

Diversity Equity & Inclusion Council Meeting - Meeting Minutes – November 02, 2022

Members Present: Dr. Jessica Greene, Sean Bailey, Darlene Borges, Atiya Stokes-Brown, Diane Greene, Becky Large.

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

Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Dr. Jessica Greene

Welcome & Introductions: Dr. Jessica Greene

Dr. Jessica Greene requested we do introductions, everyone introduced themselves.

MBACC Diversity Statement: Cindy Gettig, Danette Patton

Danette was tasked with writing a diversity statement. Karen wanted everyone's input and wanted others to give their thoughts as well. She did not think the statement should be long but wanted to make sure it included our values and what we believe and want for the council, chamber, and community. Atiya made a few suggestions: In the first paragraph it mentioned, "unique life experience". She said all social identity markers lead people to unique life experiences. Add "gender identity and expression" and take out "or unique life experiences". In the second paragraph, "MBACC see's diversity as" – change to "see's diversity as social identity markers that define and influence one's life experience." In the third paragraph, change "We promote inclusion, accessibility, and acceptance" to "We promote inclusion, accessibility, and equity". Update the last sentence in the third paragraph to "and targeting our diverse, underrepresented and marginalized groups." Instead of DE&I, just write DEI. It looks better written like this.

2023 DEI Planning Session: All

- EVOLVE Series

- Dr. Franklin Ellis was very engaging in our final EVOLVE session. Cindy suggested potentially having one facilitator for each of the four sessions. It would be a buildable course that would build from each session. Would like to continue with the series completion certificate. The goal is to set dates and registration up early to allow individuals to sign up in advance. Want to promote this as an appealing series to be a part of to obtain interest in learning more about DEI. It would be advertised as a series, instead of four separate classes. Goal would be to have individuals sign up for the entire series instead of separate classes. Becky suggested possibly having a fee attached to the series to bring added value to the courses. Atiya suggested making sure the promotion was descriptive and explanatory as to what the series is and what they will gain from the classes. There would only be a certain amount allowed to register since we want to make

this series appealing and gain individuals interest in wanting to be apart. Another suggestion Atiya made was having the speaker understand our community and help us learn how to serve with DEI initiatives within our community. Danette suggested a potential community project to do within the series to serve the community. The goal is to put DEI into practice.

- Minority Business Initiatives

- Last year we had a certification class with SBA and SCORE that individuals could attend to acquire business certification. Cindy asked Danette for suggestions on how to incorporate this into the 2023 strategic plan. Danette shared that she has been walking into businesses meeting people and sharing the benefits of joining the chamber. She has learned some of the hesitancies from these minority businesses. There's a sense of distrust and lack of understanding of the benefits the chamber offers. Her goal is to have focus groups that are selected for different areas within the community and within the minority businesses. Danette would like to do a course with Coastal Carolina University to meet with other key players and have the community learn about the chamber benefits. Equity for Business A is different for Business B. After the community panel at CCU, she would like to have a breakfast drop-in session that would include current minority owned businesses speaking about how the chamber has benefited them. Becky asked how many minority owned businesses we have. Danette said we had about 150 businesses that were sent a survey and about 50 businesses responded. She's currently reviewing the results and trying to determine what their fears are of the chamber and what they may not know. After speaking with a few businesses, they mentioned they do not want to list they are a minority business once they've joined the chamber because they may be targeted. In some capacity, we will include minority businesses into the Member-to-Member Business Expo that happens in January. Another way we can be more inclusive is to get pamphlets and new member packets in Spanish. Currently working on this and trying to get a translator for businesses that do not speak English. Becky suggested a contact she has that does translations for materials and he is cost effective. Atiya suggested promoting social justice through sponsorship. For businesses that want to be a part of the DEI initiatives, see what they are willing to provide in order to support DEI. One idea is to have a mentorship program for new minority owned businesses. This would be segmented based off various characteristics the mentor offers, but also want to make sure we include other chamber committees to be a part of this initiative. Cindy will ask TD Bank to sponsor chamber memberships for four minority owned businesses again this year. We would like to continue to add more people to the DEI Council and there isn't a term limit to be on the council.

- Freedom Week

- The chamber is a sponsor of Grand Strand Freedom Week, and the DEI council is a sponsor of the Welcome Reception that kicks off the week. Everyone is invited on the council, but this is an invite only event for others outside of the

council. There will be a parade that Saturday that the chamber will participate in, and it is encouraged that the DEI Council participate as well. Last year the Carolina African American Heritage Foundation had an intern for the parade, and he will be assisting again this year. Dr. Jessica will be doing the mental health forum. The chamber also sponsors the drum major awards and breakfast.

- BMW Supplier Diversity Conference

- Erica White will be brought back to do a workshop for discussion of supplier diversity. Karen would like to do a supplier diversity conference here in Myrtle Beach hosted by the chamber. We will need to look at the calendar to align it with the other many events happening. We are going to combine with chambers, EDC, GSBA to assist with this conference. Whenever a date is determined we will send those details out.

- MBACC DEI Assessment

- Assessment allowed us to see the good things we are doing and the areas we can improve. It starts from within, so we will work on engaging the staff and educating them on DEI first. Danette wanted to do something for Heritage History month. For Hispanic Heritage month we had art in the lobby. Native American heritage month will have a pow wow. We hope to have Chief Hatcher talk at the chamber about the many different aspects of their heritage. This discussion will be open for the DEI council to attend. The hope is to educate others about Native American's and their heritage and how we can respect their tribal land more. Becky asked if Chief Hatcher would be interested in being on the council. Danette said she would reach out and ask. Each heritage month will be celebrated, and we will invite the board and council to attend. Danette would like to reach out to different communities and tour different areas. She wants to partner with different people that have various cultural events happening. Would like to have different art in the lobby for each heritage month. Wants to collaborate with different cultural events happening around the community. Another goal is to have a DEI blog, monthly newsletter, and a DEI day conference. Want to work on social justice and restorative practices. Becky asked what this means. Danette explained it is work that contributes to assisting marginalized communities and businesses. The goal is to be inclusive.

- Other initiatives for 2023

- One thing we want to start doing is highlighting businesses that are supporting DEI and working on initiatives to make change happen. Like Leading Business of the Month, we could have a business chosen each month that we think deserves to be celebrated for the work they are doing.

Other Discussion Items: All

Meeting adjourned at 11:24 a.m. by Dr. Jessica Greene.