette Patton: Cindy Gettig

Cindy introduced Danette and discussed how she will be serving the council and chamber. She is the Director of DEI. Danette also introduced herself and said she has been with the chamber for one month. She is originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She's moved all over the United States and recently moved from Cedar Rapids. Danette is excited to be here and for the warmer weather! Her background is in education, she was a professor in General Studies and the CO-lead for the DEI council at her school she formally worked at. Currently she's working on Hispanic Heritage Month, which is September 15-October 15. One of her goals is to do a community event for Hispanic Heritage Month that will include a jazz band, salsa dancing and different Hispanic foods. She wants to involve the community in these endeavors as much as possible.

Ignite Women's Conference: Cindy Gettig

Earlier in the year, it was decided to have a full day women's conference. One of the strategic initiatives of Business Development was to add one new signature event and this is how the women's conference was chosen. This event will be held at the Sheraton Myrtle Beach Convention Center. A planning group was formed to create this event and assist in execution. The hopes are to make this event an annual event. A committee will be formed from this planning group. Amanda Masterpaul will be doing one of the breakout sessions. Additional breakout session speakers are Alex Husner, Dr. Jessica Greene, Freda Funnye and Tideland's Health. Registration starts at 7:30 a.m., exhibitors will be set up, Tideland's will be offering blood pressure checks to all attendees. Cindy encouraged the council to get their tickets, purchase table sponsorships and ad space. Eileen encouraged the council to invite people they know and share this with their networks. Susie Fryer asked what some of the topics would be. Amanda Masterpaul said she was going to focus on identity markers. Women's health will also be discussed. Diane Platt asked what the cost will be. Cindy said it's \$150 for attendees and \$1500 for a sponsorship.

Upcoming EVOLVE Class: Cindy Gettig

Cindy reminded everyone of the EVOLVE class on September 20 at 9 a.m. Dr. Robert Wallace from Webster University will be the facilitator for the third EVOLVE class this year. DEI vocabulary and terms will be discussed. If you complete all four classes, you will get a certificate of completion.

Minority Business Survey: Danette Patton

Danette mentioned she was reviewing the survey that was sent out a couple of months ago. She is looking to determine what minority businesses are in the community. Wants to parcel out what type of businesses there are and how we can better serve them. Would like to reach out to investors that haven't marked they are minority owned to determine if they are and reasons why they may have not selected they are a minority owned business. Cindy reminded the committee about the minority owned business contest that was done earlier in the year and how many people took the survey. We had a good number at just about 55 entries. The feedback from the survey and the contest will help Danette gather additional questions to ask on how we best can serve the minority owned business community. We would like to get them more involved with the chamber and things going on in the community.

Minority Business Certification Class: Cindy Gettig

Cindy worked with Kelvin Waites, DEI Director at City of Myrtle Beach to create this class. It is for minority owned businesses to help them begin certification. The speaker will discuss the benefits of being certified and talking through how you can become certified. Bonnie O'Guin is the best example of this certification and how being certified can help your business. She got certified and can now work with the city and various groups in the community. The class will be held on September 21 at 9 a.m. at the Chapin Memorial Library. Registration is open and on the website, there is no cost to attend. Eileen asked how many people we anticipated to attend. Cindy said she is hoping for about ten to fifteen attendees, would like more but a good gauge is ten to fifteen attendees.

Rubric Model: Sean Bailey & Atiya Stokes Brown

Eileen said that a scholarship rubric has been created to review the Bennie Swans scholarship applications. She said as the committee was reviewing the applicants, they realized it wasn't very equitable because of different preferences within everyone. We needed to determine how the responses were weighted so that we would look at the application and it could be measurable. Sean discussed what the rubric looks like and what it is. He created the rubric by collecting similar topics that were discussed through the applicant review process. The first main topic was to gauge their relationship with the under marginalized community. The weight is measured from 1-10, 10 being the most affective. The second topic was community service and the overall application. The goal was to take a broader look at the application, instead of just the essay portion.

The committee wanted to gauge how the applicant's community service goes beyond their regular job duties. The next topic was application quality, wanted to determine how much time was put into their application. This could be determined by grammar, spelling, and sentence lengths. Letters of recommendation is important to the judging committee. Cindy explained who Bennie Swans was. He encouraged the city to do Freedom Week. His famous saying was to "do something". Sadly, he passed in 2020. The chamber decided in his honor to create an LGS scholarship through the chamber foundation. Dr. Atiya mentioned that there were many individuals this year that were on the selection committee last year. The goal of the rubric is to allow others to understand how the applications should be judged and weighted. It's important to provide a guide for others who join the committee to be able to easily judge equitably. LGS Board of Regents select the applicants once the selection committee has ranked the applications.

BMW Supplier Diversity Conference: Cindy Gettig

The BMW conference is being held on September 1. The chamber was able to get a bus from Coastal Carolina last year, this year this is not available. This is the fifth or sixth year the conference has been held. Louise Connell recently retired from BMW, but she's opened her own consulting company. So, she consults with BMW. The conference is wonderful to attend and has a lot of learning opportunities. There will be a keynote speaker during lunch, breakout sessions and then after lunch they have exhibitors. The exhibitor time helps in connecting the minority owned businesses with the BMW suppliers. BMW requires their suppliers work with a certain amount of minority owned businesses each year.

Other Discussion Items: Sean Bailey, Dr. Atiya Stokes Brown, Danette Patton, Bob Harris, Lauren Morris

Dr. Atiya mentioned she would like to talk about how we distinguish the EVOLVE series between the LEAD series. Wants to determine the differences between each series and what each series added value is. Cindy said it was a great point, Waccamaw Community Foundation reached out to the chamber to promote the series. She said it provides our investors with another resource and education touch point. One added value the EVOLVE series has is a certification of completion that was added this year. The committee would like to ask the attendees of the last two EVOLVE classes to gauge their feedback. Would like feedback on why they chose to attend the class they attended. It will allow the chamber to see how these series are benefiting our investors and any changes we can make. Amanda Masterpaul mentioned it would be a good conversation to see how each series could build off one another every year. It was suggested that EVOLVE could be the first series and LEAD could follow. The names somewhat determine this because EVOLVE's definition goes with growing and learning at a beginner state, while LEAD has more of an experienced role in learning and knowledge. Cindy mentioned Atiya was responsible for determining the name for EVOLVE. Dr. Jessica Greene mentioned there could be a post survey after each

session to see what others think about the classes. Eileen wanted to put this discussion topic on our next agenda.

Danette has been talking to Grand Strand Pride. LGBTQ history month is in October and overlaps with Hispanic month. She is doing an event for national coming out day and will share more information when it comes out.

Bob said there will be a FAM (familiarization) tour for diversity sports groups. It allows them to see what Myrtle Beach offers and brings in business for Myrtle Beach and most book their events back in Myrtle Beach.

Lauren Morris said Coast RTA will no longer be fare free. They will be starting a cashless system, there have been challenges with the unbanked community on that. Coast RTA will be accepting cash on a limited basis until more are accepting of the cashless system. Looking to move the bus station from across the city council to another area within City of Myrtle Beach. The fare will be back to \$1.50 and .25 for transfer. Magnetic swipe systems are no longer used. There has been an uptick of safety issues for drivers and passengers because of free fare. The hope is to encourage individuals who don't want to drive to ride the bus. The goal is to still include everyone. Bob asked if we have a lot of J1 students that use the system. Lauren responded that they do work with J1 students but haven't had as many this year.

Sean is working with a group to bring a stonewall sports group to Myrtle Beach. Stone wall is a kickball, bowling, and volleyball sports league that is open to all abilities and all identities. Nearest stone wall is either Wilmington or Charleston. Hoping in early 2023 that the league will be started. Amanda Masterpaul asked if there is an age requirement. Sean said most leagues have had the age requirement be 21+. Amanda was hoping there would be options for teens, since there aren't many options for them to be involved in safe play. Sean said this could potentially be an option for Myrtle Beach's league to allow a younger age group to play.