

Transgender Equity Council Minutes

Regular Meeting

March 11, 2021 - 05:00 PM

Online Meeting

Members Present: Kenzie Weller (Co-Chair), Hunta Williams (Co-Chair), Billie Kurek, Ray Lockman, KC Pavus, Galen Mitchell, Melissa Burner, Becca Sanborn (Quorum - 8)

Members Absent: Nicolas Cruz, Ash Ray, Destiny Xiong, Emma Grey, CeCe McDonald

Others Present: Koko Chino (interpreter), Megan Bolduc (interpreter), Nicky Leingang (staffer for Congresswoman Omar)

Staff : Track Trachtenberg

Call To Order – 5:15 PM

1. Roll Call.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
 1. Remove #8 (OVP updates)
 2. Ray motions, Galen seconds, 8 in favor, 5 absent, none opposed - motion passes
3. Acceptance of minutes
 1. Ray motions, Galen seconds, 8 in favor, 5 absent, none opposed - motion passes

[Feb 11, 2021 Transgender Equity Council](#)

Discussion

4. Follow up questions on Hunta's February Deaf Culture presentation
 1. What are other good resources for TEC members to learn from? **HUNTA** – will send an email with some websites and other resources
 2. Feel free to reach out with 1:1 questions as well!
5. Feedback loop with presenters
 1. TEC has developed a series of questions that Track sends to presenters in advance of their presentations to TEC; Track also follows up 6 months after presentation to see what progress they've made on TEC recommendations. Their responses are saved in the "Presenters" SharePoint folder. What else would be useful?

2. Hard to say as a new member – how has this worked for returners/anyone who has been here longer?
 1. Still a work in progress, honestly. Came up with this in the last six months based on difficulties with some presentations
 2. TRACK – let people know via email/attachment to the calendar invite every time there's an update

6. Updates on TEC recommendations to Council

1. Kenzie and Hunta's reflections:
 1. Tech issues, but it was still great! Council Members were receptive, multiple compliments, and felt heard
2. Housing:
 1. CM Goodman is editing the bathroom language on the Single Room Occupancy ordinance
 1. TRACK – follow up with Hunta and staff drafting ordinance around disability and access in this ordinance/these buildings
 2. Still meeting with community members re: trans equity grant requirements in contracts with shelters and other organizations. CM Fletcher is willing to take up some of this work
 3. Rent stabilization passed its first Council vote
 4. Maximum Occupancy Ordinance/"family" redefinition going through Council this month
 5. Using 2040 Plan to work on prioritizing affordable housing
 6. Regulatory Services is incorporating content into their existing landlord training and developing an in-depth webinar on discrimination – who wants to help shape that content? CMs Ellison and Cunningham are willing to take legislative action here if needed
 1. TRACK – Hunta wants to review document and provide more feedback
 7. City-wide Zero Lead Poisoning plan also coming out later this year
3. Safety and Healing:
 1. CM Ellison interested in safe use sites and willing to co-lead this work late this year

2. CVP has spoken to state legislators about panic defense; CM Cunningham supportive of doing the work to amend our state legislative agenda
 1. What is allowed to be given as a defense in Court is managed at the State level
 2. Even if the defense isn't banned, it doesn't mean a jury will listen to the Panic Defense – it just means it's a defense they can use in court
 3. How can the TEC still use their leverage? Can reach out to state legislators – draft a letter, testify, etc.
 1. TRACK – connect KC, Melissa, Becca, Galen, Hunta, and share bill language
 3. Track has met with Communications about updating their photo library, but this will happen as part of a longer-term project
 4. CM Ellison is willing to co-lead public appreciation campaign work
 5. There is a community coalition building around repealing the loitering ordinance; some CM's are already supportive and others want more info
4. Training:
 1. Training subcommittee is pulling together basic materials for new encampment outreach staff while we try to get a trainer under contract; CM Ellison is willing to support this work
 2. CM Ellison is willing to co-lead on getting HR's trans equity survey distributed
5. Restrooms:
 1. CM Johnson is willing to work on restroom construction; waiting for more detailed information from his office
6. Appointed Boards:
 1. CVP is working on reforms for the structure of appointed boards this year and is open to including your suggestions in those reforms

~~7. Co Chair Vote~~

~~8. Updates from Office of Violence Prevention meeting~~

9. Subcommittee updates:

1. Training

- Getting ready to hire a new contractor for the Gender Inclusivity training; shaped interview questions for potential candidates
- Getting ASL interpreter training up and running to be prepared before the Summit – have started advertising!
 - HUNTA – send Track attachment
- Prepping some training materials for City and Park Board encampment outreach teams while we wait to have a trainer under contract who can do more thorough work with them

2. Policy

- Discussed updates on Transforming Community Safety (Request For Proposals going out for mental health crisis teams), Housing policy, Decriminalization coalition

10. Trans Issues Work Group updates

1. Same as above re: incorporating trans equity requirements into contracts

11. Summit planning updates

1. First meeting March 25th – does anyone want to be involved who doesn't already have the meeting link?
 1. TRACK – send to Kenzie
2. Survey results - interest in one bigger event and multiple smaller events throughout the year, and in more community members driving planning
3. What else do we want?
 1. Could we do some combination of in-person and virtual?
 2. How can we be more intentional about which spaces/events/workshops center trans/GNC folks and which spaces center cis allies, and about creating safe spaces for BIPOC?
 3. Ensure interpreters are prepared – and that presenters prepare their scripts in advance whenever possible so interpreters/captioners can be more prepared

Presentation

12. Nicky Leingang, Constituent Services Director for Representative Ilhan Omar (25 min)

1. Majority of their job is providing casework assistance for constituents (immigration, USPS, IRS/taxes, and consumer protection issues), as well as outreach and engagement on environmental issues, immigration and foreign travel, consumer protection, USPS, taxes, and LGBTQ issues
 1. If anyone needs help with unemployment, tax payments not going through, stimulus checks, etc. – please reach out!
2. Late February – Congress passed Equality Act. Would add gender identity and sexual orientation to federal anti-discrimination laws, in order to prohibit discrimination (would add to Civil Rights Act of 1964, Fair Housing Act, Equal

Credit Opportunity Act, Jury Selection and Services Act, and a few other federal laws).

1. Currently in the Senate, waiting for consideration. The same Equality Act was passed in May 2019, but didn't receive action in Senate – hoping that there is more of a chance this year. The Senate has a robust filibuster that prevents passage of policy without at least 60 votes (would need 10 Republicans, or to force filibuster reform). Congresswoman Omar has been calling for repeal of filibuster, as well as other policies (statehood for DC, option of statehood for Puerto Rico and other territories, HR1 strengthening Voting Rights Act) that would make processes more democratic
2. Bostock v. Clayton County Supreme Court ruling last June prohibited discrimination due to sexual orientation and gender identity in employment contexts. Biden issued an Executive Order that instructed federal agencies to apply this to all anti-discrimination laws – not just employment. However, the Equality Act would stay in place if approved, whereas a new administration could repeal this Executive Order as soon as they got into office
3. COVID Relief package signed into law today - \$1400 stimulus payments (now covered for all dependents, regardless of age, and mixed-status families will get stimulus checks). Lots of support for local governments and schools, tax relief for unemployment benefits, expanded support for gig workers, huge expansion of child tax credits (amounts to Universal Basic Income for families with children), health insurance subsidies
4. Ilhan will be cosponsoring a federal bill to ban the LGBTQ Panic Defense nationwide – will be introduced in the next few weeks!

3. Questions:

1. What is the impact on healthcare for people who receive SSI or SSDI, especially trans folks in the surgery process?
 1. More familiar with the parts of this package that involve buying health insurance off of an exchange – reopen marketplace for when people lose jobs, to prevent some paperwork. The subsidies are largely through health plans from the marketplaces, as well as a few others. Not as sure what this bill will do re: SSDI, Medicare, Medicaid – will follow up
 2. If you lose your job and your employer-related health insurance, would apply for state health insurance (MNCare, medical assistance) – and thanks to some lawsuits, the State of MN does cover most “medically-necessary” transition care. Would still have to go through the burdensome paperwork process of prior

authorizations, but they should be covered. Congresswoman Omar's office can help anyone apply for health insurance or connect to organizations that can appeal a denial

2. Big difference between what medical organizations deem "medically necessary" and what states/government considers "medically necessary" re: trans-affirming care. Has there been any movement on finding solutions to this, with the ACA or anyone else, and is anyone interested in doing this work at the federal level (is Congresswoman Omar supportive)?
 1. Have been working on coverage of care that the VA provides to veterans – this could be achieved via an internal policy memo, so it would be particularly easy to win.
 2. Medicare restrictions are written into law, which would require an act of Congress and 10 Republican Senate votes. In MN, because of settlements of the last few years, the state-run programs with Medicare and Medicaid funds are supposed to cover the things that Medicare nationally doesn't cover
 3. Not sure if Congresswoman Omar has worked on Medicare issue, because of MN Human Rights Act and these legal settlements – but it is still bad here, even if it is not as bad as elsewhere. Hope that the Equality Act would help here as well, more so than Biden's Executive Orders
 4. Believe the answer is Medicare for All, rather than an insurer that decides what is or isn't medically necessary for you
 5. Will bring these ideas back to DC staff – and possible Congresswoman Omar has signed onto bills Nicky isn't even aware of!
3. Supportive of universal healthcare!!

[Ilhan Omar Casework Overview](#)

[Equality Act Fact Sheet 117th](#)

Adjournment – KC motioned, Galen seconded – 6:59 PM

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Next Transgender Equity Council meeting: Apr 8, 2021

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- Your attendance at the meeting;
- Your name, residential address, email or phone number, or other personal contact details;
- Your comments at the meeting, whether part of a formal hearing or comment period or otherwise; and
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