

## Washtenaw Equity Partnership Meeting #3 – Minutes

*November 18, 2021*

### Members in attendance:

1. Carol Kuhnke
2. Deborah Labelle
3. Natalie Holbrook
4. Nicholette Hoard
5. Belinda Dulin
6. Brock Dietrich
7. Che Carter
8. Dan McNeil
9. Delphia Simpson
10. Heather Martin
11. Jeanette Hadden
12. Judy Gardner
13. MaryAnn Sarosi
14. Melvin Parson
15. Rachelle Wilson

### Chairs in attendance:

1. Sue Shink (part of meeting)
2. Alma Smith

### Vera staff in attendance:

1. Amy Cross
2. Tara Dhanraj
3. Liz Swavola
4. Sandhya Kajeepeta
5. Alex Roth
6. Kaitlin Kall

### Meeting minutes:

1. Co-chairs and voting privileges
  - a. Near unanimous vote granting co-chairs voting privileges
2. Attendance and participation guidelines
  - a. Purpose of meetings is to conduct business and make substantive and process-related decisions; attendance is necessary in order to hold quorum
  - b. Request that members miss no more than three meetings and communicate to co-chairs in advance if they cannot attend

- i. Missing more than three meetings will be grounds for discussing membership
  - c. Members vote in their own capacity, drawing upon their personal and professional backgrounds, not on behalf of an agency or organization
  - d. Work group will not make or implement policy decisions, instead it will make recommendations and decide on processes for conducting business
  - e. Members should do their best to review distributed materials in advance of the meeting
  - f. Members are expected to serve on one subcommittee. **ACTION ITEM:** Members should email Alex Roth at [aroth@vera.org](mailto:aroth@vera.org) if they are not already on a subcommittee
- 3. Meeting recordings and sharing with the public
  - a. Discussion about the pros and cons of making video/audio recordings available to the public via website
    - i. Some expressed that this space is sacred, and free and authentic discussion may be hindered if full recordings are made public
    - ii. Many promoted idea of developing other methods, such as panels or town halls, to get public informed
  - b. Vote decided that full recordings of meetings will not be posted publicly
    - i. However, deidentified notes from each meeting will be made available
- 4. Update on website
  - a. Preview of beta version of WEP website
  - b. **ACTION ITEM:** Members should review content and send feedback to Trevor, MaryAnn, and Dan in the next week
  - c. Need to keep thinking through who and how new content, such as meeting minutes, will be posted to website
  - d. Group feels some urgency to get website live as soon as possible
- 5. Stipends for community participants
  - a. Goal is to have a fund of \$75,000, raised from foundations, administered by county to compensate some participants
  - b. Members who work for a nonprofit with an annual budget under \$350,000 and/or those with an annual income of \$50,000 or less will be eligible
  - c. A local foundation has agreed to contribute, but will need to raise additional funds
  - d. Comments/questions:
    - i. Should we feel confident that the money will be raised and therefore feel comfortable mentioning it when inviting community members to the table?
    - ii. Should we disclose publicly that some WEP members will be compensated for their time?

- iii. WEP should decide on payment schedule so that participants are clear on when they will receive payment. Some suggested stipends should be distributed monthly.
- iv. Question as to whether or not to require a full year of participation upfront. Some promoted giving grace with “excused” absences if someone can’t make a monthly meeting
- v. Several promoted the idea that funds should also be available to people with lived experience who contribute their expertise in the form of qualitative interviews, focus groups, etc.
- e. **OPTIONAL ACTION ITEM:** Members should reach out to Alma if they would like to help fine tune policies around stipends and compensation
- f. Vera staff can also give thought to this process

## 6. Subcommittees

- a. Update on status of subcommittees:
  - i. Prevention & system front-end: Have a list of potential members, but it doesn’t feel complete. Aiming to be more expansive and inclusive with membership
  - ii. Court processes: Looking for representation from prosecutor’s office, public defense, Washtenaw Community College, and probation; would like recommendations from WEP members on filling these roles. Okay with having a committee with less than 25 people. Would like to move quickly in recruiting people
  - iii. Post-sentencing & reentry: Would like membership from Ann Arbor City Council and a parole officer and/or someone knowledgeable about parole violation process. Considering some people who are in the reentry sphere but do not live in county
  - iv. Youth justice & schools: List is shaping up well. Would like suggestions for someone in juvenile probation and maybe additional community representation. Suggestion to include someone from school law enforcement and/or intensive probation
  - v. Behavioral health: List feels small; open to suggestions. Prioritizing community members with lived experience. Would like to see a Commissioner on the group.
  - vi. Data: 25 members feels large for this subject; aiming for closer to 15. Moved some people to an ‘expert group’ whose experienced can be tapped into on specific topics. Seeking a justice-impacted person. Reaching out to UMich Research Department for suggestions
- b. Next steps:
  - i. **ACTION ITEM:** Members should look at list and make suggestions
    - 1. Co-chairs can delete names that are superfluous or repeats
  - ii. Vera will get in touch with co-chairs to discuss approach for outreach and recruitment

1. Vera can take the lead in helping with outreach. Can draft an email template for subcommittee chairs to follow. Alex and Tara can be point people if folks have questions or want to indicate interest
- iii. Discussion about open call to community members for subcommittees:
  1. Should 'calls' be specific and pertain to certain needs/areas of interest?
  2. Should we wait a week until the website goes up so there is a place for people to find the information?
  3. There might be people who might be more interested in or appropriate for a focus group instead membership
  4. Think through ways to publicize via the media, mailing list sign-up on website, and leveraging WEP members' networks
  5. Mailing list signup on the website
7. Vera presentation on research approach (see Powerpoint slides for content)
8. Next steps & dates:
  - a. Planning to convene co-chairs on December 7<sup>th</sup> at 5pm EST to meet with Chief Justice McCormack; also open to all WEP members. Will also use time to discuss subcommittee outreach/recruitment.
  - b. Next WEP meeting is December 14<sup>th</sup>, 3-5pm EST
  - c. We are considering Monday or Tuesday nights for meetings in 2022. **ACTION ITEM:** Members should email Vera if they know that one or both of these nights will not work with their schedule