



MEETING MINUTES

COMMUNITY INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Imran Malik, Chair, called the Community Inclusion Advisory Committee (CIAC) meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chair Imran Malik, Vice Chair Niki Lombardo, Noor Amara, Isao Shoji, Peggy Kilty, Max Xu, Kristine Aldemir

Members Absent: Vineet Goel, Katawi Cato, Ming Yu

Staff Present: Christine Nardecchia

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Aldemir moved, Mr. Shoji seconded approval of the April 23, 2024 CIAC minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

JUNE MEETING PREVIEW

Vice Chair Lombardo stated that there will be two newly appointed members present at the June 25 meeting. A clerk from Legislative Services will be present at that meeting to provide onboarding for new members. Because this will be the beginning of new terms, election of a Chair and Vice Chair will be held at the June meeting, as well. Also at that meeting, a representative from the Abbey Theater will provide information regarding The Evolution Theater Company, an LGBTQ+ supportive theater company.

Ms. Nardecchia stated that if all members are present at the June meeting, a group photo may be taken.

Mr. Shoji noted that he would not be present at the June meeting.

Ms. Nardecchia noted that newly appointed committee member, Ingrid Fields, is present tonight to observe the committee meeting process.

Ms. Nardecchia requested the committee to revise the agenda order to include Agenda #5 – Ohio University Dublin Speakers Series Update to be included with the Agenda #8 - Outreach and Engagement Updates.

Committee members had no objection to the requested agenda revision.

ENVISION DUBLIN UPDATE

Mr. Shoji, Envision Dublin Update steering committee member, reported that the steering committee has completed its work, and the proposed Community Plan update will be scheduled for Planning and Zoning Commission review and recommendation to City Council. The proposed Plan can be viewed at the City of Dublin, Envision Dublin webpage. Mr. Shoji indicated he would email a link to the CIAC members.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI) FRAMEWORK

Ms. Nardecchia stated that at the DEI Framework discussion at the CIAC's April meeting, the discussion went a little off track. The objective was to review and discuss the progress that has been made, not to edit details of the document. The DEI Framework was reviewed/approved by the Committee last July 25, 2023, and it was adopted by City Council in October 2023. She noted that Priority Area 6 has been placed on hold until the City has completed the Housing Study that is part of the Envision Dublin review.

Ms. Nardecchia noted that at the Committee's March meeting, the City's Assistant Law Director and City Manager were present for the discussion of the Committee's role. They attended and provided similar information at all of City Council's advisory committees. This item is scheduled on City Council's Administrative Committee June agenda. A final report from City Council regarding the advisory committee's role is anticipated in August 2024.

Ms. Nardecchia stated that at CIAC's April meeting, the DEI Framework discussion focused on the progress in Priority Area 1 – General Recommendations and Priority Area 2 - Public Engagement. There was discussion on the public engagement of youth in the community. The discussion tonight will resume with:

Priority Area 3 – City Practices

Goal 1: Diversify the Workforce - "Recruit, Retain and promote a demographically diverse staff."

The Indicators of Success are:

- The City increases its diversity of historically underrepresented populations to be more reflective of Central Ohio's population demographics over a 5- to 10-year period.
- City leaders create and sustain an organizational infrastructure to support accountability in achieving equity goals within the agency.
- City staff implements an inclusive and comprehensive outreach, engagement and assessment plan focusing on hiring standards and practices, such as advertising, the creation of job descriptions, search processes and education of search committee/hiring managers to aid in the recruitment of diversity.
- The City retains and promotes a more compositionally diverse workforce.

Ms. Nardecchia noted that Human Resource staff has presented twice previously to the committee on this effort. In December, they reported that the City received a 100% score on its Municipal Equality Index (MEI) for DEI practices. The City has increased its recruitment outreach and promotes a more compositionally diverse workforce.

Ms. Lombardo noted that it might be interesting to have H.R. describe their outreach efforts to the under-represented populations. Perhaps there are recommendations this Committee could recommend to H.R., based on the communities with whom we interact.

Ms. Nardecchia responded that update could be scheduled on a future agenda.

Goal 2: Facilitate Education and Awareness - "It is important that the City enhance its understanding and awareness of diversity, equity and inclusion."

The Indicators of Success are:

- The City establishes a standing internal DEI committee that consults with leadership and provides recommendations.
- The City's Human Resource Department creates DEI-specific training programs (for full-time and part-time employees) and increases participation in required and voluntary training each year.
- City programs provide resources and support activities to incorporate diverse perspectives into the workplace.
- City staff actively measures and evaluates the workforce's DEI awareness.
- The City commits to assessing the likely outcomes of its administrative policies, rules and regulations on diversity, equity and inclusion in Dublin.

Ms. Nardecchia pointed out that the City has an active DEI internal committee, which is made up of a wide cross section of City employees. That committee has its own strategic framework, which they are currently reviewing chapter by chapter. That framework was presented to City Council last year for adoption, as well. The City's H.R. department creates DEI-specific training programs for both full and part-time employees; that program is very robust. The City's H.R. department addresses each of the above bullet points on a regular basis. The City provides resources and support activities to incorporate diverse perspectives. She does not believe the City has yet been able to assess the outcomes of those efforts.

Ms. Lombardo inquired if, when referring to administrative policies (last bullet point), those policies are related to City staff, such as benefits, hiring practices, leadership, etc.

Ms. Nardecchia responded affirmatively. The City leadership team regularly reviews the City's administrative policies.

Mr. Shoji referred to the City's efforts to evaluate progress. He recalls that in a previous H.R. presentation, the demographics of City staff was laid out with varying position levels. He is curious as to metrics regarding workforce DEI awareness. Those are difficult to measure without initially identifying the baseline.

Ms. Nardecchia responded that perhaps a follow-up from H.R. could be scheduled for the August or a fall CIAC meeting, and H.R. could report on the evaluation process, including the metrics that are measured regularly. It has been a year since H.R. last reported to the Committee, so it would be interesting to see if there are comparison numbers. Based on the City's MEI report, she believes the City of Dublin ranks well against other government entities. The City has 430 full-time employees and during the summer, with seasonal workers, it has close to 1,200 employees.

Ms. Kilty inquired what type of DEI training is required for part-time and seasonal workers.

Ms. Nardecchia responded that DEI training is required for all full and part-time employees, as well as for City Council, board and commission and advisory committee members.

Goal 3: Evaluate Business Practices – “The City will establish and maintain business practices that ensure fairness and equity for diverse vendors and contractors seeking to do business with the City.”

The Indicators of Success are:

- The City effectively increases the percentage of diverse vendors and contractors that do business with the City.
- The City facilitates an increase in the number of locally owned diverse businesses.

Ms. Nardecchia stated that the H.R. internal DEI committee met with the City Director of Finance to discuss minority-owned businesses within the City. At the moment, the City’s Munis system is unable to measure that element or make it a requirement. The City works with 1,000s of vendors. In terms of locally owned diverse businesses, the City is a strong supporter and partner with the Dublin Chamber of Commerce. To the extent possible, the City of Dublin attempts to do business with locally owned businesses.

Goal 4: Monitor Service Delivery – “It is imperative that the City understand its customers and ensure that services are designed and delivered in an equitable and inclusive manner.”

The Indicators of Success are:

- Increase the demonstrated cultural fluency and competency of City staff.
- City divisions collect standardized demographic user data to identify gaps and/or overrepresentation.
- City divisions use an equity toolkit when developing policies, programs and budgets.
- City customers feel that City service interactions are responded to with equity and access as indicated by standardized user feedback tools.

Ms. Nardecchia stated that every City department is not able to collect standardized demographic user data; however, others, such as Recreational Services, do collect demographic information. The CyraCom language translation service has been implemented City-wide to all 7 City buildings. It is being used regularly by Court Services and Recreation Services. Now that this service has been implemented City-wide, it will be possible to measure usage numbers for the second half of the year.

Mr. Shoji stated that he understands the difficulty when working with systems that do not facilitate DEI efforts, and he is not minimizing that challenge. He would point out that it continues to be a difficulty for the City 4 years after the City created the DEI Task Force. He hopes it continues to be a priority.

Ms. Nardecchia stated she would relay that concern to the Finance Director. The City’s vendor systems is very expensive, so she is not sure of the potential for upgrades to the system. She noted that the H.R. Director is also the internal DEI staff leader.

Ms. Lombardo noted that some accounting systems have user-defined data fields that can be repurposed for another purpose. The solutions vendor also might be able to offer a simple upgrade to the system.

Ms. Nardecchia noted that, currently, the City of Dublin does not have a minority-owned business directory, such as some larger metropolitan areas may have.

Ms. Lombardo stated that because the City works with so many vendors, it may take some time for the City to collect that type of information.

Mr. Malik noted that the City of Dublin has a relationship with the Columbus Office of Small Business Administration (SBA), and SBA has extensive data that includes minority business data. It might be easy to obtain that information from SBA.

Ms. Nardecchia thanked committee members for offering helpful suggestions.

Ms. Nardecchia noted that **Priority Area 4 – Public Safety** is under the purview of the Chief's Advisory Committee. Perhaps once a year, someone from that committee and the Police Chief could provide a progress report on that Priority Area.

She drew the Committee's attention to **Priority Area 5 – Economic Development**. This focus has not been discussed previously due to timing. After a delay, the City now has a new Economic Development director and full staff. She suggests this discussion be deferred to a future agenda item.

Priority Area 6 – Housing is a priority area currently on hold, by directive of City Council, pending the Housing Study, which will be part of the Envision Dublin update.

Ms. Kilty inquired when a report on the Housing Study could be anticipated. Will it be provided along with the Envision Dublin update?

Ms. Nardecchia responded that the findings would be incorporated into the comprehensive Plan. Two housing studies were conducted: a general regional study by MORPC and a second one by the City for the City of Dublin only.

Ms. Nardecchia suggested that Priority Areas 7 and 8 be discussed at a future CIAC meeting. Committee members had no objection to continuing the Framework discussion at a future meeting.

Ms. Lombardo stated that the affordable housing area was a priority for the original DEI Task Force. She is unsure if incorporating the housing study into Envision Dublin will address all the pieces identified in the Housing priority area. Will someone be assessing that item and ensuring that if any significant items are missing in the Envision Dublin Plan, that they will be addressed otherwise.

Ms. Nardecchia responded that because this item is on hold until "next steps" are determined by City Council, she has no better information this evening.

Ms. Lombardo stated that she understands that, but would like to be on the record as stating she hoped someone would be taking a look at that item to identify potential gaps, whether intentional or not. The housing effort still needs to be tied to the DEI Framework.

Mr. Shoji stated that he was part of the Envision Dublin discussion. He does not anticipate that the Envision Dublin Community Plan Update will address all the points in the Housing Priority item. There was extensive discussion about the need to "age in place," that people of all ages should be able to live in and comfortably be a part of the Dublin community. There was not as much discussion about the racial or economic diversity component of housing. The Envision Dublin update will not address all components of housing, so additional work will be necessary.

Ms. Aldemir stated that she works on the Affordable Housing Committee in the City of Columbus. She was told by an architect participating in the discussion that there are many conflicting interests between developers, schools, the City and potential homebuyers. Reaching a solution would require each party to concede a little.

Ms. Nardecchia agreed that housing is a regional and national issue.

Outreach & Engagement Updates

- **OU Dublin Speaker Series**

The second event of the Speaker Series was held April 24, 2024 at the Abbey Theater in Dublin; it was very well attended. The primary focus of the presentation was Older Adults and Healthy Aging. Dr. Bill Burke, Dean, OU College of Osteopathic Medicine was presenting. Dr. Burke will be convening a meeting in June to discuss next steps in the OU Dublin Speaker Series.

- **Naturalization Ceremony**

On May 8, 2024, the City of Dublin hosted a Naturalization Ceremony in the Abbey Theater. The group of 150 petitioners were from 51 countries, ranging in age from 19 to 76 years. Mayor Amorose Groomes was the keynote speaker. The Mayor pointed out that 20% of the City of Dublin's residents were born outside of the U.S. CIAC committee member Ms. Kilty assisted in the event.

- **Pride Month Proclamation**

City Council issued a Pride Month Proclamation at its meeting on May 20, 2024. Ms. Kilty had submitted a request for the proclamation to City Council. Members of Rainbow Dublin were present to accept the proclamation.

- **Memorial Day Ceremony**

Ms. Nardecchia invited committee members to attend the Memorial Day Ceremony on Monday, May 27, 2024 at 11:30 am to 1:00 pm in the Historic Dublin Cemetery. It is important for the community to show support for our veterans.

- **Juneteenth/Brown-Harris Cemetery Dedication**

Ms. Nardecchia invited committee members to attend the Juneteenth/Brown-Harris Cemetery Dedication on Friday, June 28, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. The African American cemetery, located on Shier Rings Road, was discovered recently during the construction of the OSU Wexner Medical Center Outpatient Facility. Both the Brown and Harris family descendants have been engaged with the cemetery restoration.

Ms. Kilty noted that she appreciates the City's acknowledgment of its historical land usage.

- **FYI – Framing Dublin's History**

Ms. Nardecchia stated that when talking about the history of Dublin, we now make an effort to point out that the original inhabitants of this area included the Delaware, Shawnee and Wyandot Native American groups. She noted that today, staff met with the representatives at OSU Ohio History Center – Wyandotte Nation, to discuss efforts to ensure Dublin is presenting its history correctly. We are considering whether we should contract with experts concerning how we share our Native American History. The OSU Ohio History experts were very complimentary of the City of Dublin Parks Department for the respect it has always shown in terms of archeological artifacts discovered on City land. She would like to provide an Outreach & Engagement update at every CIAC meeting.

Ms. Lombardo reiterated Ms. Kilty's expressed appreciation of the City's acknowledgement of its historical land usage. She noted that sometimes discussion of that early history results in difficult conversations, as not everything that occurred was a positive.

Ms. Nardecchia responded that the City has a long-term relationship with its Native American partners, but that relationship is becoming increasingly energized. In the development of the Ferris Wright Park, a Hopewell Indian site, the City worked with archaeological experts on how best to frame that history on the site.

Ms. Lombardo referred to the Brown-Harris Cemetery and inquired if the current family members were aware that they were descendants of the earlier Brown and Harris family members interred in that cemetery. Was it a lost cemetery to them, as well?

Ms. Nardecchia responded that she is unsure. When the cemetery was discovered, the City engaged archaeological experts to protect the cemetery.

Ms. Aldemir noted that related to Dublin's early history, she has been told that certain Dublin homes were part of the Underground Railroad system during the Civil War years.

Ms. Nardecchia responded that Dublin was part of the underground railroad system. There is a home in Historic Dublin that was part of that. During the Dublin walking tour, the group stops at the privately owned home that participated in protecting escaped slaves. Abraham and Lucy Depp were heavily involved in that area. She would be happy to ask the Dublin Historical Society to speak at a future CIAC meeting concerning that history.

Ms. Aldemir noted that she was told that a couple of escaped families settled here in Dublin, and in the early years, were hidden and protected by other Dublin families.

Ms. Amara stated that she is curious how these stories can be kept alive, generation after generation. Should it be incorporated into our local schools social studies courses, or perhaps the local library could share a series of podcasts on that early history. It has a DEI component.

Ms. Nardecchia stated that the Dublin Historical Society is the keeper of Dublin's early history elements. The Society will be opening a museum in Historic Dublin. They will retain ownership of the historic Coffman Homestead. Dublin school students traditionally visit the Coffman Homestead. The Society has recordings of some earlier Dublin residents sharing their early memories of the Dublin area. The City also extends efforts to share its early stories.

Mr. Malik noted that the OU Dublin Speaker Series event at the Abbey Theater was very well attended. He appreciates the OU and City leadership, including Ms. Nardecchia, who were involved in putting the event together. When he arrived at the event, there was standing room only.

Ms. Nardecchia responded that the theater seats only 200. We need a larger venue for the OU Dublin Speaker Series.

Mr. Shoji inquired the current cadence of the Speaker Series schedule.

Ms. Nardecchia responded that at this point, there have been two events. The intent was to have two per year. OU now has a new president, so there may be shifting priorities. She will keep the committee apprised of the status.

Mr. Malik referred to the recent Naturalization Ceremony hosted by the City. Many new citizens find the City a welcoming place; however, there is little affordable housing. The housing situation for new Americans could be a worthwhile committee agenda item.

Ms. Aldemir stated that the State of Ohio has developed a program called Ohio Homebuyer Plus. Working with the State, people can deposit up to \$100,000 over a 5-year period, and that money can be shown as a deduction for income tax purposes. Within 5 years, that money must be used for housing purposes. Only a limited number of financial institutions offer this type of account, however.

Mr. Malik inquired if there was any way in which CIAC members could assist with the Memorial Day Service.

Ms. Nardecchia responded there are already volunteers handing out poppies at the event. At this point, people are needed to attend and express appreciation for our veterans, many of whom gave their lives.

Mr. Malik notified committee members of the following event opportunities:

- The Board and Commission Recognition Ceremony is scheduled for Monday, June 3, 5:30 pm, at City Council Chamber. Committee members were encouraged to RSVP to the invitation they received, if they have not done so already.
- Rise Up Columbus! is a spring and summer monthly event that is gaining momentum. Hosted by the City of Columbus, the focus is on the multiculturalism that exists in Columbus. The calendar of events is posted at the City of Columbus' Office of Diversity and Inclusion Events webpage. These are free cultural events with many vendors, music and opportunities for social connections.
- The third New American Book Fair will be held on Saturday, September 21, 2024, 11am-5pm, at the Columbus Metropolitan Library, 5590 Karl Road, Columbus.
- Dublin Arts Council (DAC) will be hosting "A Snail's Journey," art display, May 11 – June 28. He encouraged committee members to visit during open hours. [10am – 5pm weekdays; 11am - 2pm second Saturday of month].
- The 2024 Memorial Tournament event in Dublin will occur the first week of June this year.

Ms. Nardecchia stated that the City sent email invitations late last week. If members do not see their invitation, they should check their Spam folder.

Ms. Lombardo stated that she received the invitation on Wednesday, May 15, and by Friday, the only remaining tickets were on Thursday, June 6.

Mr. Malik continued with upcoming event opportunities:

- Samaritan's Feet distribution events, hosted by One City Columbus, will be hosted in several City of Columbus locations in late July 2024. In 2023, Samaritan's Feet distributed over 3,500 pair of shoes; it is anticipated that approximately 4,000 pair of shoes will be distributed to those in need this year. Members should contact him, if they would like to volunteer to assist with the event.
- Several of the 2024 Cricket World Cup Tournament events will be hosted in various U.S. cities this year, including New York, Dallas, Houston and Los Angeles.
- The City of Dublin School Back to School Drive will occur in late August 2024. One Dublin collaborates in this effort to provide free school supplies to students.

Ms. Nardecchia suggested that when the date of the Back to School Drive is known that it be shared with her, and she would provide the date to Committee members.

Mr. Malik noted:

- Local Food Pantries have need for food donations, as their supplies are low.

Ms. Nardecchia noted that food donations are collected daily at the Dublin Recreation Center.

Mr. Malik stated that the Dublin Food Pantry site is located on Dublin Center Drive (6608) off Sawmill Road.

Mr. Shoji stated that their drop-off process is simple and efficient.

Mr. Shoji noted that he would not be present at the June meeting due to a family trip to Japan. He will be present at the August meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Imran Malik, Chair

Assistant Clerk of Council