

## Recap of the Hillsborough County Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) Meeting June 7, 2017

June 7, 2017 Hillsborough County Diversity Advisory Council meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Vice Chair Howell. Members present: Vice-Chair Howell, Norma Reno, Robert Chen, Satish Sharma, Letitia Haynes, James Tokley, Raed Khawaja, Virgil Perry, Gamal Gasser, Lynnette Stine, Francis Joseph, Anh Nguyen, Yvette Jones, and Kamal Patel. Members absent: Chair Ortiz (Notified), Jennifer Shiver (Notified), Terry Kemple (Notified), Roxanne Bartley (By Phone), Patti Sanchez (By Phone), Kaitlin Connolly (Notified). There was a quorum present. Staff present: Albert Coleman, EOA/Office of Community Affairs, Tony Morejon from the Office of Community Affairs, Carmen LoBue from the Office of Community Affairs, and Zuleyka Carbajal from the Equal Opportunity Administrator's Office.

**Public Comment:** Ms. Richidean Hills-Ackbar, Founder and Director of Caregiver's Helping Hand, Inc., came in and spoke to the Council regarding a Multicultural Family Day event scheduled on June 25, 2017. She presented a video and spoke about her event and the possibility of the DAC participating in the event as well.

Mr. McCallister spoke regarding events in May that affected the Indigenous Southern American Community, 3 monuments to Southern heroes were taken down in New Orleans, Louisiana and also in Charlottesville, Virginia, removal of memorial statues there as well. In Alachua County, FL they voted to remove a Confederate Memorial. Two thirds of the citizens in Alachua County did not want to remove it. Mr. McCallister, presented a photograph that represents civil discourse and hopes that Hillsborough County is much better than that. He felt that the image is disturbing and shouldn't get out to the public. He feels that the DAC is a way to avoid these events. In Gainesville, the Mayor, without a vote decided to move another statue where it had been in Lake Eola Park, to a cemetery. This monument had been there for 100 years. He stated that his group is not represented in the DAC, but that he comes to the meetings. A Hillsborough County Commissioner wants to remove a monument that has been in the County for 100 years. This is in front of the Courthouse. There were many members of the public, Confederate descendants that were at the Commission meeting today. As Southerners and Veteran Community, they are not happy with these monuments taken down. No one from the public has requested for the monument in Hillsborough County to be taken down. Mr. McCallister feels that the DAC should study this situation investigate, talk to the Southern Indigenous Community and hold forum and pass that along in a letter to the BOCC. Mr. McCallister stated that he feels that this is why the DAC was established to bring the grievances of the different communities to the BOCC.

There is no quorum present at this time. The quorum would still be 2/3 present because the 50% change would have to be voted on a second time. People via the phone cannot vote unless there is a quorum present at the meeting. The vote for lowering quorum can be done at the next regularly scheduled meeting, which should be next month at July's meeting. ***Later in the meeting, Mr. Chen and Ms. Nguyen arrived which made quorum.***

Mr. Tokley spoke regarding Mr. Gasser and Mr. Khawaja attending his church, Trinity CME Church, to speak to the members regarding the Muslim/Middle Eastern Community.

Mr. Tokley spoke regarding the Community and Law Enforcement Workshops, he is a trainer, and he stated that there is going to be a workshop at the Rivers of Life Church Ministries, in Brandon on June 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> from 5-9 p.m. There is another one on July 31<sup>st</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup> at the Idlewild Baptist Church.

### **Old Business:**

**Approval of May 3, 2017 Meeting Recap:** A motion was made by Ms. Stine to approve the May 3, 2017 meeting recap. The motion was seconded by Mr. Perry. ***Motion carried unanimously. (Voting was done towards the end of the meeting when there was a quorum present)***

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## Old Business:

**Interact Hillsborough Event:** Mr. Morejon spoke regarding the event, which was going to be scheduled for June 17<sup>th</sup>, but staff advised that it should not be done on that day due to all of the Juneteenth celebrations already scheduled. Staff is also busy on the weekends in June. Mr. Morejon stated that dealing with bureaucracy makes it more difficult. He understands that there are members going out in August, but could still participate in the event. He asked the BOCC regarding their September schedules and they would get back to him. Ms. Stine stated that after reading about Richidean's event, she suggests that maybe the DAC could participate in the Multicultural Day event, for this year, with a table and tent and in the future, partner up with Richidean. She feels that this is repeating what each other is doing. Mr. Morejon stated that we want the DAC to succeed and have a good event, with whatever the group wants to do. Vice Chair Howell stated to plan to have an ability to share the event to have a table there, and to be able to speak about the Interact event. Mr. Patel said to advertise it on social media and then state that the DAC has a similar event, with the date to come. Mr. Joseph stated that going forward the DAC would have to be consistent if choosing to participate and partner at this event. He also questioned, why this organization versus another organization. Also, in 2018, when will the event be scheduled? Ms. Bartley also commented on how you choose one group over another. She stated, as the DAC, you should participate with other groups and events, but also have our own event. Her suggestion would be for staff to give a few dates, so that the DAC could put the event together. Ms. Bartley thinks it would be good to know definitively what the process is on the different areas of putting the event together and the timeframe. Mr. Chen stated that his dragon boat team will not be available on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of September, but that he likes September because schools can be invited during this time. Ms. Haynes inquired what days the BOCC had given, Mr. Morejon responded Saturdays are fine, we would be looking at Saturdays in September. Ms. Haynes feels that the DAC should be at as many multicultural events and that the Interact Hillsborough could be scheduled every other year. Ms. Bartley stated that last year, September and October were months that were stayed away from. Ms. Stine thought that Ms. Haynes' idea is a good idea, to have a DAC table at each event to be represented and having Interact every other year. Mr. Gasser stated that the Interact Hillsborough event is the most important thing that the DAC does. He feels that the process should be looked at to be able to have the event. He would like more help from the staff in making the event happen. Mr. Joseph is in agreement with Ms. Stine and Ms. Haynes, and we should commit to a date. He would like for staff to look at April 2018 and get a commitment for that date. Vice Chair Howell stated that keeping the event scheduled for the same time each year, people would look forward to the event. Ms. Jones thinks keeping the date in April would be good. Ms. Bartley questioned whether having the event every other year instead of annually, would it impact the budget? Mr. Morejon responded that the County is being faced with budget cuts. Ms. Haynes suggested having fund drives, spending a little bit of money, and making it fun events. Ms. Bartley responded that having the Town Hall in the fall and supporting other events throughout the year. Ms. Nguyen questioned the \$50,000 budget and felt that it was a high amount. Vice Chair Howell responded that not all of that money was spent and that a lot of services were donated for the event. Ms. Bartley stated we should find out if the money would be in jeopardy, since not all of the money was spent. Ms. Haynes inquired when the Town Hall was, and Ms. Bartley responded that it was in October and that just a few hundred dollars was spent on the event. Ms. Jones stated that time is a factor and it has to be well planned to be successful. Vice Chair Howell responded that here should also be a date set in stone. Ms. Nguyen said we need to have a good plan, communication, and leadership. Mr. Patel questioned whether it would be set for September, and if yes or no, a date has to be set. Ms. Jones suggested April. Mr. Chen stated that he wished the budget would carry over, but that it's better to do in April, and there could be sponsors. Ms. Jones said that if the DAC showed how they money is being used, then they could allocate the money. Mr. Patel's fear is that they will take the money if they see the money wasn't used. Mr. Joseph stated that if it is done in September, then each year it should be scheduled in September. Mr. Morejon stated to give a date and make sure the date works, to be able to set up to meet with the Commissioners and the Parks Department.

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A motion was made by Mr. Gasser to have the event the best date in September. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tokley. Members against the motion were: Ms. Haynes, Ms. Jones, Mr. Joseph, and Ms. Bartley. **Motion carried.**

Ms. Reno questioned when the next subcommittee meeting will be and Mr. Morejon responded next Thursday evening, June 15<sup>th</sup>. Vice Chair Howell stated that there is already a template made just to go in and plug in the names, they are just waiting on the date to then assign the roles.

**Revised Strategic Plan:** Vice Chair Howell stated that Chair Ortiz has the documents minus the dates. Mr. Coleman discussed when Chair Ortiz went to the BOCC, a video was shown of that to the DAC, and they kept on mentioning mission creep, they didn't see a focus of what the DAC is doing, that's why the Strategic Plan is needed. Mr. Coleman stated that the Strategic Plan was done 3 or 4 years ago. Ms. Haynes reminded the group of the entire meeting that was spent revising the Strategic Plan, and the dates just needed to be put in to submit it to staff.

Vice Chair Howell stated that another item still on the table was the Multicultural Day Event.

A motion was made by Ms. Stine to participate in the Multicultural Day Event and to get a table at the event. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tokley. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Chen spoke with Richidean and they are going to provide the table free of charge to the DAC.

There was discussion of who would attend the event and be at the table and the times.

11:00am to 1:00pm: Mr. Patel and Ms. Stine/1:00pm to 2:00pm: Ms. Bartley, Vice Chair Howell, and Ms. Sanchez  
2:00pm to 4:00pm: Mr. Perry, Mr. Gasser, Mr. Joseph and Mr. Tokley/3:00pm to 5:00pm: Ms. Reno and Ms. Nguyen /4:00pm to 5:00pm: Mr. Khawaja /5:00pm to 7:00pm: Ms. Jones and Mr. Sharma.

## **New Business:**

**Lowering Quorum:** A motion was made by Ms. Haynes to change quorum to 50%. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stine. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## **Announcements & Council Member Reports:**

Mr. Gasser handed out a flyer: Iftar for Ramadan. The invitation is for the members. He advised that it wouldn't be good for children to be there.

Mr. Joseph wanted to speak regarding Mr. McCallister's request, he would like to go back to look at the minutes which state that the DAC had responded to Mr. McCallister. The DAC should communicate to him, that while he is welcome to come to the meetings each month, the DAC does not have the power to make changes he is wanting, that the DAC cannot make the BOCC make changes. Mr. Perry stated that to desecrate anyone on any side is his brother veteran and that is a point that should be brought forward, it's his suggestion. Ms. LoBue stated as a friendly reminder, only the BOCC can appoint and take people off of a board. Mr. McCallister can re-apply, that is his right.

Ms. Jones is asking for notifications if something is scheduled, or cancelled because she showed up for a subcommittee meeting, but no one was there, staff didn't respond when she called and then she called Ms. Bartley. Ms. Bartley let her know that it was cancelled.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Mr. Perry to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Jones. Meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Next Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 5, 2017, at 6:30 p.m.