

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: January 21, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Foua Choua Khang, Lolita Davis Carter, Jensina Rosen, Paul Slack, Larry Yang, Tonia Lofton, Wesley Farrow, Satasha Green-Stephen, Elizabeth Taylor-Schiro, Kia Moua, Rosa Tock, Amanda Koonjeharry, Brook Mallak, Sheree Steele, Meagan Hernandez, Jesús Villaseñor, Shannon Geshick, Shawn Sorrell, Sheila Lipsco, Miguel Garate, Ken Ujifusa, Cratè Darden, Anjuli Cameron, Linda Sloan
- **DHS Staff:** Nicole Juan, Beth Dansie, Dr. Karen McKinney, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Nikki Farago, Tom Howley, Verona Mitchell, Cardina Esparza, Steven Wilson, Michaela Burton, Helen Ghebre, Seth Kaempfer, De Anna Conover
- **Public Attendees:**

### Agenda

- 1:00 Welcome and Land Acknowledgement
- 1:05 Introductions
- 1:15 Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- 1:20 Chair Remarks
- 1:30 DHS Updates
- 1:45 CECLC Bylaws Update
- 2:00 DHS Equity Work Overview: Equity Directors
- 3:00 Workgroup Updates
- 3:15 Community Open Space & Announcements
- 4:00 Adjournment

### Decisions Made

Review and approve December minutes:

- Motion to approve December minutes: Kia Moua
- Second: Shannon Geshick
- The motion passed

Approve today's agenda

- Motion to approve today's agenda:
- Second:
- The motion passed

## Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

Council Chair Foua Choua Khang welcome members and attendees to the meeting and led the council through a land acknowledgment. Foua Choua let members know she is more than happy to add additional items to the agenda upon suggestion as well as reminded members it is okay to step away and take breaks when needed. Council members and attendees shared introductions and one thing that inspired them that day.

## Chair Remarks

Council Chair Foua Choua shared a story about her recent reflection on the word equity. Foua Choua asked the council to look for equity in the things they encounter and the things they do. She challenged council members to find their own definition for equity, asking what does equity mean to you and how do you bring that to CECLC?

## DHS Updates

### Updates from Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago

Deputy Commissioner of External Relations Nikki Farago thanked Foua Choua for her remarks and thanked the council for sharing their inspirations. She acknowledged it is a very challenging and difficult time for people and shared her appreciation for the council.

Deputy Commissioner Farago shared updates about the upcoming legislative session. She mentioned that the next legislative session will be a non-budget year but Minnesota has a 7.7 billion dollar surplus and there is additional ARPA federal funds to consider. Deputy Commissioner Farago also noted this year is a campaign/election year which changes the dynamic of the session. She shared the Governor's Office will release the budget on January 26<sup>th</sup> and she thinks there will be significant pieces this year.

Foua Choua asked Deputy Commissioner Farago how to best contact and communicate with her in the future. Deputy Commissioner Farago suggested reaching out to Nicole and Nicole shared her email in the chat.

A council member asked Deputy Commissioner Farago what the main priorities of DHS for this legislative session are. She replied stating DHS has been focused on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as addressing disparities and inequities. She also noted other priorities included serving children and families, supporting workers, and supporting the childcare industry.

## **Community Relations and Employee Culture Updates**

Assistant Commissioner of Employee Culture De Anna Conover shared with the council updates on the Community Relations team and updates on her work with employee culture.

The Community Relations team is planning the next Community Empowerment Session and Loop Back Session for the first Community Empowerment Session. The team is preparing to launch a community engagement podcast called The Loop Back in May 2022. The team is also planning for an internal Community Engagement Open Forum and the next enterprise-wide Community Engagement Practitioners Group meeting.

Assistant Commissioner Conover shared she is working to establish standards of culture for DHS as well as she is working on building her new team and expanding the agency development and learning division.

## **CECLC Bylaws Update**

Nicole Juan shared she sent out the draft of Bylaws changes from the last legislative session and asked the council to review the changes. The final approval of the Bylaws changes will be moved to a later date to allow the council more time to review.

## **DHS Equity Work Overview: Equity Directors**

DHS Equity Directors joined the meeting to introduce themselves to the council and discuss future collaborative work. The equity directors present at the meeting were Michaela Burton from Director Care and Treatment, Seth Kaempfer from the Health Care Administration, Cardina Esparza from the Office of Inspector General, Tom Howley from the Community Supports Administration, and Verona Mitchell from DHS Operations.

Nicole noted the equity directors want to work on building a relationship with the council and will join the next meeting to present on projects they are working on. The equity directors asked the council what they would like to hear more from the equity directors on when they come back to present.

- A council member expressed interest in wanting to know more about the hiring and retention of people of color at DHS. Verona shared the equity directors have been working on the DHS Equity Policy and are looking at how to operationalize the policy at DHS. In addition, the equity directors are working with a team of DHS employees to support the recruitment and retention of DHS employees of color. Seth also shared he is working on looking over the Health Care Administration's recommendations for retention and recruitment.

- A council member asked if the equity directors are involved in policy work. Equity directors stated they help review legislative policies and their implementation as well as perform equity analyses on internal DHS policies.
- A council member asked how the CECLC can best support each equity director in their work and what were the equity directors' goals for 2022.
- A council member expressed interest in learning more about how each equity director develops a strategy for advancing equity as well as how the equity directors connect across DHS to move forward in a coordinated way. Tom responded and mentioned the importance of networking and working together, especially in connecting with community and building relationships. Verona noted how the equity director role has evolved from DHS having two equity coordinators to having an equity director for each administration. The equity directors come together to discuss systemic issues at DHS and work on agency-wide issues. Verona also mentioned that the CECLC has a strong voice in advocating to equity work at DHS.
- A council member asked how the equity directors can best support the council as community members. Cardina responded mentioning that the equity directors want to understand and be in conversation with the council about what equity directors can help make visible in the systems they work across such as communities and community issues.
- A council member asked what outcomes the equity directors are looking for, both internally and externally. This member also wanted to know how the equity directors define 'racial equity lens' and if there is more than one lens they use for measuring racial equity. The equity directors took note of these questions and stated they would get back to the council with a response at the next meeting.
- Foua Choua mentioned she asked the Commissioner when the CECLC will be a community-driven council instead of a community-informed council and asked the equity directors if it was written in their strategy for their work to be a community-driven. Verona stated part of the equity directors' job is educating DHS staff on how to use an equity lens in their work and encouraged the council when partnering with DHS staff, to state what their role is in advancing equity work and state how they are driving their initiatives.

The Equity Directors noted they will share their contact information in their presentation as well as that council members can communicate with them via email and Microsoft Teams. Nicole mentioned she can pass along additional ideas and questions council members may have for the equity directors via email.

## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Amanda shared at the last workgroup meeting there was a presentation from the Minnesota Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans and an update from the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. Workgroup members also discussed legislative interests for the upcoming legislative session. At the next meeting there will be an update from the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs and from the Minnesota Council on Minnesotans of African Heritage. The workgroup plans to connect with the state ethnic councils to discuss potential areas of collaboration for the upcoming legislative session. Amanda also shared the workgroup debriefed their meeting

with Senator Hoffman and plan to continue to have meetings with key legislators. Nicole shared for the next workgroup meeting members will hear from DHS staff on the equity analysis process used to review legislative proposals.

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Cratè shared the workgroup reviewed and edited the council's Bylaws. The workgroup is waiting to hear back from the DHS who is reviewing them for approval and will then share the Bylaws with the whole council to finalize.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Jensina shared the workgroup further discussed their goals for 2022 and plan to identify specific topics to start working on at their next meeting. She also mentioned a subgroup has formed to work on child welfare and how to support families. Jensina noted the workgroup has a strong interest in the impact on the pandemic on various topics and has had conversations on using non-white centric measurements for their work.

### **Community Open Space and Announcements**

Foua Choua shared she has been coordinating an interpreter summit and invited anyone who identifies as an interpreter to attend. She will send Nicole registration information to be shared via email.

Motion to adjourn meeting: Wesley Farrow

Second: Sheree Steele

**Meeting adjourned 3:02pm**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: February 18, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Foua Choua Khang, Lolita Davis Carter, Larry Yang, Tonia Lofton, Wesley Farrow, Satasha Green-Stephen, Elizabeth Taylor-Schiro, Kia Moua, Amanda Koonjbeharry, Meagan Hernandez, Jesús Villaseñor, Shannon Geshick, Shawn Sorrell, Sheila Lipsco, Miguel Garate, Ken Ujifusa, Cratè Darden, Jackie Thomas-Hall, Mariah Norwood, Hibaq Dualeh, Linda Sloan
- **DHS Staff:** Nicole Juan, Beth Dansie, Dr. Karen McKinney, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Nikki Farago, Tom Howley, Cardina Esparza, Steven Wilson, Seth Kaempfer, De Anna Conover, Jodi Harpstead, Dan Pollock, Jerad Green
- **Public Attendees:**

### Agenda

- 1:00 Welcome and Land Acknowledgement
- 1:05 Introductions
- 1:20 Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- 1:25 Chair Remarks
- 1:30 DHS Updates: DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead
- 2:00 Equity Work Overview: DHS Equity Directors
- 3:00 Discussion: CECLC Leadership Development
- 3:30 Workgroup Updates
- 3:45 Community Open Space & Announcements
- 4:00 Adjournment

### Decisions Made

Review and approve January minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve January minutes and meeting agenda: Kia Moua
- Second: Amanda Koonjbeharry
- The motion passed

## **Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions**

Council Chair Foua Choua Khang welcomed members and attendees to the meeting as well as led the council through a land acknowledgment. Council members and attendees shared a milestone or goal for the next two weeks.

## **Chair Remarks**

Council Chair Foua Choua shared about her recent experience facilitating a summit for health care interpreters and mentioned their discussion on how to hold each other accountable. Foua Choua asked the council to help keep her accountable to not move too fast and to be present.

Foua Choua mentioned the council leadership has been discussing creating a work plan for the year based on community consensus from the council. The work plan can be shared with Commissioner Harpstead to provide greater transparency in how the council is working with DHS. Foua Choua told the council there would be more updates about the work plan shared via email.

## **DHS Updates**

### **Updates from Assistant Commissioner Nikki Farago**

Assistant Commissioner of External Relations and Communications Nikki Farago shared they made a decision on the new Community Relations Director and announced the new director will be Helen Ghebre. Assistant Commissioner Farago highlighted some of Helen's previous work and accomplishments at DHS as well as shared Helen will be starting in her new position on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Assistant Commissioner Farago thanked Foua Choua for participating in the DHS interview process for the new director.

The former Community Relations Director and current Assistant Commissioner of Employee Culture De Anna shared she plans to continue to work with the council and the council workgroups for co-creation. Assistant Commissioner Conover thanked the council for working with her and for the council's service to DHS.

### **Updates from Commissioner Jodi Harpstead**

Commissioner Jodi Harpstead joined the meeting to speak with the council and gave a presentation on the Walz-Flanagan legislative budget proposal (see PowerPoint slides for more information).

Commissioner Harpstead highlighted the key budget priorities in the proposal as well as outlined the budget for DHS and its various initiatives.

A council member asked if the mentioned FTEs in the budget proposal were to expand DHS staff in which the Commissioner confirmed they were to ensure that DHS had enough staff capacity staff to implement the budget initiatives.

Another member asked the Commissioner for further detail on the plan to hire and retain staff for mental health services. Commissioner Harpstead responded stating there is a package of proposals for providing children's mental health services. The council member followed up on their question providing an example of challenges mental health providers face when trying to hire more BIPOC providers. Commissioner Harpstead mentioned over the past year DHS made sure over 51% of the federal SAMHSA grants DHS received were for culturally specific providers. She also noted that while there is funding for culturally specific providers, there is not always enough BIPOC professionals in the field which is another space DHS needs to do work with. Commissioner Harpstead mentioned there is concern about the loss of mental health providers over the course of the pandemic and that DHS should assist people in getting their credentials and getting into the field.

Another question was asked about the DHS plan for retention of BIPOC staff and if there was community co-creation around the plan. Commissioner Harpstead mentioned she worked with the DHS Equity Directors and Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) to create a hiring and retention plan. She noted DHS has made a measurable difference in retaining BIPOC staff in the central office. Commissioner Harpstead shared the Assistant Commissioner of Employee Culture is creating a "hiring and retention plan 2.0" which will look deeper at the policies and procedures in the Human Resources department that can change to help retain people. Council members expressed interest in being involved in the process of creating the new hiring and retention plan. Commissioner Harpstead agreed to partner with the council for community co-creation. Assistant Commissioner Farago noted that the CECLC is a prioritized community resource for DHS in weighing in on DHS policies.

Commissioner Harpstead and Assistant Commissioner Farago shared about the recently held DHS community engagement open forum hosted by the Community Relations team which highlighted the engagement work happening between DHS, American Indian communities, and Tribal Nations.

A council member commented on how ERGs are more effective when they are supported with funding. Commissioner Harpstead acknowledged the comment and mentioned how she has worked to improve the internal culture around supporting employee involvement in ERGs.

Another council member shared that there is a great need for mental health professionals in different languages. Commissioner Harpstead agreed and mentioned she participates in the Council for Economic Expansion in Minnesota where they have been discussing developing professionals in different fields and the importance of language. She also shared a new workgroup for the Governor's strategic plan has been created which will focus on workforce shortages.

A council member commented on how it is important for community to be involved in all processes for co-creation work and stated the council would be a valuable asset to DHS working on improving policies moving forward. Commissioner Harpstead mentioned it will be a priority for the new Community Relations Director to work closely with the CECLC. She noted that they are learning how to better engage and co-create with community and shared her hopes to change the agency culture around community engagement.

Commissioner Harpstead shared a bill was passed last legislative session for capacity building grants for culturally specific nonprofits in the home and community based services area. She noted more information about the grants would be shared with the council.

A council member asked if DHS was going to review the RFP application process for providers because the current RFP process is challenging and lengthy. Commissioner Harpstead replied that she is aware of the issue and is working with the Commissioner of Administration and the DHS Contracts manager to reexamine the RFP process. Commissioner Harpstead also shared DHS senior leadership has a book club on book *Subtract* and she is eager to take look at simplifying the grant making process.

Another council member shared with the council and Commissioner that the CECLC was initially supposed to be involved in creating the DHS retention policy and anti-racism policy but was never looped in until this meeting. The member asked the Commissioner for more concrete clarification on how policy co-creation will occur. Commissioner Harpstead replied that she thought CECLC had been a part of reviewing the first hiring and retention plan which the council clarified they were given the plan before it was submitted, but not consulted for review, input or co-creation. Commissioner Harpstead assured they would bring the hiring and retention plan 2.0 to the CECLC to review.

Council Chair Foua Choua asked the council if there were any final questions or comments for Commissioner Harpstead. One council member commented on the importance of using evidence-based practices and research to support the use of an equity lens in account management practices such as hiring and retention.

## **Equity Work Overview: DHS Equity Directors**

DHS Equity Directors Cardina Esparza, Tom Howley, and Seth Kaempfer introduced the new Equity Director for the Children and Family Services Administration Jerad Green. The directors gave a presentation to the council on a high level overview of the updated DHS Equity policy (see presentation for more information).

The presentation also included responses to questions council members had asked at the last meeting. Following the presentation, the Equity Directors facilitated a discussion with council members about their questions and thoughts on the presentation.

One council member asked if the DHS Equity Policy's behavioral expectations applied to volunteers and contractors that work with DHS. The Equity Directors told the council they would make note of clarifying if the objectives in the Equity Policy apply to volunteers.

Cardina asked the council how members define authentic community engagement. Council members shared what authentic community engagement means to them including:

- Means more than a check-box
- Engagement is early in the process and often
- There is community inclusion in the decision making whenever possible
- Sharing lessons learned when engagement didn't go well
- Transparency

- Power-sharing
- Involvement from the very beginning
- Working with communities - not for them or on behalf of them
- Understanding the historical context of previous attempts of engagement
- Hard work that leaves communities stronger and strengthens relationships to build power for real change

The Equity Directors asked the council for examples of when CECLC has worked with DHS on co-creation work. One council member shared that the Equity Policy is one example as co-creation on a policy but that there are other opportunities and ways community co-creation work can occur at DHS. Another member shared an example was how the CECLC has helped support the Equity Director's role at DHS.

A council member asked who community organizations, community advocates, and leaders should reach out to for collaborating with DHS on eliminating disparities. Cardina responded Community Relations at DHS is a key bridge in connecting community organizations to DHS. Nicole Juan told the council they can reach out to her or email the team's general inbox at [community.relations.dhs@state.mn.us](mailto:community.relations.dhs@state.mn.us).

The Equity Director from the Health Care Administration (HCA) Seth Kaempfer shared HCA hosts biweekly stakeholder calls as an opportunity for HCA to inform stakeholders of various projects and updates. Seth encourage council members who attend those meetings to raise their questions and topics in that space. A council member asked what stakeholders were invited to the calls. Seth told the council he would get back to them with that information.

One council member asked if the Equity Directors have an Equity Analysis tool developed. Cardina responded that the tool kit is still in the process of being developed. Nicole asked if there was an opportunity to work with the CECLC Internal Workgroup on the equity analysis tool kit while it is still a draft. The Equity Directors responded that the CECLC can be involved in the development process.

One council member asked Seth what process HCA uses to follow up when stakeholders present questions and concerns at the stakeholder calls. Seth replied that the calls are led by HCA external communications team and are intended to inform stakeholders of HCA updates. Seth encouraged the council to reach out to the external communications staff to see how the calls can be more of a two way conversation between stakeholders and DHS staff. The council suggested that at stakeholder meetings DHS staff should ask the stakeholders how they want DHS to report back after meetings and then follow through in doing so as well as create group expectations to hold people accountable.

Another council member asked the Equity Directors what action DHS is taking to address the core cause of systematic racism that exist within external institutions DHS works with and supports. Cardina commented on the importance of using an equity analysis to view how different systems interact with each other and involving leadership in further discussions on systemic change. Council members discussed the need for greater transparency in how DHS holds themselves and their providers accountable to following through on expectations for equity work and working to address disparities.

Foua Choua shared with the Equity Directors CECLC members serve on the council for two years as determined by the legislature. Foua Choua asked the Equity Directors to share with the council at the next meeting what equity means to them and their team so the CECLC and Equity Directors can move forward in unison.

Equity Directors shared their contact information with the council and noted they will send out their presentation slides.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

Mariah Norwood shared the annual CECLC Legislative Report was published this week and Nicole will email the published report to the council. A Doodle Pole was sent out to reschedule a new meeting time for the workgroup meetings. Mariah asked the council to reply to the pole by next Wednesday. The workgroup is working to determine the council's focus for this legislative session.

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Kia Moua shared the workgroup had met with the equity directors to reestablish a relationship, identify areas of opportunity for supporting each other, and lay groundwork and history of the equity directors connection to the CECLC. The workgroup is also in talks with Chris Taylor on OneMN and collaborating with councils across the state.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

The workgroup co-leads were not present at the meeting. Foua Choua share the workgroup is continuing to discuss its priority focus moving forward.

## **Discussion: CECLC Leadership Development**

Council Chair Foua Choua shared there is funding for leadership development with the council. Foua Choua asked the council if anyone had any trainings they would recommend or request for the council. Council members expressed interest in trainings about grant writing, accounting, and budget planning. Another suggestion was a training around authentic engagement with decision makers and leadership, especially when having uncomfortable conversations. A council member shared in the chat that Nexus Community Partners does some valuable [trainings](#) around community growth and engagement.

Foua Choua also mentioned the Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI) assessment and wanting to create a space where council members feel empowered. Cardina suggested Intergroup Dialogue steps or dialogue for deeper understanding.

Nicole shared council members can reach out to her if they have additional ideas so she can compile them for the leadership team.

## Community Open Space and Announcements

Dan Pollock shared a [job posting](#) for the Continuing Care for Older Adults Equity Director (Job ID 53048).

Motion to adjourn meeting: Kia Moua

Second: Wesley Farrow

**Meeting adjourned at 3:22 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: March 18, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Lolita Davis Carter, Larry Yang, Tonia Lofton, Wesley Farrow, Satasha Green-Stephen, Elizabeth Taylor-Schiro, Kia Moua, Amanda Koonjbeharry, Jesús Villaseñor, Shawn Sorrell, Sheila Lipsco, Ken Ujifusa, Cratè Darden, Mariah Norwood, Jensina Rosen, Sheree Steele, Kaytlyn Lundstrom, Anjuli Cameron
- **DHS Staff:** Nicole Juan, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Tom Howley, Cardina Esparza, Seth Kaempfer, De Anna Conover, Helen Ghebre, Carol Anthony, Dr. Karen McKinney
- **Public Attendees:** Jean Lee

### Agenda

- 1:00 Welcome and Land Acknowledgement
- 1:05 Introductions
- 1:25 Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- 1:30 DHS Updates
- 1:45 Loop Back: Community Engagement for HCBS Provider Capacity
- 2:15 Workgroup Updates
- 2:45 CECLC Leadership Development Survey and Discussion
- 2:55 Community Open Space & Announcements
- 3:00 Adjournment

### Decisions Made

Review and approve February minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve February minutes and meeting agenda: Anjuli Cameron
- Second: Mariah Norwood
- The motion passed

## **Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions**

Council members Cratè Darden and Kia Moua welcomed members and attendees to the meeting as well as led the council through a land acknowledgment and introductions.

## **DHS Updates**

### **Welcome to DHS Community Relations Director Helen Ghebre**

DHS Community Relations Specialist Nicole Juan welcomed the new Director of Community Relations Helen Ghebre to the meeting. Helen introduced herself to the council and shared some of her background. Helen has worked at DHS for over 15 years with her previous roles being in Direct Care and Treatment and Behavioral Health services. Helen shared with the council her dedication to engaging with communities to help shape services, policies, and programming at DHS. Assistant Commissioner of Employee Culture De Anna Conover extended a warm welcome to Helen and thanked the council for their previous work together.

Assistant Commissioner Conover shared an update on the work she has been doing to build her new team and expand the Learning and Development Division at DHS. Assistant Commissioner Conover mentioned she is hoping to work with the council on various Human Resource initiatives. Nicole mentioned the council has expressed interest in working with Assistant Commissioner Conover on the employee retention plan and the Internal Policies and Operations workgroup would be reaching out. Assistant Commissioner Conover shared the DHS Director of Diversity Recruitment and Inclusion Lauren Hunter would be reaching out to the council and that Lauren is working on resourcing a team for addressing employee recruitment and retention.

### **DHS Community Relations Update**

DHS Community Relations Associate Cate Dymit gave an update on two projects the Community Relations team has been working on. She shared the team has been following up with different administrations at DHS to discuss the feedback received from the first Community Empowerment Session held on December 1, 2021. There will be a Loop Back session held on June 15<sup>th</sup> to follow up with individuals who attended the first Community Empowerment Session and share any plans, decisions, or changes that were made in response to the community input received. The team is also preparing for the next Community Empowerment Session which will focus on culturally responsive behavioral health services. Cate also mentioned the progress the team has made on their community engagement podcast series which will be launching in May.

Community Relations Community Engagement Coordinator Rebeca Sedarski gave an update on the work she is doing for DHS Modernization: Key Initiative Engage.

## **Loop Back: Community Engagement for HCBS Provider Capacity**

Carol Anthony, Director of Grants, Equity Access, and Research (GEAR) for the Continuing Care for Older Adults Administration, was present at the meeting to share an update on the DHS Home and Community Based

Services (HCBS) Spending Plan as well as loop back on the discussion had during the November 2021 full council meeting.

Carol shared the HCBS Spending Plan received conditional approval from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services in January. The Minnesota spending plan for HCBS has approximately 680 million dollars in funding from the Enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) match and will fund 52 separate initiatives that span across DHS. Carol mentioned she is seeking feedback from the council on a “Quick Call” proposal for community-focused engagement to identify service needs and service gaps for HCBS. The focus community groups for the engagement include American Indian and indigenous people, Asian and Pacific Islander, Black and African-born, LatinX, LGBTQ, and rural and regional centers outside the seven-county metro areas. The community input received from the “quick call” engagement efforts will inform future DHS grant programs tied to the spending plan.

A council member asked about clarity regarding the funding allocation, specifically if a community organization that served more than one targeted community population could receive \$50,000 in funding. Carol replied that if it is included in a community organization’s proposal that they will engage with multiple community groups, they can apply for a \$50,000 grant. Carol noted that up to \$25,000 in grant funding is available for each of the focus communities, but grants can range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 depending on how well-equipped community organizations are to engage with multiple community groups.

Carol explained the proposal is called a “Quick Call” because it is a more streamlined application process. The proposal was released March 7<sup>th</sup> and will be open until March 31<sup>st</sup>.

A council member asked if future grant opportunities will be for larger dollar amounts and if larger providers will be able to apply. Carol replied there will be over 20 million dollars for the future HCBS provider capacity grants that the community feedback from the “Quick Call” engagements will inform. Carol noted there are tight timelines for the spending plan and that the funding must be spent by March 2024.

Carol invited the council to share the “Quick Call” proposal opportunity with their networks and asked members to encourage any community organizations they think are eligible to apply. Carol also asked the council for their feedback on the evaluation process of reviewing the “Quick Call” proposals, specifically if there was anything the review team should include in the evaluation process and look for in evaluating community engagement. A council member shared it is important to look at if a project is grounded in particular community values as opposed to “white centric status quo values.”

Carol asked the council if any member were interested in serving as a community reviewer on the review team to email her. Several council members expressed interest in serving on the evaluation team. A council member asked if there would be compensation provided for CECLC members participating on the review team. Carol replied because of the tight timeline for the review of the “Quick Call” proposals, the ask of reviewers would be to volunteer but for future grant reviews there will be built in funding for compensating community reviewers. Helen Ghebre added that it is an important opportunity for CECLC members to provide input on how community engagement will be used to inform future grants with a historical amount of funding. Helen noted this opportunity was an important way for the agency to engage with the knowledge and expertise of the council.

Carol asked the council how they would like to be informed about updates regarding the HBCS Spending Plan moving forward. A council member shared that they support continuing the relationship between Carol and the council as she comes back to report on community collaboration.

Council members commented on the importance of state agencies providing compensation for community members' knowledge and expertise when asking for feedback. Carol agreed with the council. Helen asked what the expectation was for community organizations to provide compensation to community members who participate in their engagement efforts for the "Quick Call." Carol said it will be considered an important feature in the evaluation process if and how community organizations are compensating community members. Council members discussed how to best compensate community members for their time and involvement in community engagement efforts. One member commented that gift cards should not be considered payment. Nicole mentioned there are various challenges community engagement staff face in providing fair compensation for engagement such as statutory regulations for income eligibility and that there is on-going conversation regarding these issues. Council members expressed interest in further discussing how state agencies can compensate community members for their time and knowledge in engagement efforts.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

Workgroup co-lead Mariah Norwood shared the workgroup has officially heard from all the state ethnic councils on their legislative priorities. Mariah acknowledged there were state ethnic council representatives present at the meeting and opened the floor for council representatives to provide any legislative updates. No updates were shared.

At the last workgroup meeting, members heard from the MN Council on Latino Affairs and the Council on Minnesotans of African Heritage. Mariah encouraged the council members to join the next workgroup meeting if members had interest in reviewing ranked priorities. The next workgroup meeting will be on Thursday, April 7 at 12:00 pm.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Workgroup co-lead Paul Slack shared poll results from the workgroup's priority selection. The workgroup determined their priority topic would be child welfare, child protection and family reunification. At the next workgroup meeting, the group will determine specific goals related to the topic for the workgroup to accomplish over the next 2 years.

Nicole noted that if any council members were interested in working on the workgroup's identified topic, the workgroup meets the first Wednesday of the month at noon (next meeting April 6<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 pm).

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Workgroup co-lead Kia Moua shared at the last workgroup meeting there was a debrief discussion on the DHS Equity Directors presentation from the February full council meeting. There was also a discussion on council

leadership development. Kia shared the workgroup plans on following up with Assistant Commissioner Conover on the employee retention plan. She gave an update on the CECLC annual work plan in which workgroup leads will be adding to the plan at the next council leadership meeting. More information will be shared with the full council following the leadership meeting. The workgroup will hold their next meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm. Workgroup co-lead Cratè Darden welcomed council members to join the workgroup and Kia noted the invite is also extended to the DHS Equity Directors.

## CECLC Leadership Development Survey and Discussion

Council member Cratè Darden led the council in a discussion on topics and logistics for CECLC leadership development training. Council members shared out suggestions for topics and skills to focus leadership development on. Suggestions included:

- Feature guest speakers such as Sam Simmons, Nick Mohammed, or Thomas Barry who can speak to the council on what is happening in communities
- Create an opportunity for people to share their stories and experiences with DHS programs; building the council's capacity in understanding the experiences of the individuals and communities the council advocates for
- Start a collective process for identifying and organizing topics the council is interested in and engaging with people in those spaces to share their expertise and stories; Using a poll to gauge what the council is interested in and then organizing in a spreadsheet to collectively brainstorm speaker ideas and timelines
- A council member asked if the council had done trainings before and what have they focused on in the past. Focuses of past training included different facilitating techniques and policy analysis skills.
- An equity-focused training on how to use an equity lens in respective workplaces or how to engage with leadership on equity initiatives
- Training on facilitation techniques, strategic planning, policy analysis, current DHS program/policies/systems, power mapping and creating Campaign plans
- Training on action planning or skill building for engaging with legislators
- Trainings on using an equitable lens, radical self-care, and community healing

The council had a discussion on how to best engage with communities when hearing people's stories and lived experience. Cratè noted there could be opportunity for the council to engage with some of the work the Community Relations team is doing to uplift community voices through the Community Empowerment Sessions and *LoopBack* podcast series.

A council member asked if the leadership development training would be included as part of the agenda for monthly meetings or if they would occur during time outside the monthly meeting time. Nicole responded the council could decide on what works best for members.

Council members commented on the importance of using storytelling and uplifting the stories of the individuals being impacted by DHS policies and systems. One council member suggested having time during full council meetings for council members to share their stories and experiences on interacting with DHS services and systems.

Cratè suggested sending out a poll to ask questions on logistics and determining topics for leadership development. Nicole noted she could set up and send out a poll.

## Community Open Space and Announcements

- Chief Equity Officer Dr. Karen McKinney shared the Office of Equity and has posted a position opening for a communications specialist. The position is open through next Wednesday, March 23rd. Dr. McKinney asked the council to share the position details with anyone who may be interested.
  - Current non-probation employees who are in the same class and seniority unit may bid here by searching for posting: 115121
  - Current state employees not in the class or seniority unit or are on probation may apply via self-service by searching for job ID: 53718
  - Applicants who are not current state employees can apply through the state career with this [link](#)
- Amanda Koonjbeharry shared she co-founded a networking series for BIPOC women in Minnesota called [In Sisterhood We Bruch](#). The next event is on June 4<sup>th</sup>. Amanda asked the council to share the opportunity with their networks.
- Mariah Norwood shared there will be a Teacher Strike event happening outside the Governor's Mansion today at 3:30pm. There will be an opportunity to show solidarity with the teacher union on Sunday at 3:00 pm at Shiloh Temple. There is also an ongoing weekly Tuesday/Thursday picket from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm at the Adult Education Center in Minneapolis.
- Shawn Sorrell shared Hennepin County Diversity Equity & Inclusion will be [positing a position](#) for Senior HR Representative whose primary duties will be training and facilitation countywide.
- Amanda Koonjbeharry shared Gender Justice is having a virtual lobby day for reproductive freedom and justice rights happening on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Amanda will share further details with Nicole to send out.

Motion to adjourn meeting: Shawn Sorrell

Second: Tonia Lofton

**Meeting adjourned at 2:52 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: April 15, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Lolita Davis Carter, Larry Yang, Tonia Lofton, Wesley Farrow, Satasha Green-Stephen, Jesús Villaseñor, Shawn Sorrell, Ken Ujifusa, Cratè Darden, Mariah Norwood, Jensina Rosen, Sheree Steele, Paul Slack, Meagan Hernandez, Hibaq Dualeh, Florkime Paye (CMAH),
- **DHS Staff:** Nicole Juan, Cate Dymit, Tom Howley, Cardina Esparza, Seth Kaempfer, Helen Ghebre, Nikki Farago, Dr. Nathan Chomilo, Tamir Elnabarawy, Rebeca Sedarski
- **Public Attendees:**

### Agenda

- 1:00 Welcome and Land Acknowledgement
- 1:05 Introductions
- 1:10 Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- 1:15 Chair Remarks
- 1:20 Building Racial Equity into the Walls of Minnesota Medicaid: U.S.-born Black Minnesotans
- 2:00 DHS Updates
- 2:30 Workgroup Updates
- 2:45 Community Open Space & Announcements
- 3:00 Adjournment

### Decisions Made

Review and approve March minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve March minutes and meeting agenda: Sheree Steele
- Second: Mariah Norwood
- The motion passed

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Council member Shawn Sorrell welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared a land acknowledgement. Shawn took a moment to remind the council to be mindful of one another and thanked attendees for being present.

## Building Racial Equity into the Walls of Minnesota Medicaid: U.S.-born Black Minnesotans

DHS Medicaid Medical Director Dr. Nathan Chomilo presented to the council an update on the *Building Racial Equity into the Walls of Minnesota Medicaid: U.S.-born Black Minnesotans* report (see [PowerPoint Presentation](#)). Dr. Chomilo shared information on disparities in health for Black Minnesotans and described how racial inequities lead to racial disparities. Dr. Chomilo also explained the role Medicaid plays in addressing racial health disparities. In the presentation, Dr. Chomilo described four different “levers” of Medicaid that frame the report’s calls to action. The four “levers” included eligibility/enrollment, access, quality, and early opportunities. Dr. Chomilo also described the three calls to action from the report. After the presentation, Dr. Chomilo asked the council if they had any questions or feedback.

A council member commented on their appreciation for the utilization of racial equity and community engagement in the report. The council asked if Dr. Chomilo could speak to the data around communities of color for diabetes as well as the difference between addressing disparities with churn versus the benefits cliff. Dr. Chomilo clarified the data was referencing prevalence of diabetes and the report also mentions disparities in measures of management and quality of care for diabetes for U.S.-born Black Minnesotans. Dr. Chomilo also clarified churn refers to administrative reasons that individuals get kicked off Medicaid including the impact of income volatility for Medicaid enrollees. Dr. Chomilo noted the report recommends continuous enrollment to address churn issues.

The council asked Dr. Chomilo to specify what is unique about the report that will bring people to take action. Dr. Chomilo responded that the recommended action items in the report are applicable to everyone but would disproportionately benefit those who are disproportionately impacted by racial health inequities and would help to close racial gaps. Dr. Chomilo also mentioned the report focuses on the ways the community feels are most relevant to address racism as a public health crisis and gives support to community-led and co-created solutions.

Dr. Chomilo invited council members to attend the upcoming community engagement opportunities for the report and asked the council to share the opportunity with their networks.

Community Relations Director Helen Ghebre commented that the report highlights the need for system wide change and encouraged the council to think about ways they can get involved to influence systems change and stay engaged while working with different parts of the agency.

## DHS Updates

### Director of Federal Relations – Tamir Elnabarawy

DHS Director of Federal Relations Tamir Elnabarawy joined the meeting to discuss with the council the Department of Homeland Security's Public Charge policy. Tamir provided context on the public charge determination process and recent updates with the public charge rule during the Biden Administration which include:

- President Biden issued an executive order for review of public charge policies by the Department of Homeland Security. The review process included the Department of Homeland Security [asking for public feedback](#) to inform further rule making action.
- The Minnesota Department of Human Services submitted a comment outlining recommendation for rulemaking in October 2021.
- The Department of Homeland Security released their [proposed rule](#) in February 2022

Tamir shared with the council DHS drafted [a response](#) to the Department of Homeland Security's proposed rule which expressed DHS support for those provisions that aligned with their recommendations and reinforced their recommendations for the provisions that did not align. Tamir specified that DHS's ultimate goal regarding public charge rulemaking is to mitigate fear and confusion in immigrant communities that might contribute to a chilling effect, whereby immigrants avoid benefits that they're entitled to, or that they need.

Tamir went over the DHS recommendations in response to the proposed rule which include:

- The Department of Homeland Security should not consider long term institutionalization at government expense in public charge determinations.
- The Department of Homeland Security should not consider cash assistance from states, tribes, territories, or localities in public charge determinations.
- The Department of Homeland Security should only consider federal cash benefits in public charge determinations when they are the primary, permanent, and current sources of income for an individual.
- The Department of Homeland Security should not consider benefits received by survivors of hardship, children, or any individual during a public health emergency.
- The Department of Homeland Security should explicitly communicate what the definition of receipt is.
- The Department of Homeland Security seriously consider an applicant's 'totality of circumstances' in that no one factor should be the sole reason for deeming an individual to be a public charge.
- The Department of Homeland Security should consider affidavits of support as strongly and objectively as possible.
- The Department of Homeland Security should implement a collaborative outreach and engagement campaign when a final rule is released and to develop any materials or messages around the new rule in partnership with states, cities, and community-based organizations.

Tamir noted the public comments are due April 25<sup>th</sup>. DHS is aiming to release their response sooner but wanted to check in with the council before submitting anything. Tamir said he will share a final copy of DHS response

with council soon. Tamir also offered himself as a resource to the council for further discussion on public charge or any other federal topics in the future.

Tamir asked the council for general impressions on the DHS comment to the Department of Homeland Security proposed rule as well as encouraged members to review the comment and send any additional feedback to Nicole Juan.

Tamir shared DHS will be recirculating informational materials that were developed in partnership with the CECLC and other organizations when the final rule on public charge determinations is released. Tamir asked the council to reference and help share the informational materials with their communities.

## **Deputy Commissioner – Nikki Farago**

DHS Deputy Commissioner of External Relations and Communications Nikki Farago joined the meeting to share some DHS updates.

- Deputy Commissioner Farago shared an update on where DHS is in the legislative session.
  - The legislature is currently on break and will return next Tuesday with a month left in the session.
  - There will be budget announcements and work with conference committees to create final bills.
  - Deputy Commissioner encouraged folks during this time of year with the legislative session coming to an end, to focus on the mission of DHS which is to help people live in dignity and achieve their highest potential as well as to focus on work that is equitable and lean into our partnerships.
- Deputy Commissioner Farago shared an update on the DHS Strategic Plan for 2023.
  - Leadership has begun conversations on planning for the next DHS Strategic Plan. Within the next 8 to 9 months, DHS will evaluate the current plan and create a new strategic plan for 2023.
  - Deputy Commissioner Farago asked the council for input on how DHS can best incorporate community input, feedback, and intentional community engagement in the creation of the new strategic plan.
  - Deputy Commissioner Farago Nikki shared the conversations are just starting now but she will have more concrete asks for community engagement in the summer.
- Deputy Commissioner Farago shared an update on the DHS hybrid workplace process and noted starting April 22<sup>nd</sup>, all state buildings will be open to the public.
- Deputy Commissioner Farago highlighted Governor Walz's [Executive Order 22-07](#) issued on April 7 to create a new interagency subcabinet and advisory council focused on the state's continued efforts to address opioids, substance use, and addiction in Minnesota. There is an [open position](#) for the Addiction and Recovery Director as well as open positions on the subcabinet and advisory councils. Applications are open until April 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **DHS Community Relations Update**

Helen Ghebre introduced herself to the council as the new DHS Community Relations Director. Helen mentioned upon request from the council, she would like to take the opportunity in the near future to share more about herself, the strengths she brings to her role, and continue to build relationships with the council.

The Community Relations team shared updates on upcoming DHS events.

- The Community Relations team will be hosting the second Community Empowerment Session on May 11. Council members were invited to attend and share the opportunity with their networks. The session will focus on community healing including culturally responsive behavioral health series and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Service (CLAS) standards.
- DHS Communications team is working on building relationships with multicultural media outlets across Minnesota. The Communications team has asked the council to review a list of multicultural media outlets and provide feedback by May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- DHS and MNIT are working with consultants to conduct a comprehensive assessment of culture and climate at DHS and MNIT. DHS and MNIT have reached out to see if any council members were interested in participating in this project. There will not be compensation for participation. Any council members that are interested can reach out to Nicole Juan. There was a brief discussion on the number of DHS employees being engaged in the culture and climate assessment.
- Community Relations team will be launching a new community engagement podcast series called the LoopBack. The podcast will be a platform for creating dialogue on topics of community interest and feature DHS staff and community partners to discuss the progress and outcomes of recent community engagement efforts including the Community Empowerment Sessions. The pilot episode will be released on April 27<sup>th</sup>. Nicole will be sending out more information on where council members can access the podcast when it is released.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

Workgroup co-lead Mariah Norwood shared at the last workgroup meeting members discussed preparing for the next legislative session and discussing what the council would like to partner with DHS on. Over the next two workgroup meetings, members will work on drafting the council's priorities for the legislative session as well as discuss the priorities during the full council meetings. Nicole will be sending out an email with specific topic areas the council wants to prioritize and focus on for the next legislative session. Nicole mentioned they are working with DHS Legislative Director Matthew Burdick to provide training on the DHS legislative process for the council and how the council can help inform legislative proposals for the next session.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Workgroup co-lead Paul Slack shared the workgroup has narrowed their focus to families of color reunification. At the next workgroup meeting, Devon Gilchrest will present to the workgroup on his current work and respond

to key issues and questions the workgroup has been discussing. Representatives Ann Hill and Muriel Gubasta of the Ombudsperson for Families may also attend workgroup meetings to provide additional information.

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Workgroup co-lead Cratè Darden shared the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Children and Family Services and the Director of Children and Family Services Business Integration Division attended the last workgroup meeting and presented on the formation of an equity accountability governance group within DHS. The governance group aims to be more community focused and the council was approached to provide input and feedback on how to model the group to get community and tribal nations more engaged in governance at DHS. Cratè shared the Deputy Assistant Commissioner and Director would like to attend a future full council meeting to share more information with the rest of the council and ask for additional feedback

### **Community Open Space and Announcements**

Jensina Rosen shared an opportunity for the council to [participate in justice focused work groups and community conversations for the next statewide plan to and prevent homelessness](#). More information can be found [here](#).

Motion to adjourn meeting: Shawn Sorrell

Motion passed.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:58 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: May 20, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Lolita Davis Carter, Larry Yang, Tonia Lofton, Wesley Farrow, Satasha Green-Stephen, Jesús Villaseñor, Shawn Sorrell, Ken Ujifusa, Cratè Darden, Jensina Rosen, Paul Slack, Meagan Hernandez, Florkime Paye (CMAH), Miguel Garate, Shannon Geshick (MIAC)
- **DHS Staff:** Nicole Juan, Cate Dymit, Tom Howley, Seth Kaempfer, Helen Ghebre, Ashley Oolman, Dr. Karen McKinney, Nelly Torori, Rachel Grimes, Shaneen Moore, Steven Wilson
- **Public Attendees:** Carmen Robles

### Agenda

- 1:00 Welcome and Land Acknowledgement
- 1:05 Introductions
- 1:10 Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- 1:15 Chair Remarks
- 1:25 DHS Updates
- 1:35 Workgroup Updates
- 2:05 Presentation: DHS Equity Accountability Team
- 2:35 Community Open Space & Announcements
- 3:00 Adjournment

### Decisions Made

Review and approve March minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve April minutes and meeting agenda: Shawn Sorrell
- Second: Paul Slack
- The motion passed

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Council member Shawn Sorrell welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves. Shawn gave recognition to the ancestral lands of the Dakota People and acknowledged the council's commitment to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference.

## Chair Remarks

Council member Shawn Sorrell shared May is National Mental Health Awareness month and recognized the many challenges and tragedies communities are facing. Shawn acknowledged the recent mass shooting in Buffalo, New York and the tragic loss of ten individuals who represented various roles in the community as family members, friends, and loved ones. Shawn opened up the space for council members to share and reflect on recent events as well as asked the group what they are doing to nurture their mental health.

## DHS Updates

### DHS Community Relations Update

DHS Community Relations Director Helen Ghebre shared updates on recent community engagement events that were held in May 2022.

- On May 9<sup>th</sup>, DHS hosted a Community Conversations on the report, [\*Building Racial Equity in the Walls of MN Medicaid - A focus on Black Minnesotans\*](#). Following the event, DHS will be creating action teams and will share updates with the council on how the work evolves.
- The Community Relations team hosted the second Community Empowerment Session that was focused on community healing. Helen shared an overview of the session and encouraged council members to participate in the planning and design of future sessions.
- The Community Relations team hosted a Community Engagement Open Forum for DHS staff. The forum focused on building capacity within DHS to do community engagement by sharing examples of community engagement work and best practices. There were presentations on the DHS Indian Children Welfare Act (ICWA) Unit and Early Childhood Systems Reform (ECSR) efforts.
- Episode 1 of [\*the LoopBack podcast\*](#) was released and featured Commissioner Harpstead sharing her thoughts on the value and importance of authentic community engagement at DHS.

Helen also shared upcoming events the Community Relations team is preparing for.

- On June 15<sup>th</sup>, the Community Relations team will host the Community Empowerment Loop Back Session which will focus on the impact of the legislative budget on communities and will feature DHS Director of Legislative Relations Matt Burdick.
- The Community Engagement Practitioners Group (CEPG) quarterly meeting will be held on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and will focus on effective strategies to deal with conflict in community.

- CECLC chair Foua Choua Khang and DHS Director of Legislative Relations Matt Burdick will be featured in episode 2 of the LoopBack podcast and will be discussing community engagement in the legislative process.

Helen shared DHS will be giving the DHS Employee Antiracism Orientation Training that will introduce the topic of race and racism within the context of the United States and will be hosted by the Office of Equity and Inclusion. Dr. Karen McKinney provided additional information about the training and mentioned the Office of Equity and Inclusion will be coming out with additional trainings on building the skills to be anti-racist.

A council member asked Dr. McKinney where she sees opportunity to collaborate with the CECLC on the training and provide feedback. Dr. McKinney noted they are in the early stages of the training and will be evaluating the training three times a year to make adjustments based on feedback. Dr. McKinney invited council members to participate in the training and stated council members are welcome to be a part of the evaluation and strategic planning for the training if they have taken the training. Dr. McKinney asked the council to invite and encourage legislatures and their friends to come and participate in the training.

CECLC member Cratè Darden mentioned the Internal Policies workgroup will be discussing the antiracism training at their next meeting on June 2 at 5:00pm and encouraged all CECLC members to attend. Cratè also noted that all DHS Equity Directors are invited to the meeting.

A council member commented on the need for ensuring that policies and plans for equity, inclusion, and diversity at DHS are being followed through with and implemented at all levels of the agency.

DHS Community Relations Specialist Nicole Juan shared updates on the CECLC leadership development trainings. Nicole shared the survey results of the council's primary topics of interest for trainings which included:

- Holding difficult conversations
- Empowering community voices
- Creating Issue Campaign Plans
- Effectively engaging with legislators/other elected officials
- Systems change planning and strategy

Nicole mentioned all council members are invited to participate in the planning of the Community Empowerment Sessions and noted the legislative workgroup is working with Matt Burdick to discuss training opportunities on engaging with legislators and preparing for the next budget cycle. Nicole shared that Dr. McKinney in the Office of Equity and Inclusion has committed to financially supporting the council with leadership development and the leadership development team will be working on building a plan for on-going development and training opportunities for the council. Nicole invited council members who are interested in working on the leadership development plan to reach out to her and she can include them in the planning meetings.

Dr. McKinney shared updates on the Office of Equity and Inclusion and mentioned the office is hiring for their final trainer position as well as for a County Equity Director. The office is also preparing to post a position for an engagement coordinator. Dr. McKinney asked the council to share the job opportunities with their networks.

Helen introduced the new DHS Operations Equity & Inclusion Director Ashley Oolman. Ashley introduced herself to the council and shared that she is always open for informal chats and making new connections. Ashley encouraged the council to reach out with any opportunities to connect.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and External Workgroup**

Nicole Juan shared DHS Legislative Director Matt Burdick and DHS legislative staff in agency-wide operations. Chris Zempel attended the last workgroup meeting. For the next workgroup meeting, members will be looking at outcomes of the 2022 session as well as looking ahead to community engagement in the next legislative session. The next Legislative and External workgroup meeting will be held on Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 12:00pm. Council members can contact Nicole for the meeting invite.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Topics and Issues workgroup co-lead Paul Slack shared Devon Gilchrist attended the last workgroup meeting and presented on the DHS African American Child Welfare Unit. Paul noted the workgroup had a robust conversation with Devon on a variety of different topics including root causes of disparities in child welfare programs, cultural competency in child welfare investigations, and data practices. Devon shared with the workgroup that DHS has an annual child welfare report but they need better metrics to help identify root causes for disparities and workgroup members expressed interest in following up on the report. Dr. McKinney shared Devon Gilchrist had won the Bush Fellowship award. The next Topics and Issues workgroup meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 12:00 pm. Council members can contact Nicole for the meeting invite.

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Internal Policies and Operations workgroup co-lead Cratè Darden asked council members to come to the next internal workgroup meeting which will be held on June 2nd at 5:00 pm. At the next meeting, workgroup members will discuss the DHS anti-racism strategic plan. Cratè shared at the last work group meeting, DHS Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Children and Family Services (CFS) Shaneen Moore and CFS Business Integration Division Director Rachel Grimes talked with members about creating an Equity Accountability team at DHS and how the CECLC can partner with them in this work.

## **Presentation: DHS Equity Accountability Team**

DHS Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Children and Family Services (CFS) and Director of Child Support Shaneen Moore and CFS Business Integration Division Director Rachel Grimes joined the meeting to present on the DHS Equity Accountability Team (see [presentation](#) for more information). Rachel shared an overview of the current Human Services IT Governance structure and its purpose which includes making decisions on IT projects and prioritizing work. Rachel noted none of the IT Governance groups currently have community representatives. Rachel also pointed out that IT governance is challenged by its complexity and rarely takes equity into

consideration with their decisions. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Moore shared that intent of creating the Equity Accountability team is to hold governance accountable for considering and analyzing equity considerations as a part of all systems work. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Moore also when over the purpose and goals of the Equity Accountability Team.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Moore shared with the council some questions they asked for the council's input on, which included:

- What are some ways we could engage community to identify members?
- What does it look like to create an inclusive space for community members?
- What's the best way to create a feedback loop so we can adapt and evolve as needed?
- What does it look like to make decisions collaboratively?

A council member asked for clarification on the definition of 'community.' Deputy Assistant Commissioner Moore clarified they are looking for individuals who have lived experience using DHS services and programs.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Moore asked council members to reach out to her and Rachel with thoughts and responses to the questions posed. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Moore shared their next steps which included identifying resources to support the team such as stipends to compensate community members and identifying team members. The team will be formed in June and will start having monthly meetings shortly after.

Shawn Sorrell asked the presenters to highlight the most important question for discussion with the council which was how to best engage community in identifying members for the Equity Accountability team. Council members responded to the question recommending utilizing pre-existing community groups and partnerships DHS has, utilizing channels DHS uses to communicate with individuals currently receiving services, specifying the time commitment for community members, targeting individuals who have not engaged with DHS services or opted out of using services, utilizing public libraries to reach community members, making sure compensation for participation will not impact individual's eligibility to accessing other services, having child care resources available for in-person meetings, and providing interpretation services for non-English speakers.

A council member asked what the time commitment will be for members of the Equity Accountability team. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Moore responded it would be a two-year commitment with monthly hour and 30-minute meetings and additional meetings based on subcommittee participation. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Moore also clarified that the meetings would start off being held virtually but they are planning to have future meetings in-person, in community, with community.

The council thanked the presenters for attending the meeting and sharing information on the Equity Accountability team.

## Community Open Space and Announcements

- Cratè Darden shared Hennepin County in partnership with the city of St. Paul will be hosting an [Employee Resource Groups Summit](#) on June 14. CECLC member Shawn Sorrell will be participating in one of the panels during the summit.

- Shawn Sorrell shared the Hennepin County African American Employee Resource group will be participating in a Juneteenth Parade and encouraged council members to look out for additional upcoming events celebrating Juneteenth.
- Nicole Juan shared next Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> at 12:00pm the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees (MAPE) Local 2101 will be hosting an event for MAPE members to learn about the history of Juneteenth. Contact Nicole Juan for more information.
- Shannon Geshick shared the [South of the River Powwow](#) will be held Saturday May 21<sup>st</sup> at Burnsville High School. The Grand Entries will occur at 1:00 pm and 7:00 pm. The event is free and open to the public.
- Council members shared mental health reminders to give yourself grace and to take a moment to pause or rest. Resting is productive and necessary.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:59 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: June 17, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Larry Yang, Tonia Lofton, Wesley Farrow, Satasha Green-Stephen, Jesús Villaseñor, Shawn Sorrell, Ken Ujifusa, Cratè Darden, Paul Slack, Miguel Garate, Mariah Norwood, Kia Moua, Sheree Steele
- **DHS Staff:** Nicole Juan, Cate Dymit, Tom Howley, Helen Ghebre, Ashley Oolman, Nikki Farago, Kelly Barnebey, Jerad Green, Rebeca Sedarski
- **Public Attendees:** Carmen Robles

### Agenda

- 1:00 Welcome and Land Acknowledgement
- 1:05 Introductions
- 1:10 Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- 1:15 Chair Remarks & Reflection
- 1:45 DHS Updates
- 2:00 Workgroup Updates
- 2:15 CECLC Work Priorities Discussion
- 2:45 Community Open Space & Announcements
- 3:00 Adjournment

### Decisions Made

Review and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda: Kia Moua
- Second: Miguel Garate
- The motion passed

Review and approve May minutes

- Motion to approve May minutes and meeting agenda: Paul Slack
- Second: Tonia Lofton

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Council member Cratè Darden welcomed members and attendees to the meeting as well as led the council through a land acknowledgment. Council members and attendees introduced themselves in the chat.

## Chair Remarks

Council member Cratè Darden shared that Juneteenth is this weekend and recognized the history behind Juneteenth. She then led council members in a reflection on freedom: What does freedom look like to you? What does it look like to feel free?

## DHS Updates

### Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago

Deputy Commissioner Farago expressed her gratitude for being welcomed into the space and participate in the council's reflections and discussions. She shared some organization updates and changes at DHS, including the retirement of Deputy Commissioner Chuck Johnson. She also outlined the new administration that Nikki will oversee: Agency Culture and Relations. This administration includes the areas of human resources, agency culture, organizational learning and development, employee engagement, office of equity and inclusion, as well as external relations and communications

Deputy Commissioner Farago also gave an update on the agency's process for creating the new strategic plan. She explained that leadership is currently working on identifying the priorities in the plan and would like the CECLC to be involved in providing input. Her hope is that the CECLC will see their work reflected in the new plan when finalized.

### DHS Community Relations Update

Community Relations Director Helen Ghebre gave an update on the Community Empowerment Loop Back Session that was held last Wednesday where the conversation centered on coming back to conversations held at the first community empowerment session in December 2021; provide update on 2022 legislative session and have a conversation on how community can have a greater impact in the DHS legislative process and how can DHS create inclusive practices for involving community. She Helen noted the importance of the CECLC in informing the development of future Community Empowerment Sessions. Helen encouraged the council to think about how the CECLC and DHS can create a space through facilitation methods to authentically engage

community. Helen invited the council to be part of the creation around what can be meaningful and impactful for engaging communities.

Other updates included:

The LoopBack podcast episode 2 was recently released and featured DHS Legislative Director Matt Burdick and CECLC chair Foua Choua Khang: <https://mn.gov/dhs/general-public/about-dhs/outreach-and-engagement/the-loopback-podcast/>

Community Engagement Practitioners Group (CEPG meeting) will be held on June 23. CEPG consists of community engagement practitioners across all state agencies (enterprise-wide). Topics of the next meeting will be focused on conflict resolution when working with community and restorative justice in conflict resolution.

Discussion: A member of the CECLC asked if the Commissioner can come back to the council to discuss DHS plans with the outcomes of the 2022 legislative session and noted that the council wants clearer communication on what the process is for incorporating the input community provides during engagement events. There was agreement amongst council members in the need to collaborate with DHS on a loop back process for incorporating community feedback.

A council member also asked for an update on the DHS Equity Policy is at since the hand off back to DHS was over a year ago. How can CECLC play a role in bringing this forward? A DHS Equity Director present at the meeting provided an update, including the development of an equity analysis toolkit. Once that toolkit is finalized and included with the policy, it will move to final approval. With regard to the equity analysis toolkit, the Equity Directors are working on final edits and will move to launching the toolkit as a pilot in early fall. The council and Equity Directors agreed that partnership on this process including review of the toolkit, the current equity policy, as well as the implementation plan will be crucial in moving forward with the policy. The Internal Operations and Policies Workgroup and the Equity Directors will continue to meet and develop next steps.

## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

- Co-lead Mariah Norwood highlighted the follow up email from the last workgroup, including the need for responses on the new meeting time. They also shared that co-lead Amanda Koonjbeharry has stepped down from the CECLC and so the workgroup will decide on a new co-lead in the July meeting. Other agenda items for July include DHS legislative updates as well as a discussion on building the council's legislative goals and priorities moving forward.

### Topics and Issues Workgroup

- Co-lead Paul Slack provided a recap of the June workgroup meeting. He shared about the robust conversation on known root causes for family unification and reunification in the child welfare system, and the discussion that led to identifying the major themes. Agenda for the July meeting will include a focused discussion in impact as well as a determination of next steps.

## Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

- Co-lead Cratè Darden shared at the last workgroup meeting, there was a conversation with Dr. McKinney on how the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) can more effectively collaborate with CECLC. This led to a more general conversation and what partnership looks like between CECLC and DHS. The workgroup will continue to have these conversations with both OEI and the DHS Equity Directors.

## CECLC Leadership Update

- Community Relations Specialist Nicole Juan shared updates on upcoming changes with CECLC appointments: five positions are currently posted for renewal. The council will soon receive information about the postings for CECLC members to share with near networks.
- A discussion was held on the possibility of shifting the CECLC to a co-chair model rather than having one appointed chair. Additionally, the council discussed moving the election/recommendation of chair to this fall, to better align with the CECLC's work and priorities. It was the consensus of the council to hold an election in the fall for two co-chairs of the CECLC.

## CECLC Work Priorities Discussion

- The following discussion prompts were posed to the CECLC members:
  - Where we are now: What has the CECLC learned in its time? What are some accomplishments/successes?
  - Imagine a year from now. What are the achievements of the CECLC?
  - What is necessary for these achievements to take place? Consider:
    - People – participation from you and others, leadership, DHS
    - Possible Opportunities – are there things that are out of our control but may take place and could facilitate these achievements?
    - Possible Roadblocks – are there things that are out of our control but may take place and could hinder these achievements? What are some strategies to address those barriers?
  - What are you excited to contribute? Consider your skills, interests, leadership, time, etc.
  - How do the efforts of this Council feed into the broader achievements and advancements of the CECLC (and DHS) as a whole?

In discussion based on these prompts, CECLC members discussed various areas where the council has done good work, as well as opportunities for better partnership with DHS. One topic was a discussion of the CECLC legislative report and included equity review: how can the report have a stronger focus on equity outcomes rather than a list of projects aimed at addressing disparities. How can the council make space for DHS to be concrete about what outcomes they are trying to achieve? Council members discussed creating an action plan (12 months), focused on actions it can take with DHS and getting out in community. Members expressed the importance of person-centered practices and focusing on people and communities rather than data points; a need to further focus on storytelling.

The council also discussed the nuances of fostering change internally to DHS as well as identifying needed changes in statute. Looking at issues such as child protection, for example, the council can use its strength to amplify the issues heard in community to both DHS and the State Legislature.

It was noted that Commissioner Harpstead will attend the CECLC meeting in July. The council was asked to think of questions and topics they would like to discuss during the conversation with the Commissioner.

## Community Open Space and Announcements

- Juneteenth events: <https://mspmag.com/arts-and-culture/where-to-celebrate-juneteenth-in-the-twin-cities/>
- Powwow Season. For more information and the calendar, visit: <https://calendar.powwows.com/events/categories/pow-wows/pow-wows-in-minnesota/>
- Sweet Potato Comfort Pie event
  - Sweet Potato Comfort Pie’s mission is to “advance racial justice and equity, heal damage caused by race-based trauma and elevate marginalized voices and experience.”  
To honor Juneteenth, they will be hosting a play, “Kumbayah: The Juneteenth Story” play on Friday, June 17th at 10:00 a.m. or 7:00 p.m. at the Breck School Theatre in Golden Valley.  
Through music and storytelling, this two-act play will bring together the history and events surrounding June 19, 1865. Following the play, Sweet Potato Comfort Pie will invite a cast member to engage with our DHS leadership in a dialogue about advancing racial justice at DHS and our roles in driving this work forward.
- Owamni in Minneapolis won the James Beard Award for best new restaurant!  
<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2022/06/14/owamni-wins-beard-award-for-best-new-restaurant>

**Meeting adjourned at 3:03 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: July 15, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Ken Ujifusa, Mariah Norwood, Rosa Tock, Sheree Steele, Cratè Darden, Foua Choua Khang, Kia Moua, Lolita Davis Carter, Miguel Garate, Meagan Hernandez, Jesús Villaseñor, Shawn Sorrell, Larry Yang, Tonia Lofton, Wesley Farrow, Jackie Thomas Hall, Jensina Rosen, Shannon Geshick
- **DHS Staff:** Nicole Juan, Helen Ghebre, Beth Dansie, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Karen McKinney, Ashley Oolman, Kelly Barnebey, Commissioner Jodi Harpstead, DeAnna Conover, Janene Cowen, Jerad Green, Mai Xue, Deqa Sayid, Seth Kaempfer, Arantxa Hernandez-Chaire, Nathan Chomilo, Tom Howley
- **Public Attendees:** John Deshun (MDH)

### Agenda

- 1:00 Welcome and Land Acknowledgement
- 1:05 Introductions
- 1:10 Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- 1:15 Chair Remarks & Reflection
- 1:25 DHS Updates: DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead
- 2:15 Workgroup Updates
- 2:30 CECLC Work Priorities Discussion: Part II
- 2:45 Community Open Space & Announcements
- 3:00 Adjournment

### Decisions Made

Review and approve meeting agenda and June minutes:

- Motion to approve meeting agenda and June minutes: Kia Moua
- Second: Ken Ujifusa
- The motion passed

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

### DHS Updates: DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead

Commissioner Harpstead shared that the senior strategic team has been meeting over the past two days to plan and revision the next rendition of the DHS Strategic Plan and asked the council what they think should be included in the DHS Strategic Plan for the next four years.

- A member thanked the Commissioner for not coming to the council with an already drafted plan.
- A member suggested including the aspect of reunification of families; what are the areas that will ensure reunification is appropriate, families have necessary resources, education component.
- A member noted the need to continue to embed equity in DHS operations and understanding culturally specific communities in the delivery of services, including immigrant and refugee residents in greater Minnesota. There are issues with language barriers, reaching out to communities to explain resources, programs and services.
- A member added the need for a DHS commitment to recruiting people of color and mirroring the communities and people they serve; hiring people from the communities they serve; figuring out how to sustain and retain workers and provide opportunities for job advancement; how is DHS going to measure if you are succeeding or not in the strategic plan; having tangible results to communicate back with the public
  - Commissioner Harpstead commented about their process of hiring from within the agency and how that has helped with diversity and retaining employees
- A member noted the issue of under-resourced child care providers; providers from low-income communities face resources in the application process
- A member added that given the economic situation we are facing, there are issues of food insecurity, housing stability, and child support; these are critical areas communities are facing; adding these areas into the strategic plan to show how DHS will approach these issues would be good

The Council asked Commissioner Harpstead where the CECLC will come in with the strategic planning; where she expects CECLC to come in next

- Commissioner Harpstead noted that there will be continued conversations with DHS staff working on the strategic plan, and the Council is welcome to continue giving their input and channel it through the Community Relations team. Other specifics on input to the strategic plan are to be determined.

A discussion took place regarding the process DHS uses in obtaining community input on the strategic plan as well as other initiatives at DHS. Council members suggested setting aside a specific budget to pay people for offering their expertise to DHS - and doing it in ways that doesn't limit where they can spend that money. If DHS seeks to include community and co-create, the agency needs to compensate people for their time and also provide things like food, transportation and childcare. Put another way, how can DHS policies adjust to support the logistics required for authentic community engagement, reflective of the value community brings, and co-creation.

- It is important to ensure that community advisory board members are from communities we serve. In addition to racial/ethnic backgrounds, it is important to hear from folks who currently or have previously received services from DHS.
- Commissioner Harpstead mentioned that there has been work done to connect with community partners and organizations to talk with community
- It is important to include metrics that measure the progress and impact of outcomes for the changes that DHS will make. How do we ensure that these outcomes are equitable?
- A policy is needed that covers important features of community engagement including funding to provide compensation, transportation, childcare, translation services, etc.
  - Several council members agreed with this
- The council asked for DHS to provide clarity on the timeline for the development and implementation on the strategic plan.
- A member asked that that whatever work that is done involving English Language Learners that rather than interpreters being used, there's an increase in cultural brokers being used instead.
- A member suggested the ability to see a report/reporting feature on the strategic plan (talking about successes, areas that are new, how to get involved as a community member) on the DHS public-facing website.
  - How does DHS own the complexity for communities that are trying to access resources?
  - Commissioner Harpstead responded noting conversations she's had with OneMinnesota Council on transparent accountability
- Commissioner Harpstead shared at the SST retreat they shared a short and powerful set of metrics to measure how people are living their fullest, healthiest lives and measure progress
- A member remarked that failing to plan is planning to fail; communication should be a key priority in the strategic plan; thinking about what communication needs to look like in the next 4 years and plan for that sharing back with community updates on the strategic plan. It is important to be centering public-facing DHS website on the public; culturally responsive communication styles; practice transparency about DHS actions and outcomes that DHS wants to have
  - Commissioner Harpstead: commented that perhaps using community media outlets would help accomplish this goal as well.
- DHS should work to make sure that community knows who the DHS Equity Directors are and be able to ensure Equity Directors are engaging with communities and being a direct connection to DHS; how do we market and communicate that with communities that are culturally responsive?
- It would be good for DHS to reflect on if/how DHS is a trusted partner. During the pandemic, MDH went through this useful exercise to help focus their work on building relationships with community.

- A member noted that DHS' integrated services delivery initiative has a lot of wonderful information and ideas based on feedback from community about how to make DHS services and supports more equitable, accessible, and responsive to people. It would be great if the strategic plan could wraparound and support that work so that people can access the right service they need when they need it, have a better user experience, understand DHS programs and services in ways they need to hear it, and can leave interactions with DHS (and its lead agencies) feeling like they had a respectful, dignified, and empowered experience.
- The strategic plan should include the support of DHS workers of color; these workers are very valuable to the visions of these actions in discussion today.
- Council members reminded DHS leadership that the council would still very much like to be involved in the co-creation of the anti-racism policy. They would like to see a timeline and strategy for implementation.
  - Dr McKinney responded that DHS is trying to merge the anti-racism policy with the equity policy; the equity policy has been updated and along with the equity policy there is an equity toolkit that is being piloted right now. It was decided that there would not be a separate anti-racism policy but instead statements on antiracism expectations that go out with everyone's job descriptions; DHS has not yet started to write these expectation statements. Once there is a draft, DHS can present it the council for feedback. Dr. McKinney invited members to participate in the creation of these expectations.
  - Council members voiced the need for a separate antiracism policy from the equity policy. They feel that expectations won't in and of themselves change behavior, and there is a need for mandated policies to have accountability.
  - Council members asked that there be accountability measures included in the expectations
  - Commissioner Harpstead reiterated that DHS has committed to being an anti-racist organization and she, as a Commissioner has taken a strong anti-racism stance.
  - CECLC would like to be leveraged as a requirement; requirement for CECLC to be at the table with Dr. McKinney's team and their work/conversations on these expectations.
  - Chair Foua Choua expressed interest in connecting with Dr. McKinney to see how the CECLC and the Office of Equity and Inclusion can better partner and build a relationship.

Commissioner Harpstead shared ideas that have come up in the Senior Strategy Team (SST) retreat to include in the DHS Strategic Plan. Some examples include:

- DHS take a stand for racial justice, gender justice, housing justice, and more
- Initiated work to make Minnesota the best place for black, brown, and indigenous children to grow up in
- Developing an ambitious family preservation plan
- Being known for developing robust approached to co-creating work
- Massive project to understanding who gets all of our grants
- Moving the organization to 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> pillar in anti-racism continuum

Council members thanked the Commissioner for attending today and listening to the Council's feedback.

Council members also reiterated hope toward seeing DHS' passion for equity to translate to actionable items – like policies – in place to hold themselves accountable, and to help community hold DHS accountable to these goals.

The Commissioner thanked the CECLC for their comments and will connect back with them in the future.

Council members thanked each other for being a shining light of community voice, knowledge, passion and collaboration.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

- Shawn Sorrell has been elected as the new co-lead of this workgroup. The workgroup will be working with the DHS Legislative Director Matt Burdick as DHS works on its legislative package for 2023.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

- Continues its conversation on its priority on family reunification and is starting to look into practices and processes around mandatory reporting.

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

- The workgroup continues to meet with DHS Equity Directors and is provided updates on the work of the agencywide policy on equity
- There was a brief discussion on the Strategic Antiracism Team (StART). The Council is interested to hear more about what power this group has, what decision-making ability there is in this area. How is that power manifesting their work across the agency, and not just within the group itself?
- It was suggested that there is a separate space held for the council to learn the history of StART and their level of authority within DHS; how the CECLC can collaborate and leverage that authority.

## **CECLC Work Priorities Discussion: Part II**

- Dr. McKinney has identified funding for the CECLC to use for development; an initial step to use these funds will be facilitated discussions on guiding principles for the council. This work and these discussions will take place over the next few months – stay tuned!

## **Community Open Space and Announcements**

- Assistant Commissioner DeAnna Conover shared updates on the work that has been done in the Office of Agency Culture, including its established standards, work plan, and goals. These items will be shared

with the CECLC via email, and she looks forward to continuing the conversation with the CECLC on the work of her office.

- Northside FLOW ART Crawl is this weekend

**Meeting adjourned at 3:03PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: August 19, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Larry Yang, Ken Ujifusa, Meagan Hernandez, Paul Slack, Lolita Davis Carter, Foua Choua Khang, Shawn Sorrell, Satasha Green Stephen
- **DHS Staff:** Elyse Bailey, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Jerad Green, Kelly Barnebey, Helen Ghebre, Victor Gonzalez, Deqa Sayid, Jacob Day, Steven Wilson, Nikki Farago, Matt Burdick, Ashley Oolman, Janene Cowan, Liz Scherber, Tom Howley
- **Public Attendees:** Laura Bohen

### Agenda

|       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12:45 | WebEx Opens                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1:00  | Welcome and Land Acknowledgement                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1:05  | Welcome and Introductions                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1:10  | Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1:15  | Chair Remarks & Reflection                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1:20  | DHS Legislative Process Overview & Next Steps                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1:40  | Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative &amp; External Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Internal Operations &amp; Policies</li><li>• Leadership updates</li></ul> |
| 1:50  | CECLC Work Priorities Discussion: Guiding Principles                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 2:50  | Community Open Space & Announcements                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 3:00  | Adjournment                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

### Decisions Made

A quorum was not reached. There were no changes to the agenda.

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua Choua Khang welcomed members and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Chair Remarks

Foua Choua Khang expressed a desire to bring the CECLC to the next level where community is centered and it is a priority in spaces like this. This includes giving space and time to mourn tragedies, celebrate wins and accomplishments, and acknowledge challenges. In her own life, she mentioned two recent tragedies in the Hmong community. Shawn Sorrell wished to recognize his new-found or rekindled friendships in the Hmong community, including a neighbor who recently had a child. He mentioned a project in Hennepin County focusing on violence and mental well-being for African-American residents; this is a public health issue and there is interconnectedness.

Foua Choua also put a plug in for the Loopback podcast and encouraged members to listen if they have not. She gave kudos to Cate Dymit for producing the podcast.

## DHS Legislative Update

Elyse Bailey, DHS Budget Director, introduced herself and gave a high-level presentation on the legislative proposal development for 2023. She explained the proposal development process occurs throughout the year and can take up to 18 months. The bulk occurs June to December. There are various phases of proposal development that are multistep.

A council member said her community holds neighbor nights where taxes and the budget surplus are frequently brought up. She asked Elyse to explain the nuance to that. When the State seeks to pass a budget, it is about balancing state resources. Legislators are vying for the general fund which are tax dollars with no dedicated spending. There are ways DHS funds local governments and tribal nations, but generally funding comes from the State.

Matt Burdick added that Minnesota is one of few states that places, by statute, counties as operational arms for services (e.g. mental health). There are constraints the Legislature has put on counties to provide core services.

Elyse provided a 2023 budget planning overview. Priorities left unaddressed during the 2022 legislative session will strongly inform the 2023 budget planning. This year there is strong emphasis on stakeholder involvement early in the process. Priorities: child care, caring professions workforce, behavioral health, access to affordable health care, human services infrastructure (e.g. IT modernization), and addressing disparities (e.g. child welfare). Specifically DHS budget priorities include caring professions, agency culture and relations, agency effectiveness, person-centered human services system. The Governor's office has created four interagency workgroups that impact human services; they will develop and refine specific proposals in the September-November 2023 timeframe.

Any additional questions can be sent to Elyse Bailey and Matt Burdick following this meeting.

## **CECLC Work Priorities Discussion: Guiding Principles**

Foua Choua Khang introduced Laura Bohen, Outreach and Community Engagement Manager at the City of Bloomington. She believes in creating spaces where people feel they belong, and when we do that we drive toward justice. Everyone has values or deeply held beliefs (e.g. belonging and justice); she asked members to describe theirs. Inclusion, being community minded, liberation.

Laura provided an overview for development of guiding principles and gave a case example of the East Side Health and Well-being Collaborative's guiding principles. She then invited council members to participate in a reflective listening activity.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

Shawn Sorrell shared that DHS staff Matt Burdick attended their recent committee meeting and invited council members to attend the September meeting.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Paul Slack shared the workgroup performed a targeted review of mandated reporter training and family reunification, and had some follow-up next steps. They plan to make recommendations that address the disparities for people of color in both those areas.

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Shawn Sorrell shared the workgroup recently brainstormed ways it can lift up equity leaders and give them support, space, and leverage from this group.

### **CECLC Leadership Update**

Foua Choua Khang said guiding principles will be an important piece of 2023 initiatives. She feels previous council members who paved a foundation for this body of work are expecting more from this cohort moving forward, specifically the work to integrate into various DHS enterprises. Stay tuned for conversation on an inventory of council members' skill sets in order to optimize participation.

## **Community Open Space and Announcements**

Helen Ghebre introduced DHS staff Liz Scherber and Janene Cowan who are Strategic Plan Coordinators. They will present at the September council meeting.

### **Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: September 16, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Larry Yang, Foua-Choua Khang, Shawn Sorrell, Satasha Green Stephen, Kia Moua, Jensina Rosen, Wesley Farrow, Florkime Paye, Cratè Darden
- **DHS Staff:** Nicole Juan, Cate Dymit, Rebeca Sedarski, Helen Ghebre, Kelly Barnebey, Seth Kaempfer, Deqa Sayid, Ashley Oolman, Janene Cowan, Liz Scherber, Marcela Goldschmidt, Shireen Gandhi, Nikki Farago, Angie DeLille, Tamir Elnabarawy
- **Public Attendees:**

### Agenda

|       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12:45 | WebEx Opens                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1:05  | Welcome and Introductions                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1:10  | Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1:15  | Chair Remarks and Reflection                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1:20  | CECLC Member Share-outs                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1:50  | Community Updates and Open Space                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 2:00  | Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative &amp; External Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Internal Operations &amp; Policies</li><li>• Leadership updates</li></ul> |
| 2:15  | DHS Strategic Plan Discussion: Part 2                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2:50  | General DHS Updates                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3:00  | Adjournment                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

### Decisions Made

A quorum was not reached. The council will review and approve minutes for July, August, and September at its October meeting. There were no changes to the agenda.

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua-Choua Khang welcomed members and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Chair Remarks

Foua-Choua Khang noted the agenda has been reorganized to allow time for CECLC share-outs and community updates.

The CECLC will begin crafting a 2023 work plan in the coming months. What successes can we celebrate? How do we define success? What would we like to see happen in 2023 and beyond? Foua-Choua plans to attend the [Native American Community Clinic \(NACC\)'s](#) celebration of the harvest this weekend – the celebration is a reminder to center CECLC in its progress thus far.

## Community Updates and Open Space

Foua-Choua Khang opened the floor for members to share.

- Wesley Farrow shared he is excited to see what comes of a connection between DHS staff and SPNN.
- Kia Moua invited everyone to the [grand opening](#) of the MN Child Welfare Training Academy's Metro Learning Center in Roseville from 9am-3pm on Thursday, September 22.
- Shawn Sorrell shared that Hennepin County takes the month of October to celebrate collective diversity. The County has increased the budget to offer \$30,000 additional funding for non-traditional presenters to share their experience and collective stories. If anyone would like to attend its virtual offerings, please contact him.
- Foua-Choua Khang mentioned Blue Cross Blue Shield is building metrics to define what effective community engagement looks like. She invited council members to participate in this work.

## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Shawn Sorrell shared the workgroup is timing its work to coincide with the Governor's office various workgroups. It held a meeting with Matt Burdick on the following proposed agenda items: child welfare training, family reunification, investigations, mandatory reporter training, expansion of care to immigrants, the African-American Family Preservation Act specifically the Supreme Court case around ICWA and its ramifications, and harm reduction.

On the topic of harm reduction, Jensina Rosen shared a link to the [Opioid Epidemic Response Advisory Council](#) (OERAC). Currently, members of the public can apply for OERAC membership openings in these categories:

- Public member with chronic pain, intractable pain, or rare disease or condition
- Public member in opioid recovery

- Alternative pain management therapies representative

Nicole added Matt Burdick took the workgroup's feedback to DHS' Legislative team and will invite staff to discuss these items at a future meeting.

## Topics and Issues Workgroup

Jensina Rosen shared the workgroup is currently zeroing in on two topics of interest, both in the child welfare space: child welfare investigations and mandatory reporter training. The workgroup learned the child welfare training academy has a mandated reporter training but that other non-state entities can develop their own. This raises concern around oversight and accountability.

## Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup

Cratè Darden shared the workgroup has held discussion on how to ensure council members are aware of DHS processes and how to better engage council members in those processes, with emphasis on transparency and coalition building. DHS Equity Directors are finalizing the DHS equity policy and their equity toolkit rollout. Their dashboard is still under construction, and they have invited CECLC feedback. The Office of Equity and Inclusion is holding DHS Equity Week from September 12-20 and is hiring more resources for its office.

## CECLC Leadership Update

Foua-Choua Khang noted nominations for the 2023 CECLC co-chairs will open in October followed by open voting at the November meeting, after which recommendations will be sent to the Commissioner. Electing co-chairs was a recommendation from the previous cohort and was passed in legislation. Two co-chairs will offset some of the work of one chair.

DHS will be contracting with Laura Bohen, who attended the August council meeting, to lead conversations on guiding principles for the next few CECLC meetings.

## DHS Strategic Plan Discussion: Part 2

Community Relations Director Helen Ghebre introduced DHS staff Liz Scherber and Janene Cowan who are Strategic Plan Coordinators. The purpose of today's presentation is to hear how the work is evolving in the development of 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, next steps, and to invite council feedback. Liz introduced Marcela Goldschmidt who is helping with data metrics.

There was a question why equity is not specifically called out or elevated to the description of "a new future." A council member cautioned assuming equity is under the surface and instead recommended it be explicitly named. Another council member asked to see something around race, equity, and co-creation with community in the imagining.

The [current plan](#) ends December 2022. 78% of activities in the current plan are on track for completion. DHS plans to launch the next iteration in early 2023, with a 4-year strategic timeline. Janene indicated there are

intentional ways of approaching the development: guidance from Equity Directors; earlier and continuous engagement; using equity analysis for strategy development; and outreach to unheard voices.

DHS devised draft guiding principles for how it will approach the development:

- We will center equity and anti-racism in all work.
- We will use population and culturally specific approaches.
- We will be trustworthy for our work and results.
- We will provide flexible, holistic, and inclusive support that helps people meet their full potential.
- We will engage with counties and tribes [request to edit to ‘tribal nations’] prior to finalizing policies and practices that impact the work.
- We will co-create and empower community-led approaches.
- We will subtract work and processes that do not add value and do not protect health and safety.
- We will protect our planet and reduce our carbon footprint.

Janene invited council members to spend a few minutes providing feedback via survey link then opened the floor for discussion.

In her post-meeting update, Nicole Juan will include a callout for a dedicated group of council members to support strategic plan development.

## DHS Updates

Deputy Commissioner Nikki Farago introduced Shireen Gandhi to her first CECLC meeting in her new role as Deputy Commissioner for Agency Effectiveness. Shireen oversees areas of finance, compliance, audits, contracts, grants, and equity and inclusion operations. Nikki also introduced Angie DeLille, Deputy Director in the Office of Indian Policy.

Nikki briefly mentioned recent news articles about DHS as well as the [NYT article](#) noting child poverty in the US has decreased by 59% since 1993, which is something to be celebrated.

Tamir Elnabarawy, Director of Federal Relations, provided updates on the new public charge rule which essentially codifies the 1999 Interim Field Guidance by defining a public charge as someone who is “primarily dependent on the government for subsistence,” as demonstrated by either (a) using public cash assistance for income maintenance or (b) institutionalization for long-term care at government expense. Specifically, this includes:

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), commonly known as “welfare”
- State and local cash assistance, sometimes called “General Assistance”
- Medicaid or other programs supporting long-term institutionalized care, such as in a nursing home or mental health institution

Tribal benefits were included in the public charge test, despite DHS’ advocacy against that. The new rule clarifies that applying for a public benefit; assisting someone else to apply; and being in a household with someone who

receives a public benefit would not be included. Tamir thanked the council in educating the public around the new rule.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:03 PM**

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: October 21, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (Hybrid)

## Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Larry Yang, Foua-Choua Khang, Shawn Sorrell, Jensina Rosen, Becca Graves, Meagan Hernandez, Ken Ujifusa, Lolita Davis Carter, Rosalva Hernandez, Paul Slack, Wesley Farrow, Jackie Thomas-Hall, Sheila Lipsco, Manuel Zuniga
- **DHS Staff:** Nicole Juan, Cate Dymit, Rebecca Sedarski, Helen Ghebre, Kelly Barnebey, Dr. Karen McKinney, Deqa Sayid, Steven Wilson, Seth Kaempfer, Tom Howley, Shani Greene
- **Public Attendees:** Laura Bohen

## Agenda

|       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12:00 | Lunch                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 12:55 | WebEx Opens                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1:00  | Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1:05  | Introductions and Welcome New CECLC Members                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1:10  | Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes (July, August, September)                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1:15  | Chair Remarks and Reflection                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1:20  | CECLC Member Share-outs                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1:30  | Community Updates and Open Space                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1:40  | Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative &amp; External Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Internal Operations &amp; Policies</li><li>• Leadership updates</li></ul> |
| 1:55  | Adjourn Public Meeting                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 2:05  | CECLC Guiding Principles – Laura Bohen                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 3:50  | General DHS Updates                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 4:00  | Closing                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

## Decisions Made

Review and approve July, August, and September minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve July, August, and September minutes and meeting agenda: Shawn Sorrell
- Second: Lolita Davis Carter
- The motion passed

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua-Choua Khang welcomed members and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Chair Remarks

Foua-Choua Khang wished everyone well as we celebrate the harvest, and she looks forward to the changes ahead in 2023.

## Community Updates and Open Space

Foua-Choua Khang opened the floor for members to share.

- Manuel Zuniga, Ombudsperson for Asian Pacific Families, mentioned difficulty with collecting disaggregated data in the child protection sphere and is looking for support from DHS – specifically immigrant populations and limited English as a second language – in order to see trends or patterns and to inform policy. Foua-Choua suggested he reach out to Community Relations team members and the Topics & Issues workgroup for assistance.

## Workgroup Updates

### Legislative and Policy Workgroup

Shawn Sorrell shared the workgroup recently received DHS's draft legislative proposals and will be reviewing them and providing feedback to put the CECLC's stamp on these specific topics: child welfare training, family reunification, investigations, mandatory reporter training, expansion of care to immigrants, the African-American Family Preservation Act specifically the Supreme Court case around ICWA and its ramifications, and harm reduction.

### Topics and Issues Workgroup

Paul Slack shared the workgroup has zeroed in on two topics of interest, both in the child welfare space: child welfare investigations and mandatory reporter training. They discussed the frequency of training; how reports are screened out; putting more energy on child welfare investigation topic; and the potential for DHS to provide mandatory reporter training. The workgroup hopes to draft recommendations by December 2022 in order to inform DHS's legislative proposals.

## **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

DHS Equity Directors Seth Kaempfer and Tom Howley shared they have worked with co-leads Crate Darden and Kia Moua to refine and revise the Equity Analysis Toolkit. Revisions are currently being made to the Equity Policy. The next step is to gather feedback from staff.

Seth and Tom presented during DHS Equity Week in September, and a number of people have commented on the positive sense of equity directors working across business areas and taking a systemic approach to this work. DHS has been very intentional in centering community in this process – in starting with community and ending with community.

A gaps analysis was recently presented to the Senior Strategy Team for the purpose of doing an organizational scan. It will also be discussed in next week's Directors Meeting.

## **CECLC Leadership Update**

Foua-Choua Khang welcomed new members Rosalva Hernandez and Becca Graves. Foua-Choua and Cratè Darden were reappointed.

With Mariah Norwood's departure, Shawn Sorrell is seeking a co-lead on the Legislative and Policy workgroup.

The CECLC will be seeking nominations for two CECLC co-chairs. Please reach out to Nicole Juan with names. She will reiterate the process and timeline in her post-meeting update.

## **DHS Updates**

Please send any updates to Nicole Juan following this meeting. They will be shared with the CECLC.

## **Public Meeting adjourned at 2:11 PM**

## **CECLC Guiding Principles**

Laura Bohen, an Outreach and Community Engagement Manager at the City of Bloomington, attended the August meeting and reintroduced herself. She believes in creating spaces where people feel they belong, and when we do that we drive toward justice. Laura provided an overview for development of guiding principles and gave a case example of the East Side Health and Well-being Collaborative's guiding principles.

She invited council members to participate in discussion on areas of improvement and collaboration for CECLC as a precursor to development of guiding principles in a future council meeting. She will compile all of today's comments and input for staff to share with the council.

## **Meeting adjourned at 3:57 PM**

# Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: November 18, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (Hybrid)

## Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Larry Yang, Shawn Sorrell, Jensina Rosen, Becca Graves, Meagan Hernandez, Ken Ujifusa, Lolita Davis Carter, Rosalva Hernandez, Wesley Farrow, Sheila Lipsco, Tonia Lofton, Rosa Tock, MacDonald Metzger, Kia Moua, Cratè Darden, Manuel Zuniga
- **DHS Staff:** Nikki Farago, Nicole Juan, Cate Dymit, Hli Vang, Rebecca Sedarski, Helen Ghebre, Kelly Barnebey, Seth Kaempfer
- **Public Attendees:** Laura Bohen

## Agenda

|       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12:00 | Lunch                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 12:55 | WebEx Opens                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1:00  | Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1:05  | Introductions and Welcome                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1:10  | Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1:15  | Chair Remarks and General DHS Updates                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1:20  | CECLC Bylaw Updates and Vote                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1:30  | CECLC Member Share-outs                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1:35  | Community Updates and Open Space                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1:40  | Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative &amp; External Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Internal Operations &amp; Policies</li><li>• Leadership updates</li></ul> |
| 1:55  | Adjourn Public Meeting                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 2:05  | CECLC Guiding Principles – Laura Bohen                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 4:00  | Closing                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Shawn Sorrell is facilitating this month's meeting in the Chair's absence. He welcomed members and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve October minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve October minutes and meeting agenda: Jensina Rosen
- Second: Kia Moua
- The motion passed

## Chair Remarks and General DHS Updates

Shawn Sorrell invited DHS staff to share any general updates.

Community Relations Director Helen Ghebre shared the 2022 Community Engagement Summit, "Transforming Systems with Community" will take place on Thursday, December 15. This will be a hybrid event hosted at the Elmer L. Andersen Human Services Building's public meeting rooms from 8am-4pm. An e-invite to register will be included in Nicole Juan's post-meeting update. Guests may participate in all or part of the event.

## CECLC Bylaw Updates and Vote

Proposed changes were sent to the council in advance of this meeting. Kia Moua acknowledged the Internal Policies and Operations workgroup for its work to update the bylaws.

- Certain language and processes were adjusted to align with state statute
- Some accessibility pieces are clarified or added
- Update to allow for co-chairs rather than one chair
- Amend the election process to comply with MN Open Meetings Law

Shawn opened the floor to questions or comments; there were none.

Review and approve CECLC bylaw updates:

- Motion to approve bylaw updates: Shawn Sorrell
- Second: Tonia Lofton
- The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote

## CECLC Member Share-outs

Shawn Sorrell opened the floor for members to share.

- Kia Moua posted a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Specialist position, closing on December 8. It will be a metro-based position reporting to her. She will send details to Nicole Juan to include in her post-meeting update.
- Manuel Zuniga shared the Office of Ombudspersons for Families is conducting its end of the year Joint Meeting of Community-Specific Boards on Tuesday, December 6. All are invited. He will send details to Nicole Juan to include in her post-meeting update.
- Shawn Sorrell shared Hennepin County's Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Employee Resource Group will hold a vigil for Transgender Day of Remembrance on Sunday, November 20 at 4:30pm at Edgewater Park in Northeast Minneapolis. The Lowry Bridge will be lit with the colors of the transgender flag to honor the occasion.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

Shawn Sorrell shared the workgroup reviewed DHS's draft legislative priorities: child welfare training, family reunification, investigations, mandatory reporter training, the opioid crisis, expansion of care to immigrants, the African-American Family Preservation Act specifically the Supreme Court case around ICWA and its ramifications, and harm reduction.

Nicole Juan added the next legislative session, starting in January 2023, will be in-person for the first time since the pandemic. The legislative workgroup is in discussion to arrange meet-and-greet opportunities with state legislators and new leadership within the HHS committees. More to come.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Jensina Rosen shared the workgroup had conversation around child welfare investigation and reporting, and any recommendations it can make to strengthen either statute or best practices. The workgroup hopes in December to review draft legislative language around mandated reporter training and to make recommendations in order to inform DHS's legislative proposals.

The workgroup looks forward to the DHS Foster Care Licensing unit's presentation at its next meeting.

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Kia Moua said in addition to working on bylaw updates, the workgroup continues its work with DHS Equity Directors. She invited council members to join workgroup meetings.

Cratè Darden added that DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead was reappointed following the election. The continuity in leadership is an opportunity for the CECLC to continue to advocate for community needs.

Nikki Farago shared DHS co-hosted an event "Overview of ICWA Before the Supreme Court" at the Red Lake Nation on November 16. It was powerful to have advocates and leadership from the tribal nations, counties, and state government at the table. The agenda included potential amendments to fortify and protect the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA).

### **CECLC Leadership Update**

Nominations for two co-chairs are open and due by December 1. Voting will take place at the December CECLC meeting. Feel free to reach out to Nicole Juan with questions; she will reiterate the process and timeline in her post-meeting update.

**Public Meeting adjourned at 2:12 PM**

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: December 16, 2022

Minutes prepared by: DHS Community Relations Staff

Location: WebEx and Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (Hybrid)

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Foua-Choua Khang, Larry Yang, Shawn Sorrell, Jensina Rosen, Becca Graves, Lolita Davis Carter, Wesley Farrow, MacDonald Metzger, Kia Moua, Cratè Darden, Manuel Zuniga, Miguel Garate, Paul Slack, Satasha Green-Stephen, Shannon Geshick, Rosalva Hernandez
- **DHS Staff:** Nikki Farago, Nicole Juan, Cate Dymit, Hli Vang, Helen Ghebre, Ashley Oolman, Dr. Karen McKinney, Jodi Harpstead, Seth Kaempfer, Steven Wilson, Kelly Barnebey, Deqa Sayid
- **Public Attendees:** Kesone Salas, Avanie E Hernandez

### Agenda

|       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12:00 | Lunch                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 12:55 | WebEx Opens                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1:00  | Open Public Meeting and Land Acknowledgement                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1:05  | Introductions and Welcome                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1:10  | Review and Approve Meeting Agenda and Minutes                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1:15  | CECLC Leadership Vote                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1:20  | CECLC Member Share-outs and Community Updates                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1:25  | Workgroup Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative &amp; External Workgroup</li><li>• Topics &amp; Issues Workgroup</li><li>• Internal Operations &amp; Policies</li><li>• Leadership Updates</li></ul> |
| 1:35  | CECLC in Conversation with Commissioner Jodi Harpstead                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1:55  | Adjourn Public Meeting                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions

Foua-Choua Khang welcomed members and led the council through a land acknowledgement and introductions.

## Decisions Made

Review and approve November minutes and approve meeting agenda:

- Motion to approve November minutes and meeting agenda: Kia Moua
- Second: Paul Slack
- The motion passed

## CECLC Leadership Vote

The CECLC received two nominations for co-chair: Shawn Sorrell and Foua-Choua Khang. Their nomination materials were sent to council members in advance of today's vote. Nicole Juan opened the floor for comments or questions; there were none.

Review and approve the nomination of Shawn Sorrell and Foua-Choua Khang as co-chairs:

- Motion to approve the co-chair nominees: Manuel Zuniga
- Second: Kia Moua
- The motion passed unanimously

These recommendations will be sent to Commissioner Harpstead for review and appointment.

## CECLC Member Share-outs and Community Updates

Foua-Choua Khang opened the floor for members to share.

- Shannon Geshick shared a Community Pop-Up Round Dance to honor Indigenous leaders on January 3rd from 11:15-11:30am in the State Capitol Rotunda. Nicole Juan will include the details in her post-meeting update.
- Shawn Sorrell shared the Hennepin County African-American Employee Resource Group is holding an event to celebrate Kwanzaa at Brookdale Library in Brooklyn Center on Tuesday, December 20 from 11:30am-1:30pm.
- Macdonald Metzger asked council members to consider applying for the 2023 MNLEND Fellowship, <https://lend.umn.edu/how-to-apply>.

## **Workgroup Updates**

### **Legislative and Policy Workgroup**

Shawn Sorrell said the workgroup is planning to host a CECLC monthly meeting at the State Capitol in either February or March as well as a meet-and-greet with legislators. The agenda for that will be set at its February 2nd meeting.

### **Topics and Issues Workgroup**

Paul Slack shared the workgroup will be making recommendations across the fields of child welfare to inform DHS's legislative proposals.

### **Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup**

Cratè Darden shared the workgroup continues to work with Equity Directors and devoted time planning for the December 15 Community Engagement Summit.

## **CECLC in Conversation with Commissioner Jodi Harpstead**

The council welcomed Commissioner Jodi Harpstead to today's meeting. Shawn Sorrell asked the Commissioner what support the Legislative and Policy Workgroup, and CECLC as a whole, can provide for the upcoming legislative session, to which she encouraged the workgroup to connect with the DHS Legislative team. She also wishes to be kept informed of CECLC's legislative priorities in order to advocate for them.

There was conversation around affordable housing stock; improvement in disparities in outcomes for Black and Indigenous children; and funding set-asides for tribal initiatives.

Commissioner Harpstead added DHS is actively striving to be more flexible and responsive to small neighborhood-based, culturally-specific providers to remove barriers for them to receive grants. She is proud of the amount of listening and co-creating that goes on year-round, with emphasis on centering community in ongoing agency work.

### **Public Meeting adjourned at 2:59 PM**