

# Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council


## Minutes

January 18, 2019


11:30-2:00

<b>COUNCIL CHAIR</b>	Chair Vayong Moua
<b>ACTING CHAIR IN COUNCIL CHAIR'S ABSENCE</b>	N/A
<b>TYPE OF MEETING</b>	CECLC Monthly Meeting
<b>NOTE TAKER</b>	Elizabeth Stein, Nicole Juan
<b>MEMBER ATTENDEES</b>	Vayong Moua, Kia Moua, Michael Birchard, Titilayo Bediako, Dr. Pahoua Yang, Rev. Dr. Jean Lee, Adesola Oni, Beverly Bushyhead, Pastor Emory Dively, Ann Hill, Anjuli Mishra Cameron, Brendabell Njee, Rosa Tock
<b>NOT IN ATTENDANCE</b>	
<b>DHS STAFF</b>	Nicole Juan, Verona Mitchell, Dr. Jeff Schiff, Rebeca Sedarski, Elizabeth Stein, Beth Dansie, Sophie Burnevik, Robby Sanders, Wendy Plager, Charles Lawler, Ama Boumi, Stacy Wells
<b>SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTERS</b>	
<b>PUBLIC</b>	Melvin Giles, Megan Phinney, Rosalva Hernandez, Maria Sarabia

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>Review/approve minutes from previous meetings</b>	<p>Motion to approve slate of remaining minutes from 2018:</p> <p>Jean: 1<sup>st</sup> motion Kia: 2<sup>nd</sup> motion</p> <p>None opposed. Motion passes.</p>	

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>Approve agenda</b>	<p>Motion to approve slate of remaining agendas from 2018 and today's agenda:</p> <p>Jean: 1<sup>st</sup> motion Kia: 2<sup>nd</sup> motion</p> <p>None opposed. Motion passes.</p>	
<b>Comments from Chair, Vayong Moua</b>	<p>Chair Vayong Moua began the meeting asking the group to reflect on Martin Luther King Jr. day and share a quote, reaction, or thought on this day or MLK's legacy. Vayong shared the quote: "Lukewarm acceptance is more bewildering than outright rejection" and its relation to the state of Minnesota in regard to its extreme inequities and false sense of immunity to racism. Below are quotes and responses by committee members and meeting attendees.</p> <p>"True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice."  "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."  "I come as one, but stand as 10,000."-Maya Angelou  "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."  "Injustice anywhere is a thread to justice everywhere."  "I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant."  "The time is always right to do what is right."  "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"  "Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."  "A right delayed is a right denied."  "Morality cannot be legislated, but behavior can be regulated."  "If you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice. Say that I was a drum major for peace. I was a drum major for righteousness."</p>	<p>New Executive Order:</p>  <p>2019_01_09_EO-19-01_(FINAL)_tcm1055-</p>

Item	Notes	Action Needed
	<p>Members of the council also reflected on his actions as an activist for social and racial justice. While radical for his time, his work and the work of those around him have is often romanticized in the present day. Council members reflected on what it means to be bold, to be committed to doing the work, and how we can use MLK's influence to create communities that are just and equitable.</p> <p>Vayong talked about the new DHS Commissioner- Tony Lourey. He is unable to make it to February meeting, but will be asked to join at the Council's open house at the Capitol-February 6<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Lourey was an early and genuine supporter of this council, willing to learn without being stuck on technical or ideological thresholds. While serving as a senator he called for equity analysis on bills he had oversight.</p> <p>Vayong shared some information with Commissioner Lourey via email such as the analysis of the DHS Policy on Equity, letters from the council in support of Antonia Wilcoxon, equity integration recommendations for Governor Walz, and the cost of inequities report. He also affirmed the council's top priority to set CECLC in perpetuity and included in DHS legislative proposals. Vayong mentions that while an investment of staff and funding is important, the council must be prepared to fight for these requests as equity initiatives with fiscal notes are often targets during the legislative session. The new executive order outlining the One Minnesota Council is an evolution of Governor Dayton's Executive Order, and includes stronger stakeholder engagement and more input in the policy process. This new order can offer the council more alignment and leverage.</p> <p>Council member Titilayo Bediako spoke on the need for the council to define its role and strategy moving forward. We need to reflect on what was learned in 2018, particularly regarding treatment of racial equity champions at DHS over the years. Both Titi and council member Beverly Bushyhead stressed meeting with Commissioner Lourey as soon as possible to better understand how he will take on equity in all its forms, as well as his vision and plan for the DHS Policy on Equity implementation. Beverly suggested making a strategic planning subcommittee to organize the path forward and define the priorities of the council for this legislative session. Rev. Dr. Jean Lee agreed and joined will help this committee. Any other council members interested in supporting this subcommittee should contact Beverly or Jean.</p>	

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>DHS Agency-wide Updates &amp; Discussion</b>	<p>Nicole shared information on the new leadership appointments in DHS under Commissioner Lourey. Titi suggested connecting with Claire Wilson, a longtime supporter of equity and the CECLC who will now be a deputy commissioner at DHS. Dr. Jeff Schiff mentioned this appointment is an opportunity to have the infrastructure of policy at the agency rooted in equity.</p> <p>The council welcomed Wendy Plager the new Diversity and Inclusion consultant at DHS. In her role, Wendy plans to collaborate with Employee Resource Groups to create educational opportunities at DHS and have workshops at DHS to talk about equity, diversity, intersectionality, allyship, how oppression can manifest itself at individual, interpersonal and institutional levels, etc.</p> <p>Vayong asked the equity coordinators to give an update regarding equity work in their administrations and if there were any barriers to doing work.</p> <p>Stacy Wells (Community Supports) noted that one barrier is how the equity coordinators' role is positioned at DHS. The roles appeared to be isolated. There are meetings of managers, supervisors and directors where the equity coordinators should be involved. Because of the hierarchical structure, Equity Coordinators are not included in the meetings to give guidance and feedback to programming.</p> <p>Vayong asked about the repositioning and reclassifying of the positions.</p> <p>Verona Mitchell (Children &amp; Family Services) has been working within her administration to develop a common language around equity. She also commented on the limitations of her position as a coordinator, as the original position was meant to be at a director level.</p> <p>Stacy Wells (Community Supports) says that these positions and the work is often under-resourced. There is more work to be done internally within existing equity committees as well as with external facing programs. Many people at DHS still do not see or acknowledge the disparities in access, treatment and outcomes experienced by populations we serve.</p> <p>Charlie Lawler (Direct Care &amp; Treatment) shared that it was recently written into his position as special projects coordinator to serve as equity coordinator. DCT is the largest administration at DHS.</p>	<p>DHS Organizational Chart Overview:</p>  <p>DHS Overview Graphical Organizat</p>

Item	Notes	Action Needed
	While Charlie has pushed the need for a full time equity coordinator within DCT, there is an implementation plan of action regarding the DHS Policy on Equity with a focus on sustainability.	
<b>Legislative Discussion: Women's Agenda: Kabo Yang, Executive Director, MWC</b>	<p>Minnesota Women's Consortium (MWC) is a non-partisan non-profit. They are currently seeking more community input on their legislative priorities, primarily Women's Economic Security Act (WESA) 2.0. Doing more targeted outreach, MWC is looking for ways to engage community and hear from more women of color as they work on their legislative priorities. Kabo mentioned that there is the potential to integrate WESA with the Women of Color Opportunity Act, introduced by Rep. Moran. MWC will also be looking for recommendations on the Office of Economic Status of Women, which was defunded in 2017 but they hope will be reinstated this session. This office conducts research that reveals gaps in government staffing by gender, though MWC is interested in community input on what people may like to see from this office and what it will look like.</p> <p>While it's unclear at the moment which legislative pieces will be under DHS scope, Kabo asks that this council look over her materials in hopes of partnering with the council and other community spaces to better inform their work.</p>	MWC Website: <a href="http://www.mnwomen.org">www.mnwomen.org</a>
<b>Community Input &amp; Concerns</b>	N/A	
<b>Announcements</b>	N/A	
<b>Adjourn</b>	Meeting adjourned at 2:10	

# Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council



Meeting Minutes



February 15, 2019

11:30-2:00



<b>COUNCIL CHAIR</b>	<b>Chair Vayong Moua</b>
<b>ACTING CHAIR IN COUNCIL CHAIR'S ABSENCE</b>	N/A
<b>TYPE OF MEETING</b>	CECLC Monthly Meeting
<b>NOTE TAKER</b>	Elizabeth Stein, Nicole Juan
<b>MEMBER ATTENDEES</b>	Titilayo Bediako, Michael Birchard, Beverly Bushyhead, Pastor Brian Herron, Rev. Dr. Jean Lee, Kia Moua, Vayong Moua, Adesola Oni
<b>DHS STAFF</b>	Roberta Downing, Beth Dansie, Verona Mitchell, Wendy Plager, Rebeca Sedarski, Claire Wilson, Vimbai Madzura, Olukemi Adeniyi-Akins, Lauren Yates, Kate Kunitz, Holly Johnson, Ama Boumi, Dr. Jeff Schiff, Michaelyn Bruer, Christa Spielman, Nicole Juan, Elizabeth Stein
<b>SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTERS</b>	MDH's Center for Health Equity Staff & Health Equity Advisory and Leadership (HEAL) Council members; Bruce Thao, Va Yang, Jokho Farah, Shor Salkas
<b>PUBLIC</b>	Madison Olmsted (MDH), Therese Genis, Laurelle Myhra, Courtney Jordan Baechler (MDH), Keneisha Gilmer, Samuel Moose, Jennifer Nguyen Moore

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>Review/approve minutes from previous meeting</b>	Quorum not met-minutes not approved	
<b>Review/approve today's agenda</b>	Quorum not met-agenda not approved.	

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>Comments from Chair, Vayong Moua</b>	<p>A few council members recently met with Cmr. Lourey to better get to know one another on a personal &amp; inter-organizational level as well as discuss the implementation of the policy on equity and treatment of people of color working within DHS. Chair Vayong Moua reported that the commissioner seems committed to learning and listening from group and is aware that this group is here to challenge him and hold him accountable.</p> <p>Vayong also recently discussed changing CECLC legislation with Rep. Rena Moran, who authored the initial legislation, to remove the current 2020 sunset date, include dedicated funding, and expand requirements of the Commissioner and council members.</p> <p>Michael Birchard asked if the council would benefit from the addition of co-chairs. Vayong mentioned that while that is not included in current legislative proposals, this could be addressed through the council's bylaws.</p>	<p>Request: council to find Senate companion bill/author for new CECLC legislation</p> <p>Looking for testifiers – members and community to support ground work for bill</p>
<b>DHS Updates- Roberta Downing, Assistant Commissioner</b>	<p>Roberta noted that there are still some outstanding appointments at DHS needing to be filled. DHS will also be looking for a new Community Relations Director. The hiring process will be very community inclusive, she asks the council for any recommendations on applicants or to contact her if they would like to be involved in the hiring process.</p> <p>Her goal has been to keep the ball rolling on all community engagement and equity work through this transition period. Nicole and Roberta have been digging into the equity policy to see what progress has been made, those updates will be ready to share at the March CECLC meeting. Roberta said that while progress has occurred on the policy implementation, there are many areas of the policy that can be amended and strengthened to push forward this work.</p> <p>Question from Michael and Titilayo Bediako: Has there been any discussion around creating an Assistant Commissioner (AC) of Equity at DHS? Titilayo commented that this would show equity work is being taken seriously by the department. She also mentioned that this council would benefit from someone who can spend time at the capitol on behalf of the Council. Claire Wilson, Deputy Commissioner: There have not been discussions over creating an AC on Equity work. Right now at the agency they are looking at how equity work can be consolidated</p>	<p>Handouts on policy progress @ next meeting</p> <p>Handouts (AAFPA legislation)</p> <div data-bbox="1688 980 1766 1040">  </div> <p>aafpa.pdf</p> <div data-bbox="1709 1110 1745 1170">  </div> <p>Rep. Rena Moran - MN African American</p> <p>Volunteers to make letters of support and testifiers for AAFPA bill</p>

Item	Notes	Action Needed
	<p>and appropriately resourced. She wants this work to be done in partnership with the CECLC and welcomes any ideas from the Council.</p> <p>AAFPA legislation was included in handouts as an issue of relevance to the council, currently being introduced by Rep. Moran and Senator Hayden. Vayong asked the council to think about creating letters of support as well as testifying in favor of this bill.</p> <p>Roberta mentioned wanting to revisit the equity policy, asked for council members who would be interested in meeting to see how the policy can be expanded and strengthened. Vayong, Michael, Titilayo, Beverly Bushyhead, and Adesola Oni volunteered to help with this work.</p>	<p>Roberta and Nicole to meet with group of council members to go over Policy on Equity review.</p>
<p><b>HEAL Council Overview- Dr. Jokho Farah, Va Yang, HEAL co-chairs</b></p>	<p>Health Equity Advisory and Leadership (HEAL) Council was founded in January 2018 to promote health equity work at the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). The council had over 100 applicants and selected 25 members from diverse ability, gender, sexual orientation, race, and geographies. The council first used their charter to develop mission, vision, purpose and value statements for MDH. These statements emphasized that this council would be actionable and would call out those in power to address areas of structural racism that create and perpetuate disparities.</p> <p>The council developed a memo with priority areas: data practice issues, community engagement, and systems level change. The council has met with Commissioner Malcolm who is supportive of this work. See presentation for more information on the memo and work groups.</p>	<p>HEAL Presentation:</p>  <p>HEAL_Meeting with DHS CECLC_Februar</p>
<p><b>MDH Perspective on HEAL-Bruce Thao, MDH Center for Health Equity</b></p>	<p>Bruce Thao, Director of the MDH Center for Health Equity, noted that unlike the CECLC, there is no equity policy or outside legislation supporting the HEAL Council in place, but a strategic plan which includes internal and external equity components, including creation of the HEAL council. The Center for Health Equity coordinates the Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative (EHDl); the HEAL council is tied to EHDl statute.</p> <p>Bruce also mentioned that he would be happy to return to CECLC meetings and report on the equity work MDH has been doing and inform DHS on how equity work has been structured within MDH.</p>	<p>Attach Center for Health Equity information, contact information.</p>  <p>commuinty health division MDH.pdf</p>



Item	Notes	Action Needed
		 MDH CHE Handout.pdf
<b>HEAL experience, challenges, and opportunities- HEAL Council</b>	Dr. Jokho Farah and Va Yang, HEAL council co-chairs, discussed the council's experience so far in its first year and laid out challenges they face. Council members cited challenges in figuring out where the power lies, where the biggest equity impacts can be made, and the difficulties in learning about government structure. They also want to be sure that there are opportunities to build bridges between agencies to create shared power and decision making.	 HEAL Letter of Support from Comm
<b>Discussion: How CECLC/HEAL support equity integration</b>	<p>What are opportunities for collaboration/equity integration between the CECLC and HEAL council?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vayong: Important to share resources and networks between the two councils. He added that in addition to a commitment from leadership, accountability structures should be put in place so that HEAL has the means to enact its memo. Ratifying an equity policy like DHS has done is one way to make sure the recommendations and practices included in the memo will live beyond any one person's tenure with MDH. A lot of the CECLC's power comes from statute. Vayong advised the HEAL council to find legislators and other allies that may support similar legislative avenues for this work. Michael mentioned that while the CECLC has legislative backing, it is first and foremost rooted in communities, giving power and leverage to its work.</li> <li>• HEAL asked council members to sign a letter of support which will be delivered to Commissioner Malcom. A template has been provided but can be altered to better suit those contributing a letter. Vayong volunteered to work on a first draft of a letter of support on behalf of the CECLC as a whole.</li> <li>• Ama Boumi suggested that alternating membership terms, such as where some members serve three year terms and others serve two year terms, would help to keep institutional knowledge and sustain momentum through onboarding and member loss.</li> </ul>	<p>March 26<sup>th</sup>: Health Equity Summit by MDH</p> <p>Individual letters of support as well as one from the CECLC as a whole due March 1<sup>st</sup>.</p> <p>Continued communication/collaboration between MDH and DHS, inter-agency work at the AC level.</p>

Item	Notes	Action Needed
	<p>Question from Council Member Pastor Herron: Has there been discussion around a summit with all of the cultural and ethnic councils? He added that it's important to find where these councils intersect in order to strengthen each other, and avoid being counterproductive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruce mentioned there is a Health Equity Summit put on by MDH on March 26<sup>th</sup> and he will share more information about it after the meeting.</li> <li>• Council members suggested beginning collaboration with the One Minnesota Council created through Governor Walz's executive order.</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Input &amp; Concerns, Announcements</b>	<p>Roberta mentioned the Supreme Court will soon make a decision on including a question on citizenship status to the census, which will have potential impacts on DHS and equity.</p> <p>Vayong reminded the council that most members' terms are slated to sunset in July 2019. He asked that council members look to their networks for outreach in finding new council members and a new council chair.</p> <p>There was an ask from the Children and Family Services administration at DHS for two council members to sit on a community review panel for RFPs for a project working on birth to three systems reform. More information can be found in Nicole's email.</p> <p>Next meeting: update on DHS strategic plan and policy on equity implementation.</p> <p>Events: We Win Institute- Feb 26<sup>th</sup>: Harlem Renaissance event. Contact Titilayo for more information.</p>	<p>Contact Kia Moua and Nicole Juan if you would like to sit on the community review panel</p> <p>Begin outreach for new council members</p>
<b>Adjourn</b>	Meeting adjourned at 2:05	





# Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council


## MINUTES

MARCH 15, 2019

11:30-2:00

COUNCIL CHAIR	Chair Vayong Moua
ACTING CHAIR IN COUNCIL CHAIR'S ABSENCE	N/A
TYPE OF MEETING	CECLC Monthly Meeting
NOTE TAKER	Elizabeth Stein, Nicole Juan
ATTENDEES	Maret Banks, Titilayo Bediako, Dr. Nkem Chirpich, Pastor Emory Dively, Rev. Dr. Jean Lee, Anjuli Mishra Cameron, Kia Moua, Vayong Moua, Brendabell Njee, Adesola Oni, Maria Sarabia, Sheree Steele, Nyagatare Valens
NOT IN ATTENDANCE	
DHS STAFF	Roberta Downing, Tamir Elnabarawy, Stacy Twite, Verona Mitchell, Wendy Plager, Rebeca Sedarski, Nicole Juan, Elizabeth Stein, Stacy Wells, Olukemi Adeniyi-Akins, Christa Spielman, Keneisha Gilmer, Beth Dansie,
SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTERS:	Rosalva Hernandez, Elizabeth Stein
PUBLIC:	Melvin Giles, Suonvisal Seth

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>Review/approve minutes from previous meeting</b>	<p>Motion to approve January, February minutes. Quorum present</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Motion: Dr. Nkem Chirpich 2<sup>nd</sup>: Kia Moua</p> <p>None opposed. Motion passes.</p>	 February 2019 CECLC Minutes Draf
<b>Review/approve today's agenda</b>	<p>Motion to approve January, February, March agendas: Quorum present</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Motion: Dr. Nkem Chirpich 2<sup>nd</sup>: Kia Moua</p> <p>None opposed. Motion passes.</p>	 March 2019 CECLC Agenda Final.pdf
<b>Comments from Chair, Vayong Moua</b>	<p>Chair Vayong Moua began the meeting by recognizing the recent attack on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand and sending healing energy to those affected.</p> <p>Vayong discussed the recent report from the Office of the Legislative Auditor's assessment of fraud allegations with the Child Care Assistance Program. This report could not substantiate any claims that CCAP fraud money has been used to fund terrorist organizations in foreign countries. These allegations have been used by some to target communities in Minnesota, and highlights the importance of DHS building trust with community to stop Islamophobic narratives in cases like this.</p> <p>Vayong said that minority communities are often intentionally pitted against each other to distract from the overall goal of solidarity. Intersectionality does not guarantee solidarity, and it requires deliberate action to lift all communities.</p> <p>Attached to the minutes and briefly discussed: HEAL Letter of Support from CECLC</p> <p><u>Update to CECLC legislation</u></p> <p>Currently no hearing date. Senator Hayden has signed on as author of companion bill, SF 1561. Representatives Moran and Lee are authors on HF771. The new language removes the council sunset date (currently June 2020), includes \$50,000 in council funding for increased community engagement, and strengthens connections with DHS.</p>	<p>Contact your legislators so they know about your participation in the CECLC and ask them to support this legislation.</p>  HEAL Letter of Support from Comr  Why Lead with Race.pdf

	<p>Council member Titilayo Bediako asked if we should be concerned that we don't have a hearing date. More communication is needed about the strategy and timelines surrounding this bill. Others have mentioned that while the first committee deadline is March 15, 2019, there are still opportunities to move this legislation forward.</p> <p>Vayong asks that all members reach out to your legislators and advocate for the council, ask that they champion this legislation (HF771/SF1561).</p>	
<b>DHS Updates- Roberta Downing, Assistant Commissioner</b>	<p>Roberta Downing began her update with an acknowledgement for Nicole Juan, Community Relations Project Manager, who has taken on a significant amount of work during the administration change to keep the train moving for the Community Relations division. The Director of Community Relations position has been posted and will close early April. The job posting is intentionally brief, DHS is seeking a wide range of applicants. Postings have also been created for positions on the council as most member terms expire in July 2019. Those postings can be found on the <a href="#">Secretary of State's Boards and Commissions website</a>. Please spread information on these positions to your networks.</p> <p>Roberta and several council members recently met to go over the DHS Equity Policy and find areas where it can be updated and strengthened. The group decided to build on the existing policy and will have regular meetings moving forward. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 12pm. Please contact Nicole Juan if you would like to be a part of these meetings or send items or concerns you would like addressed.</p> <p>Federal Relations Update: DHS welcomed a new Federal Relations Director, Tamir Elnabarawy. Tamir joins DHS after serving as a senior health care staffer for U.S. Rep. Collin Peterson. The White House recently released its budget request for 2020. While it is widely expected to be rejected by Congress, more detailed, agency-specific information will be provided as it becomes available. See below for more details about how the President's Budget would affect DHS programs:</p> <p><b><u>Work Requirements:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally implements stricter work requirements for working-age SNAP, federal housing, Medicaid, and TANF beneficiaries.</li> <li>• The proposal includes hardship exemptions.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Medicaid:</u></b></p>	 CECLC FAQ 2019.pdf

- Reduces Medicaid spending by \$1.5 trillion over ten years.
- Shifts more than \$1.2 trillion to a “Market-Based Health Care Grant Program” (a block grant).
  - The program’s growth is limited to the pace of inflation
- Eliminates funding for the Medicaid expansion population.

**SNAP:**

- Reduces SNAP spending by \$219 billion over ten years.
- The proposal includes the “America’s Harvest Box” proposal to replace some SNAP benefits with a monthly box of nonperishable items.

**TANF:**

- Reduces overall TANF spending by \$21 billion over ten years.
- Reduces the TANF Block Grant by \$15 billion over ten years.
- Eliminates the TANF Contingency Fund.

**Opioids:**

- Overall, the proposal keeps opioid funding flat.
- Cuts nearly \$100 million from opioid-specific grant programs for law enforcement and community groups.
- Cuts the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's budget by \$62 million in FY20.
- Allocates \$245 million over 10 years to let states “extend Medicaid coverage for pregnant women with substance use disorder to one year postpartum.”
- Funds \$1.5 billion in state response grants over ten years.

**Child Care:**





- Includes a one-time, mandatory investment of \$1 billion to establish a competitive grant for child care in underserved areas.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):**

- Eliminates the CDBG.

**Social Services Block Grant (SSBG):**

- Eliminates the SSBG.

<b>CECLC Legislative Report &amp; DHS Annual Equity Review- Nicole Juan and Liz Stein</b>	<p>The 2019 CECLC Legislative Report was published March 13, 2019 and will soon be on the external CECLC website. Nicole also commented on the update to the implementation of the Equity Policy document, which identifies where more effort is needed and lays out performance indicators for standard in the policy.</p> <p><u>2018 Equity Review</u></p> <p>Liz Stein presented on the results of the 2018 Equity Review, which is done as a requirement of the annual legislative report. The presentation provided an overview of projects included in the review which were intended to reduce disparities among cultural and ethnic communities, or were under the scope of the DHS Equity Policy. Persistent barriers to equity work were reported surrounding lack of funding, data/technology, and community involvement.</p> <p>Council members responded and emphasized need to see action and change. Collecting data is not enough, annual results of this project point to structural inequities and a lack of leadership, power and accountability which have set priorities that perpetuate these barriers. Vayong also suggested giving a better idea of the scope of this review in relation to all of the work DHS is doing, as well as creating more defined sections criteria on projects that are included.</p> <p>Nicole mentioned this information will be presented to the senior management team. The full review can be found in the 2019 Legislative Report.</p>	 2019LegislativeReportCECLC.pdf   CECLC March 2019 staff update.docx   2018 DHS Equity Review.pptx
<b>DHS Community Voices and Child Support-Rosalva Hernandez</b>	<p>Rosalva Hernandez updated the council on her work from the DHS Child Support Online Communication tool. This project used community engagement to increase current child support online tool use and solicit feedback on the challenge of driver's license suspension protocol for past-due child payment supports. The goal is to teach the methodology they've used for engagement at 10 more sites, currently taught through the Future Services Institute.</p>	 Child Support & Community Voices N
<b>Community Input &amp; Concerns, Announcements</b>	<p>Council members repeated concerns regarding the status of CECLC legislation. Titilayo commented that the council should reach out to the Governor regarding the council's asks. Council members also questioned what role DHS can play in promoting CECLC legislation.</p>	
<b>Adjourn</b>	<p>Meeting adjourned at 2:15pm</p>	





# Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council



## Meeting Minutes



April 19, 2019



11:30-2:00

<b>COUNCIL CHAIR</b>	<b>Chair Vayong Moua</b>
<b>ACTING CHAIR IN COUNCIL CHAIR'S ABSENCE</b>	N/A
<b>TYPE OF MEETING</b>	CECLC Monthly Meeting
<b>NOTE TAKER</b>	Nicole Juan
<b>MEMBER ATTENDEES</b>	Titilayo Bediako, Michael Birchard, Beverly Bushyhead, Rev. Dr. Jean Lee, Kia Moua, Vayong Moua, Adesola Oni, Dr. Chirpich, Brendabell Njee, Sheree Steele, Lucas Peterson, Rosa Tock, Maret Banks, Nyagatare Valens, Rev. Emory Dively, Dr. Pahoua Yang
<b>DHS STAFF</b>	Roberta Downing, Beth Dansie, Wendy Plager, Claire Wilson, Ama Eli Boumi, Dr. Jeff Schiff, Michaelyn Bruer, Christa Spielman, Nicole Juan, Tamir Elnabarawy, Erin Sullivan Sutton, Lisa Bayley, Alexis R. Kochanski, Haregewoin Tsegaye, Nikki Farago, Amanda Calmbacher, Vern LaPlante, Anab Guliad, Stacy Twite
<b>SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTERS</b>	Commissioner Tony Lourey and senior management team members; DHS Equity Coordinators: Verona Mitchell, Stacy Wells, Christa Spielman, Crystal Fairchild, Charles Lawler, Mohamed Mourssi
<b>PUBLIC</b>	

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>Review/approve minutes from previous meeting</b>		
<b>Review/approve today's agenda</b>	Quorum not met-agenda not approved.	

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>Comments from Chair, Vayong Moua</b>	<p>A few council members recently met with Cmr. Lourey to better get to know one another on a personal &amp; inter-organizational level as well as discuss the implementation of the policy on equity and treatment of people of color working within DHS. Chair Vayong Moua reported that the commissioner seems committed to learning and listening from group and is aware that this group is here to challenge him and hold him accountable.</p> <p>Vayong also recently discussed changing CECLC legislation with Rep. Rena Moran, who authored the initial legislation, to remove the current 2020 sunset date, include dedicated funding, and expand requirements of the Commissioner and council members.</p> <p>Michael Birchard asked if the council would benefit from the addition of co-chairs. Vayong mentioned that while that is not included in current legislative proposals, this could be addressed through the council's bylaws.</p>	<p>Request: council to find Senate companion bill/author for new CECLC legislation</p> <p>Looking for testifiers – members and community to support ground work for bill</p>
<b>DHS Updates- Roberta Downing, Assistant Commissioner</b>	<p>Roberta noted that there are still some outstanding appointments at DHS needing to be filled. DHS will also be looking for a new Community Relations Director. The hiring process will be very community inclusive, she asks the council for any recommendations on applicants or to contact her if they would like to be involved in the hiring process.</p> <p>Her goal has been to keep the ball rolling on all community engagement and equity work through this transition period. Nicole and Roberta have been digging into the equity policy to see what progress has been made, those updates will be ready to share at the March CECLC meeting. Roberta said that while progress has occurred on the policy implementation, there are many areas of the policy that can be amended and strengthened to push forward this work.</p> <p>Question from Michael and Titilayo Bediako: Has there been any discussion around creating an Assistant Commissioner (AC) of Equity at DHS? Titilayo commented that this would show equity work is being taken seriously by the department. She also mentioned that this council would benefit from someone who can spend time at the capitol on behalf of the Council. Claire Wilson, Deputy Commissioner: There have not been discussions over creating an AC on Equity work. Right now at the agency they are looking at how equity work can be consolidated</p>	<p>Handouts on policy progress @ next meeting</p> <p>Handouts (AAFPA legislation)</p> <div data-bbox="1688 980 1766 1040">  </div> <p>aafpa.pdf</p> <div data-bbox="1709 1110 1766 1170">  </div> <p>Rep. Rena Moran - MN African American</p> <p>Volunteers to make letters of support and testifiers for AAFP bill</p>

Item	Notes	Action Needed
	<p>and appropriately resourced. She wants this work to be done in partnership with the CECLC and welcomes any ideas from the Council.</p> <p>AAFPA legislation was included in handouts as an issue of relevance to the council, currently being introduced by Rep. Moran and Senator Hayden. Vayong asked the council to think about creating letters of support as well as testifying in favor of this bill.</p> <p>Roberta mentioned wanting to revisit the equity policy, asked for council members who would be interested in meeting to see how the policy can be expanded and strengthened. Vayong, Michael, Titilayo, Beverly Bushyhead, and Adesola Oni volunteered to help with this work.</p>	<p>Roberta and Nicole to meet with group of council members to go over Policy on Equity review.</p>
<p><b>HEAL Council Overview- Dr. Jokho Farah, Va Yang, HEAL co-chairs</b></p>	<p>Health Equity Advisory and Leadership (HEAL) Council was founded in January 2018 to promote health equity work at the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). The council had over 100 applicants and selected 25 members from diverse ability, gender, sexual orientation, race, and geographies. The council first used their charter to develop mission, vision, purpose and value statements for MDH. These statements emphasized that this council would be actionable and would call out those in power to address areas of structural racism that create and perpetuate disparities.</p> <p>The council developed a memo with priority areas: data practice issues, community engagement, and systems level change. The council has met with Commissioner Malcolm who is supportive of this work. See presentation for more information on the memo and work groups.</p>	<p>HEAL Presentation:</p>  <p>HEAL_Meeting with DHS CECLC_Februar</p>
<p><b>MDH Perspective on HEAL-Bruce Thao, MDH Center for Health Equity</b></p>	<p>Bruce Thao, Director of the MDH Center for Health Equity, noted that unlike the CECLC, there is no equity policy or outside legislation supporting the HEAL Council in place, but a strategic plan which includes internal and external equity components, including creation of the HEAL council. The Center for Health Equity coordinates the Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative (EHDl); the HEAL council is tied to EHDl statute.</p> <p>Bruce also mentioned that he would be happy to return to CECLC meetings and report on the equity work MDH has been doing and inform DHS on how equity work has been structured within MDH.</p>	<p>Attach Center for Health Equity information, contact information.</p>  <p>commuinty health division MDH.pdf</p>

Item	Notes	Action Needed
		 MDH CHE Handout.pdf
<b>HEAL experience, challenges, and opportunities- HEAL Council</b>	Dr. Jokho Farah and Va Yang, HEAL council co-chairs, discussed the council's experience so far in its first year and laid out challenges they face. Council members cited challenges in figuring out where the power lies, where the biggest equity impacts can be made, and the difficulties in learning about government structure. They also want to be sure that there are opportunities to build bridges between agencies to create shared power and decision making.	 HEAL Letter of Support from Comm
<b>Discussion: How CECLC/HEAL support equity integration</b>	<p>What are opportunities for collaboration/equity integration between the CECLC and HEAL council?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vayong: Important to share resources and networks between the two councils. He added that in addition to a commitment from leadership, accountability structures should be put in place so that HEAL has the means to enact its memo. Ratifying an equity policy like DHS has done is one way to make sure the recommendations and practices included in the memo will live beyond any one person's tenure with MDH. A lot of the CECLC's power comes from statute. Vayong advised the HEAL council to find legislators and other allies that may support similar legislative avenues for this work. Michael mentioned that while the CECLC has legislative backing, it is first and foremost rooted in communities, giving power and leverage to its work.</li> <li>• HEAL asked council members to sign a letter of support which will be delivered to Commissioner Malcom. A template has been provided but can be altered to better suit those contributing a letter. Vayong volunteered to work on a first draft of a letter of support on behalf of the CECLC as a whole.</li> <li>• Ama Boumi suggested that alternating membership terms, such as where some members serve three year terms and others serve two year terms, would help to keep institutional knowledge and sustain momentum through onboarding and member loss.</li> </ul>	<p>March 26<sup>th</sup>: Health Equity Summit by MDH</p> <p>Individual letters of support as well as one from the CECLC as a whole due March 1<sup>st</sup>.</p> <p>Continued communication/collaboration between MDH and DHS, inter-agency work at the AC level.</p>


Item	Notes	Action Needed
	<p>Question from Council Member Pastor Herron: Has there been discussion around a summit with all of the cultural and ethnic councils? He added that it's important to find where these councils intersect in order to strengthen each other, and avoid being counterproductive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruce mentioned there is a Health Equity Summit put on by MDH on March 26<sup>th</sup> and he will share more information about it after the meeting.</li> <li>• Council members suggested beginning collaboration with the One Minnesota Council created through Governor Walz's executive order.</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Input &amp; Concerns, Announcements</b>	<p>Roberta mentioned the Supreme Court will soon make a decision on including a question on citizenship status to the census, which will have potential impacts on DHS and equity.</p> <p>Vayong reminded the council that most members' terms are slated to sunset in July 2019. He asked that council members look to their networks for outreach in finding new council members and a new council chair.</p> <p>There was an ask from the Children and Family Services administration at DHS for two council members to sit on a community review panel for RFPs for a project working on birth to three systems reform. More information can be found in Nicole's email.</p> <p>Next meeting: update on DHS strategic plan and policy on equity implementation.</p> <p>Events: We Win Institute- Feb 26<sup>th</sup>: Harlem Renaissance event. Contact Titilayo for more information.</p>	<p>Contact Kia Moua and Nicole Juan if you would like to sit on the community review panel</p> <p>Begin outreach for new council members</p>
<b>Adjourn</b>	Meeting adjourned at 2:05	






# Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

## MINUTES

MAY 17, 2019 11:30-2:00


COUNCIL CHAIR	Vayong Moua
ACTING CHAIR IN COUNCIL CHAIR'S ABSENCE	Maria Sarabia
TYPE OF MEETING	CECLC Monthly Meeting
NOTE TAKER	Elizabeth Stein, Nicole Juan
ATTENDEES	Patrice Bailey, Maret Banks, Titilayo Bediako, Michael Birchard, Beverly Bushyhead, Pastor Emory Dively, Rev. Dr. Jean Lee, Kia Moua, Adesola Oni, Lucas Peterson, Maria Sarabia, Dr. Pahoua Yang
NOT IN ATTENDANCE	
DHS STAFF	Nicole Juan, Elizabeth Stein, Tamir Elnabarawy, Beth Dansie, Verona Mitchell, Mohamed Mourssi-Alfash, Wendy Plager, Rebeca Sedarski, Stacy Wells, Jeshua Livstrom, Donald Allen, Christa Spielman, Jessica Raymond
SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTERS:	Jeshua Livstrom-DHS Contracts, Procurement, Legal Compliance Division Jessica Raymond- DHS Child Support Division
PUBLIC:	Melvin Giles, Humberto Cano

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>Review/approve minutes from previous meeting</b>	Motion by Kia Moua, second by Pahoua Yang. Approved by voice vote.	
<b>Review/approve today's agenda</b>	Motion by Rev. Dr. Jean Lee, second by Kia Moua. Approved by voice vote.	
<b>Comments from Acting Chair, Maria Sarabia</b>	Maria Sarabia opened the meeting with thoughts on how to move forward in filling the council chair position, as current Chair Vayong Moua's council term will be ending in July 2019. Council members agreed to move forward with having co-chairs. Council member Lucas Peterson noted the importance of outlining co-chair duties and responsibilities as new council members join. Council member Michael Birchard nominated Maria Sarabia and Beverly Bushyhead as co-chairs. Maria asked for any nominations or recommendations for chair to be sent to Nicole, further discussion will be added as an agenda item at the next council meeting. The group emphasized finding a balance between existing council members make recommendations for chair positions using the knowledge they have gained over the past years and allowing new council members to have a voice in the decision making process.	Send Council nominations, questions, or comments to Nicole Juan
<b>DHS Updates- Equity Review follow up</b>	<p>New DHS Community Relations Director will be starting June 3<sup>rd</sup>. This person has not yet been disclosed to the council or review panel who assisted in applicant interviews. Maria said this lack of communication hurts the trust between the council and DHS, as historically the person in this role is highly involved with the council and serves as an advocate for equity. Council member Titilayo Bediako said that not keeping the council better informed in this process demonstrates a lack of respect. Maria noted that this shows where relationships between the council and agency can be improved, and serve as an opportunity to increase transparency.</p> <p><u>Equity Review Follow Up</u>  Liz Stein (DHS- Community Relations) followed up on the Equity Review project which is included in the annual legislative report and requires a <i>"list of programs, groups, and grants used to reduce disparities, and also statistically valid reports of outcomes on the reduction of the disparities."</i> The 2018 review was presented to the council at the March meeting. The presentation garnered helpful feedback on what can be improved and what can be changed to make it more useful to the council and DHS. Asked for</p>	 2018 DHS Annual Equity Review.Final.

	<p>suggestions on what kind of projects council members would like to see submitted to this review, and what information from these projects should be highlighted. Contact Liz with any suggestions on what could be improved or changed moving forward.</p>	
<p><b>Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in contracting and grant making-Jeshua Livstrom</b></p>	<p>A year ago the contracting, procurement and legal compliance division was asked by DHS leadership on different ways to approach Diversity &amp; Inclusion in their work. This division works with other administrations in DHS to provide guidance and resources. This has evolved into three main areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sourcing and Outreach <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Developing new Request for Proposal (RFP) template. They receive a lot of feedback on how challenging the process and submission can be. Changes have been made to the evaluation process to include equity measures and weight certain equity related criteria in professional/technical and grant RFPs. RFP documents have been designed to assist grant maker who create these RFPs, to nudge programs to work through an equity analysis at the pre-RFP stage. Would like input on repository of evaluation criteria to include in RFPs and questions to include in RFPs.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Contact Language and Procedural Accessibility <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Mini-Grants: For grant projects valued at \$25,000 or less, a 5 pg. document can be submitted to increase accessibility of funding to small and diverse organizations.</li> <li>b. Micro-grants: For grants under \$5,000, they are developing tools/protocols to remove competitive process</li> <li>c. Grant contract templates connect grantees with Targeted Group/Economically Disadvantaged/Veteran Owned (TG/ED/VO) vendors.</li> <li>d. Equity Language Repository is being developed, which programs can use while drafting grant contracts.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Employee and Community engagement <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Community and employee engagement: streamlined data base to help staff reach out to organizations and vendors.</li> <li>b. Grants council developed to share ideas and best practices. Workgroups and advisory groups being developed.</li> <li>c. Working with office OEPD to determine who is doing a good job and where there is room for improvement</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<div>  <p>Equity in DHS Contracting and Gr</p> </div> <div>  <p>Mini Grant Application_FINALd</p> </div> <div>  <p>Equity Criteria (final 4-17-19).docx</p> </div> <div>  <p>DI RFP questions_final_4-17-19.docx</p> </div> <div>  <p>DI Contract Language - (FINAL 4-17-19).docx</p> </div>



	<p>Community engagement was challenging to address. Working on community reviewers and advisors to address compensation. Lots of barriers within DHS procedures. How do we provide options for compensating community members without impacting benefits/eligibility? New RFI templates, which get input from community before RFP, are being developed.</p> <p>CPLC division offers trainings for grant makers and contracts managers. Developed scaled back training and toolkit detailing how equity and inclusion can be addressed at each stage of the process. A technical assistance workgroup has been established. Options to visit organizations in community to view RFP presentations</p> <p>Comments from council:</p> <p>Lucas Peterson: What sort of instruction is given to RFP reviewers? Possibility of bias towards organizations with more money who can create a very polished looking proposal. How are timelines for submissions being addressed in crease equity? Shorter timelines may prevent smaller, community-based organizations from applying.</p> <p>Maria Sarabia: Opportunity to use council to contract with other organizations, nonprofits, and consultants. Suggests using measurement/report cards to track spending and looking into more flexibility in insurance requirements.</p> <p>Beverly Bushyhead: Increase technical assistance to organizations so they aren't limiting themselves to smaller grants.</p> <p>Michael: Question about legal services and specialized resources available for smaller organizations, also wondering what resources/trainings are being provided by DHS to approach initiatives with an equity lens.</p> <p>Jean: Question about what instructions are given to potential grantees between administrations/divisions and how that impacts the resulting applications that come in. Noted that there is also potential of bias by reviewers who may have connections to larger organizations, board members, etc. Mentioned that DEED and legislature are discussing putting a cap on how much government money an organization gets.</p>	
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<p><b>MN Child Support Taskforce Jessica Raymond</b></p>	<p>The child support task force last visited the council in 2017, after being created in 2016. The task force advises the Commissioner of DHS to serve MN children and involves parents, legislators, county attorneys, legal aid, bar associate, child support division director, etc. The task force has focused on the basic support table, as the economic data on costs of raising children is 17 years old.</p> <p>Recommendations: Continue using an income shares model (looking at both parents). Updating cost levels of raising children and extending from 15 to 30,000/month to complement increased wages. Implement a low-income threshold. Extend self-support reserve to both parents.</p> <p>Questions were raised regarding how to account for the social and human costs associated with child rearing, if that is taken into account when considering custodial parents' income/expenses. Council member Beverly Bushyhead offered that the custodial parent is contributing more than just money. Qualitative research may help answer these questions, though Jessica commented that there are limitations within the child support system and data available so they often don't know a lot about the families they serve.</p> <p>Patrice Bailey asked if the task force has any way to know how child support funds are being spent. Jessica replied that this is a common concern that gets brought up, and there are some states that track this, but MN does not.</p> <p>Council member Maret Banks offered insight into the unique challenges domestic violence cases encounter in regard to child care, and emphasized the importance that those who can speak to those situations are being heard on the task force.</p> <p>The Child Support Task Force is expiring in June 2019. They are drafting a final report which will be shared with the council. Their final meeting will be June 26<sup>th</sup>.</p>	 <p>MN Child Support Task Force Presentat</p>
<p><b>Community Input &amp; Concerns, Announcements</b></p>	<p>Beverly asked when the council will be able to see the DHS Strategic Plan. She mentioned it was supposed to be brought to the council late last year but was not covered. Nicole said that some of the community engagement pieces may be shared at the June meeting, the full plan will be on an agenda this year.</p> <p>The Bush Cohort is hosting several close out events to celebrate the end of their four year grant. Contact Nicole if you have any questions or would like to attend any events being held at DHS that require a visitor pass.</p>	<p>Tell Nicole if you'd like to attend community events</p> <p>Nicole: Schedule DHS strategic</p>


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Bush Closeout Celebrations</u></b>  These will be a brief overview of the work and accomplishments of the Bush Cohort over the years, followed by a modified World Café where attendees can learn more about the work and resources available surrounding authentic community engagement and participatory leadership.  <i>Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 444 Lafayette Rm 3148, 1:30-3:30pm</i>  <i>Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, ELA 2370-2380, 9:30am-11:30am</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b><u>Peace Celebration: Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, Ober Community Center, 3:30-7pm</u></b>  The Bush Cohort is contributing to this event, hosted by Community Peace Celebration and Urban Farm &amp; Garden Alliance!</li> <li>○ <b><u>Bush Community Event, Wednesday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-7:30, Hallie Q Brown Community Center</u></b>  The Bush Cohort will be hosting an event at the Hallie Q Brown Community Center for community members who were involved in Bush Cohort activities, and anyone else interested in a night of food and relationship building.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	plan at CECLC meeting
<b>Adjourn</b>	Meeting adjourned at 2:00pm	

# Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

## MINUTES

JUNE 21, 2019 11:30-2:00

COUNCIL CHAIR	Vayong Moua
ACTING CHAIR IN COUNCIL CHAIR'S ABSENCE	Vayong Moua
TYPE OF MEETING	CECLC Monthly Meeting
NOTE TAKER	Nicole Juan
ATTENDEES	Vayong Moua, Beverly Bushyhead, Pastor Emory Dively, Dr. Brendabell Njee, Rev. Dr. Jean Lee , Maret Banks, Dr. Pahoua Yang, Michael Birchard, Dr. Chirpich, Kia Moua, Lucas Peterson, Adesola Oni, Titilayo Bediako, Maria Sarabia
NOT IN ATTENDANCE	
DHS STAFF	Nicole Juan, Robert Downing, Helly Lee, Diego Diaz, Mohamed Mourssi-Alfash, Christa Spielman, Wendy Plager, Rebeca Sedarski, Sophie Burnevak, Beth Dansie, Sarah Lent, Michaelyn Bruer, Jennifer Blanchard, Charles Lawler, Amanda Calmbacher, Dan Pollock,
SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTERS:	Antonia Wilcoxon
PUBLIC:	Melvin Giles, Antonia Wilcoxon

Item	Notes	Action Needed
<b>Review/approve minutes from previous meeting</b>	Motion by Kia Moua, second by Dr C. Approved by voice vote.	
<b>Review/approve today's agenda</b>	Motion by Kia, second by Dr. C. Approved by voice vote.	
<b>Introductions</b>	All attendees gave introductions and shared what they are doing with regard to 'equity' over the summer months.	
<b>Guest speaker, Dr. Antonia Wilcoxon</b>	<p>Vayong provided background and introduction to guest presenter, Dr. Antonia Wilcoxon. He reminded the room that Antonia is the architect of the council, and a great inside champion for equity. She created a council that was not a token body, and fought to make sure it was a leadership council and not purely advisory. Dr Wilcoxon is one of the greatest champions in country on how to systematize equity into governance. Her blueprint is something to be modeled and tailored to other public agencies. This is a homecoming for Antonia at the council today. Vayong looks forward on her updates, what she is doing, and how she continues the fight for equity.</p> <p>Dr. Wilcoxon began her time giving a brief history of the CECLC. The first meeting of this council was in November, 2013 at Wilder. Chuck Johnson made an introduction to leadership at DHS, to all council members, etc. Commissioner Jesson and Assistant Commissioner Anne Barry were champions of equity at DHS and this council, and provided space and autonomy to be creative as they listened to community voices. The work Antonia practices is informed by Paolo Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed – see attachment for a sample); this theory underscores that people need to become aware of situations for themselves to then be the ones to change it. People live inequities on a daily basis, they are felt profoundly. Everyone is entitled to the same outcomes when visiting health care and other government systems, but unfortunately in Minnesota this is not the case.</p> <p>When Antonia started at DHS in 2004, she managed a national program in children's mental health. They were fostering change in clinics and hospitals so young children's needs are identified early. After working</p>	 <p>freire_pedagogy_of _the_oppressed_ch2-</p>

	<p>on this grant, she left that division to become a Disparities Reduction Project Manager. Leadership at DHS created a strategic plan process and identified disparities reduction as one of the primary strategies to attack, as the agency was not meeting its mission as promised to people of MN. Antonia's work prior to that at DHS had been in community, and community-based organizations in Frogtown. Valuing wisdom and lived experience of community members is integral to this work. She spent eleven years in the disparities reduction position; at first it focused on internal changes and work, but she pushed for more intentional community involvement.</p> <p>Community feedback and relationship building work culminated in a set of recommendations. These included: DHS needing to have staff that looks like the people it serves; leadership needs to understand the reality/lived experience of folks DHS serves and should take anti-racism training that includes discussions on historical trauma. The final recommendation was that community would like to have more space within agency to give recommendations and feedback, and the idea for the CECLC was born. Antonia and Anne drafted language for legislation, went back to community for input, and created an example for community to learn about the legislative process and policy making.</p> <p>It has been a deep honor for Dr. Wilcoxon to work with the council since its inception. The council and DHS learn together, challenge each other, talk about difficult issues, and respect folks' own lived experience.</p> <p>This work a labor of love and learning. Dr. Wilcoxon's current role is a community engagement specialist with Ramsey County. She is working on a project around alternative programming for youth (black and brown) ages 10-17 to move away from the juvenile justice system and toward being children of hope.</p>	
<b>Comments from CECLC</b>	<p>Titilayo Bediako: What Antonia put together for this council is historic. This is the first council she has been on where there is an intentional multicultural group of people having a true voice and working together. Nobody tries to speak for anyone else. People's voices are respected. The council can ask authentic questions of heads of departments at DHS and are able to create relationships from folks across cultural lines. There is space to disagree but members still have respect and love for others who are a part of the group. Hopefully this can be a model across Minnesota for giving community voice and for being an equal voice. Antonia had everything to do with it making this council effective; her leadership was magnificent and incredible and helped empower the council as it moves forward.</p>	

	<p>Jennifer Blanchard: Noted that she has worked with Antonia at DHS and has learned so much from her; mentioned that Antonia has had profound impact at DHS and the seeds she has planted have grown in many ways and has sparked leadership of so many people to do this work – from the Bush Cohort to other community engagement projects to the equity policy.</p> <p>Brendabell Njee: Mentioned that this group not only a group to support health equity in MN but it is also to support health equity in the world. She also mentioned the profound impact members, such as Dr. Susie Nanney, have offered to DHS and beyond.</p> <p>Vayong spoke of this space for the council to honor its origin while thinking of the future. He asked Antonia, as she’s viewed the council’s growth and evolution, if she has any insights/advice to not lose sight of this work?</p> <p>Antonia: Reminded the council that organizational culture changes very slowly; DHS is responsible for so many vulnerable populations, from babies to elders. It’s a big responsibility. She urged the council to continue to nudge so change moves forward. She reiterated that this is a very powerful body and encourages members to talk more about the work via conferences at the state and national level. This work takes patience and persistence. This is long term work. She hopes to have helped put some building blocks on so others can come and continue the work.</p> <p>Helly Lee recognized that this work is on shoulders of those who came before us who have planted seeds for this work to grow. She hopes to build a relationship with Antonia and become good friends and colleagues; everyone holds on to energy in our lives from people and they never leave us – we will continue to reach out to Antonia and hold her wisdom as dear to our work.</p>	
<p><b>Chair Remarks</b> <i>Vayong Moua</i></p>	<p>June is World Refugee Month. While Minnesota is 2% of the country’s population, it holds 13% of the refugee population in the country.</p> <p>Many negative things have been happening related to refugees in Minnesota. There has been a ban/moratorium on refugees in Saint Cloud; last session there was legislation on refugees; there has been talk of refugee cost audits (the cost to place refugees into public programs); there have been local legislative campaigns explicitly stating that the candidate will not let refugees settle in their districts; the American Refugee Committee changed its name to Alight because of the baggage and negative energy with the term refugee.</p>	

At the same time, DHS houses the Refugee Resettlement Program – 100% federally funded – and highlights the importance of DHS being a leader and shaping the narrative on our refugee population in Minnesota. There needs to be a celebration of refugees – and redefining what it means to be a refugee. The shift needs to recognize noble warriors who fled their country and not simply displaced peoples. DHS has received a lot of heat for abuse and fraud as it relates to refugee populations, but this is a great opportunity to challenge that narrative, especially since refugees usually come to the U.S. due to preexisting engagement commitment with country.

Lisa Bayley noted that earlier this week, she along with the Commissioner, met with the recipients of the Outstanding Refugee Awards. Vayong Moua was recognized with an award for civic engagement, and spoke about collective impact, the CECLC, and honoring his ancestors.

Chair Discussion:  
Many council members are rotating off next meeting, and there needs to be continuity in spirit and momentum for the next council. With that in mind, is important to discuss how leadership will look in the next council.

Legislative language states that the commissioner of DHS appoints the chair of the council; in honoring that, there is space to define how we want to lead ourselves. What is the best way to be structured and lead ourselves? Look for DHS advice and council on how to navigate that;

Antonia shared that initially, a council vote via email was conducted, and a recommendation was made from the community relations director to the commissioner.

If anyone has interest, important to throw your name out there. The council has a deep pool of wisdom and talent. It is important to make sure there is a genuine process moving ahead.

The council discussed forwarding two names as co-chairs. (No vote was taken).

Rev. Dr. Jean Lee prepared recommendations on how new group could get on board on what our membership has done and from the beginning; Jean came on and didn't know what happened in past or what issues worked on so these recommendations would help orient the new council.

Titi and Michael mentioned that nominations began at the previous meeting and are noted in the minutes.



	<p>The council held a discussion on the decision making process for council applications and potentially reviewing for gender (and other demographic) balance in the potential appointee list. It was</p> <p>Looking into a more robust review process should be on the list for the next council to take up to insure balance (gender, age, race, ability, etc.).</p> <p>The council would like recommendations on process for selecting chair and next steps.</p> <p>Vayong summarized the discussion and focused on core values and what folks are looking for in a process to select/recommend chair(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad agreement on key principles</li> <li>• Self determination</li> <li>• Shared responsibility</li> <li>• Continuity/new perspective</li> </ul>	
<b>DHS Updates</b>	Helly Lee provided an introduction of herself to the council as the new community relations director.	
<b>DHS Legislative Proposal</b>	The council was asked to review a handout highlighting the basic changes in the proposed 2019 legislation and contact Nicole Juan if there are any other changes sought by council members.	
<b>Community Input &amp; Concerns, Announcements</b>		
<b>Adjourn</b>	Meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m.	

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: 07/19/2019

Minutes prepared by: Community Relations

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

### Attendance

- Members: Sheree Steele, Lucas Peterson, Nkem Chirpich, Rosa Tock, Vayong Moua, Michael Birchard, Beverly Bushyhead, Pahoua Yang, Maria Sarabia, Adesola Oni, Titilayo Bediako, Saciido Shaie, Jean Lee, Kia Moua
- DHS Staff: Nicole Juan, Elizabeth Stein, Helly Lee, Beth Dansie, Eric Ratzmann, Chris Zempel, Verona Mitchell, Wendy Plager, Jennifer Blanchard, Rebeca Sedarski, Christa Spielman, Don Allen, Diego Diaz, Linda Davis-Johnson, Tamir Elnabrawy, Lisa Bayley, Alexis R. Kochanski, Stacy Wells, Roberta Downing, Claire Wilson
- Public: Amy Stoadt, Melvin Giles, Patrice Bailey

### Decisions Made

- Review/approve minutes from previous meeting and today's agenda:
  - Motion to approve: Saciido Shae
  - Seconded: Jean Lee
- Minutes and agenda approved by voice vote

### Meeting Notes

#### DHS Legislative Proposal Process/Discussion-DHS Director of State Legislative Relations- Alexis Russell Kochanski

Alexis Kochanski presented at the meeting to share some of the goals and logistical aspects of the DHS legislative session, and how the CECLC and communities throughout Minnesota can be better incorporated into that process. Chair Vayong Moua recognized that on top of the DHS process, it is important that this council uses multiple avenues towards progress, such as leveraging relationships with the POCL caucus and other legislative allies.

Alexis presented a brief overview of this year's legislative session, highlighting the repeal of the provider tax sunset, which is now set in perpetuity albeit at a slightly reduced rate, the creation of the Child Welfare Training Academy and American Indian Child Welfare Initiative, increase Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) rates, expansions to Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, stabilized Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) funding and added integrity measures, among others.

Alexis recently met with Acting Commissioner Wheeler, who has agreed to the timeline set for the 2020 legislative session, which will have a focus on policy and children and family initiatives. Along with Director of Community Relations Helly Lee and Agency-wide Operations Legislative Affairs staff Chris Zempel, the goal for upcoming legislative work is to incorporate more stakeholder and community engagement into the process. The tight timelines of the upcoming 2020 session means that while new proposals can't be developed, engagement will be useful in evaluating the current proposals and to get ideas for 2021. Alexis also confirmed that CECLC legislation are included and will move forward with DHS legislation.

#### **Key Dates for the 2020 Legislative Session:**

August 5, 2019: DHS leadership will review lists of policy proposal ideas by administration and make decisions on what is moving forward.

September 13, 2019: Preliminary policy proposals & bill language are due to the governor's office.

October 18, 2019: Final bill language and policy proposal forms are due to the Governor's office.

February 11, 2020: First day of legislative session

Question: Among the list of policy proposals being prepared, what is the criteria DHS uses to prioritize what will move forward, and how will the proposed stakeholder engagement impact this?

Answer: Many factors contribute to what gets prioritized. DHS tries to align proposals with what the Governor's office asks. They look at the urgency around the issue, how it impacts equity, children and families, what does the political landscape look like, are stakeholders on board with the proposals.

Question: update on the legislation surrounding the African American Family Preservation Act, and voiced concern that attendees at a community forum shared that DHS and Hennepin county opposed this legislation. DHS Deputy Commissioner Claire Wilson said that this was not the case and that DHS was actively working on pushing this bill through. It passed through the House and failed in the Senate.

Vayong commented on the importance of establishing equity criteria within proposals so they meet certain baselines and in adherence with the equity policy. DHS Equity Director Verona Mitchell said that in Children and Family Services, all proposals are made and reviewed using equity criteria. Alexis mentioned that policy and budget proposal forms require an equity analysis, but there are no established criteria for stakeholder/community engagement requirements which is what they are currently taking on. Alexis will send what those forms look like to the council.

Ann Hill with the Office of Ombudsman for Families said that oftentimes the department may feel like they are engaging, but communities may feel differently. She asked what will engagement actually look like?

Alexis replied that feedback from this conversation will help with the design of the engagement meetings. The plan is to continue reaching out to other councils and engage them in this process to leverage existing spaces and create stronger relationships. This is a new process, Alexis and Helly encouraged this council to offer feedback or suggestions on who else they can be reaching out to, especially for communities who are often excluded from formal engagement. Council member Maria Sarabia said it's also important to engage with counties, who work directly with many different communities and administer DHS programs. Council member Lucas Peterson and Vayong Moua said there should be baseline standards for this kind of engagement to ensure it is being done consistently across administrations. Deputy Commissioner Claire Wilson mentioned that some areas of DHS are doing this work well, others aren't. Expectations and standards can become simply a box that gets checked at such a large agency, if these standards are not created meaningfully and authentically.

### Chair's Remarks

Chair Vayong Moua remarked on the impact the establishment of this council has had, both personally and as a platform to advocate for equity. Vayong noted that no other state agency has an equity policy or legislatively mandated advisory body like the CECLC, and while we should applaud the steps that have been taken, we must recognize that there is much work to be done. Gratitude does not equal contentment. The implementation of the equity policy is ongoing and it should be used to not only shape policies and budgets, but the culture, hearts and minds of the agency. It is important for DHS to reach beyond its walls and connect with others doing the work to actively advocate against racism, xenophobia and discrimination. DHS also needs to continue building trust with this council and communities throughout MN. This council can support DHS in its equity efforts, and trust allows for honest conversation that does not derail the larger work.

### DHS Updates- Claire Wilson, Deputy Commissioner; Roberta Downing, Assistant Commissioner of External Relations

Deputy Commissioner Claire Wilson thanked Vayong and the council members for their time spent on this council, commenting that the work of this council and what it has set in motion is profound. She agreed that trust has not always existed with this council, but that trust is the basis of co-evolving. While DHS does not always meet the call of this council or the call the work in human services, there is an ongoing expectation and commitment to do this work better. Claire has agreed to stay at DHS as Deputy Commissioner during the tenure of acting Commissioner Wheelock, but there is no expectation of who the new commissioner will appoint to leadership positions.

Claire recognized the recent transitions at DHS, noting that while leadership matters, in other ways it doesn't. The work of this agency continues as the power of the agency lies deeper than the leadership. There has been a lot of speculation and reporting about the changes at DHS, but Claire assured the council that recent changes had nothing to do with the equity work of the agency and that reports of internal chaos or drama are inaccurate. Claire met with the DHS HR Director to continue moving forward with the Chief Equity Officer positions, which will serve as a home for equity work at DHS.

Roberta Downing thanked council members for consistently showing up to have real, oftentimes challenging conversations to advance equity work. She acknowledged the time, travel, and commitment required for serving on this council, and welcomed opportunities to continue working together.

### Community Service Recognition

Thirteen council members were recognized for having a term ending in July or early August. Some members may be returning for a second term and others have completed their full terms. Nicole Juan, DHS Community Relations Specialist shared some reflections and accomplishments of the council over the years. Helly Lee echoed earlier sentiments and thanked council members for the work they have done and continue to do. Council members commended that this council works because of its genuine relationships that have been built, with members and non-members who participate in the work of the council.

Recognitions were made to:

Reverend Dr. Jean Lee

Pahoua Yang

Michael Birchard

Titilayo Bediako

Beverly Bushyhead

Adesola Oni

Saciido Shae

Dr. Nkem Chirpich

Kia Moua

Dr. Brendabell Njee

Vayong Moua

### Announcements

The appointments process for new CECLC members is moving forward with Commissioner Wheelock, using recommendations provided by a review panel that convened in May.

**Adjourn: Council adjourned at 2:00pm.**

## **Next Meeting**

Date: August 16, 2019

Time: 11:30-2:00

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: 08/16/19

Minutes prepared by: Liz Stein, Lydia Pfluger

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

### Attendance

- Members: Rep. Deb Kiel, Beverly Bushyhead, Marquita Cammon, Sarah Clyne, Danisa Farley, Raie Gessesse Ann Hill, Emilia Jackson-Kalley, Rev. Dr. Jean Lee, Adesola Oni, Lucas Peterson, Rebeca Sedarski, Marcia Bierschenk, Petronellah Shanobi, TaShonda Williamson, Alana Wright, Serena Xiong,
- DHS Staff: Beth Dansie, Elizabeth Stein, Deputy Commissioner Claire Wilson, Kevin Williams, Christa Spielman, Mary Cahill, Diego Diaz-Rivero, Wendy Plager, Tamir Elnabarawy, Verona Mitchell, Lisa Bayley
- Community Members: Cassaundra Adler, Grace Lee, Serena Young, Melvin Giles

### Decisions Made

- Review/approve minutes from previous meeting: pending Jean's additions
  - 1<sup>st</sup> motion to approve: Jean Lee
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> motion: Lucas Peterson
- Review/approve today's agenda
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Motion to approve: Rebeca Sedarski
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Motion to approve: TaShonda Williamson

### Action Items

- CECLC members to contact Nicole Juan ([Nicole.M.Juan@state.mn.us](mailto:Nicole.M.Juan@state.mn.us)) with chair nominations, interest in participating in legislative workgroup, interest in participating in Families First Prevention Act Advisory Council

### Agenda

- 12:30 DHS Welcome and Updates- DHS Community Relations Director Helly Lee

- 12:45 CECLC Background- DHS Community Relations Director Helly Lee
- 1:00 Families First Prevention Act- DHS Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lisa Bayley
- 1:15 Priority Action Items
  - CECLC Legislation (10 mins)
  - CECLC Chair Selection Process (10 mins)
  - CECLC Retreat (5 mins)
- 1:40 Open Community Space
- 1:55 Next Steps/Closing
- 2:00 Adjourn

## Meeting Notes

### Council Updates

The council welcomes 11 new members and 4 reappointed members this month. Community Relations Director Helly Lee welcomed new and returning council members as we continue doing this work in systems-change through periods of transition. Deputy Commissioner Claire Wilson also welcomed new members and spoke about how important this council is to leadership at DHS as a collaborative open space. She recognizes that as DHS has some of the worst disparities in the nation, we need the partnership from this council to make change.

Helly Lee began with some introductory information on the council, covering general DHS organizational charts, sharing a few of the successes of this council, and discussing the original CECLC core values. Council members offered additional values to add, such as:

- Showing respect for members here and those from DHS. Moving away from blame to focus on fixing the problem that arose.
- Holding agencies accountable for disparities. Sometimes accountability can feel like blame.
- Allowing people's truth to be their truth.
- In a respectful way, agree to disagree.

The council discussed how it may interact with the Governor's public engagement team, other state councils and tribal liaisons. Helly offered that the Community Relations team puts together a weekly public engagement report for the Governor's office and meets monthly with staff across state agencies to discuss engagement work. We will look at options of having someone from the Governor's office come and speak with the council, as well as identify areas where we can partner closely with other bodies doing similar work.

Three topics that require follow up from this council are as follows:

1. CECLC Legislation
  - a. Helly proposed forming a workgroup to engage with DHS Legislative Affairs Director Alexis Kochanski and agency-wide Operations Legislative Affairs staff Chris Zempel to work on CECLC legislation through the 2020 session. Key changes to the legislation are removing the 2020 council sunset date, altering the annual report structure, adding compensation for members,



and allowing for a co-chair. Contact Nicole Juan if you would like to get a copy of the proposed legislative changes or join this workgroup.

## 2. Chair Selection

- a. Members were given information on the CECLC chair selection process and asked for any other nominations by August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Contact Nicole Juan with additional questions on this process.

## 3. Retreat

- a. The Community Relations team is planning a retreat for CECLC members. Members were asked for input on potential dates and times for this retreat, where we will discuss goal-setting and planning for the next year.

## DHS Updates

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lisa Bailey with the DHS Children and Family Services Administration presented on the Families First Prevention Act. This work shifts funding to prevention efforts aimed at preventing a child's entry into foster care. It will also result in limiting federal reimbursement for children's placements in group foster care. All council members are invited to be a part of the Advisory Committee which will meet twice a month for the next 18 months as they continue exploring implementation options. Council members interested in joining this committee should email Helly Lee to be added to the email list. See more information on this Act in the attached presentation.



CECLC 8.16.19  
Presentation.pptx

## *Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility*

Federal Relations Director Tamir Elnabarawy shared more information on a recently proposed a rule by the USDA which would affect the broad-based categorical eligibility policy option in Minnesota. Under the proposal, approximately 35,000 Minnesotans between 130% and 165% of the federal poverty guideline would lose their SNAP benefits, in addition to an unknown number of Minnesotans losing benefits if asset limits are reinstated. Colleen Moriarty, Executive Director of Hunger Solutions MN, is interested in partnering with this council on advocacy and action efforts. For those interested in working on this topic, contact Colleen Moriarty at [cmoriarty@hungersolutions.org](mailto:cmoriarty@hungersolutions.org). Formal comments on this rule can be submitted at the [Federal Register](#), all comments are due by September 23, 2019.



Broad-based  
Categorical Eligibilit

## *Public Charge*

Federal Relations Director Tamir Elnabarawy provided an update to the public charge rule. If an immigrant applies to enter the United States or to obtain a Green Card, immigration officials determine whether the applicant will be "primarily dependent" on the government for support. Currently, if someone uses cash

assistance programs or if they receive publicly funded long-term care, they would be considered a public charge and their application could be denied. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security finalized a rule which expands the list of benefits that are considered when making this determination. The rule is scheduled to go into effect on October 15, 2019. Minnesota has joined a multi-state lawsuit to challenge the public charge rule, which can potentially delay the current rule's effective date. DHS is putting together information to share which clarifies what the rule does. Both DHS and this council submitted formal comments regarding this rule last year during the public comment period.

## **Next Meeting**

Date: Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup>

Time: 11:30-2:00pm

Location: Wilder Foundation, Auditoriums C&D

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: 09/20/19

Minutes prepared by: Liz Stein

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

### Attendance

- Members: Commissioner Jodi Harpstead, Rep. Deb Kiel, Rep. Rena Moran, Maret Banks, Marquita Cammon, Sarah Clyne, Shannon Geshick, Emilia Jackson-Kalley, Anjuli Mishra Cameron, Kia Moua, Adesola Oni, Maria Sarabia, Rebeca Sedarski, Marcia Soto Bierschenk, Sheree Steele, Petronellah Thomas Shanobi, Rosa Tock, TaShonda Williamson, Alana Wright
- DHS Staff: Roberta Downing, Helly Lee, Nicole Juan, Liz Stein, Lydia Pfluger, Beth Dansie, Tamir Elnabarawy, Diego Diaz Rivero, Christa Spielman, Verona Mitchell, Marvin Davis, Alexis Kochanski, Lisa Bayley
- Community Members: Melvin Giles

### Decisions Made

- Review/approve minutes from previous meeting:
  - Motion to approve: Rebeca Sedarski
  - Seconded: Jean Lee
- Review/approve today's agenda:
  - Motion to approve: Kia Moua
  - Seconded to approve: Jean Lee
- Minutes and agenda approved by voice vote

### Action Items

- Nicole will send out job postings, Families First work group dates, and additional public charge information in next CECLC bulletin

## Agenda

- 11: 30 Light Lunch, Networking
- 12:00 Welcome, Introductions
- 12:25 Review and Approve Meeting Minutes and Agenda
- 12:30 DHS Updates
  - Commissioner Jodi Harpstead
  - Helly Lee – Community Relations
  - Tamir Elnabarawy – Federal Relations
- 12:50 Families First Prevention Act Update, Lisa Bayley – DHS Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Children and Family Services Administration
- 1:10 CECLC Background and History, Representative Rena Moran
- 1:30 CECLC Legislation Update, Alexis Kochanski – DHS Director of State Legislative Affairs
- 1:45 Community Open Space
- 1:55 Next Steps and Closing
- 2:00 Adjourn

## Meeting Notes

### DHS Updates

The council welcomed DHS Commissioner Jodi Harpstead to the meeting and spoke about the ongoing work and collaboration she envisions when working with this council. Commissioner Harpstead commented on her previous work at Lutheran Social Services, which had an anti-racism task force, strong equity goals, employed the use of anti-racism language in job interviews, and dispersed Individual Development Inventory (IDI) certified assessors throughout management levels. She shared the need for a unifying equity strategy across DHS, noting the serious disparities in MN. Commissioner Harpstead's next steps are to meet with the equity leads in each administration and with the DHS Employee Resource Groups to learn how we can better approach equity both internally and externally. She also has a 90 day plan which focuses on establishing her management team and addressing some of the pressing agency issues. Council members encouraged her to continue supporting the work of equity leads throughout the agency, look at strategies to retain individuals of color, and use this space and council members as a resource for partnership in this work.

Community Relations Director Helly Lee noted that as community relations staff have continued to receive many requests to share information with the council, staff will develop regular email updates that include DHS updates, community news, and events. If you have anything you would like to be shared with CECLC members, please send them to Nicole Juan ([Nicole.M.Juan@state.mn.us](mailto:Nicole.M.Juan@state.mn.us)). Helly also mentioned that we are continuing our weekly public engagement reporting to the Governor's Office of Public Engagement. If there is work from this council that you would like highlighted in these reports, please contact Helly ([Helly.Lee@state.mn.us](mailto:Helly.Lee@state.mn.us)).

Federal Relations Director Tamir Elnabarawy updated the council on two topics mentioned at the last council meeting: proposed rule changes to broad-based categorical eligibility in the SNAP program and the public charge

rule. Public comment on the broad-based categorical eligibility requirements ends September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Council members were sent a DHS fact sheet on the public charge rule and given a flyer from Legal Aid, which can be used as a main point of contact for those with questions on this rule and if it affects them. This is a nuanced rule that applies to few people, but has the potential to impact many due to uncertainty and confusion. Tamir encouraged everyone to look over the DHS fact sheet to see what benefits and immigrants are not included in this rule change, and to utilize Legal Aid as a resource if receiving legal questions from immigrant populations in MN. He will be following up with the council to share more information from a briefing with the Governor's and Attorney General's office.

Resources:

- MN Legal Aid document on public charge ([English/Spanish](#), [English/Somali](#))
- [Public charge FAQ](#)
- [BBCE briefing document](#)



Public Charge  
FAQ.pdf

Tamir also shared an update on refugee resettlement, as decisions are currently being made at the federal level to set the 'refugee ceiling,' which determines the number of refugee admissions in the US and is directly tied to funding for the DHS Office of Refugee Resettlement. There are reports of the ceiling being much lower compared to previous years. Final decisions will be made by October 1. If council members have ideas or suggestions on topics and materials that would be important to include in messaging to community surrounding these issues, please contact him at [Tamir.Elnabarawy@state.mn.us](mailto:Tamir.Elnabarawy@state.mn.us), 651-431-6439).

DHS Acting Assistant Commissioner, Children and Family Services Administration Lisa Bailey updated the council on the Families First Prevention Act Advisory Committee meetings and shared information on how to get involved in these meetings, the smaller bi-monthly coordinating committee meetings, or one of the evolving workgroups for this planning. Dates and times for these meetings will be shared with the council.

## Council Updates

State Representative Rena Moran joined the council meeting to share with the new members on the council's history and vision for this work. Representative Moran was chief author in the House for the original CECLC legislation. She emphasized the importance of bringing community voice to this space and advocating for those who may not traditionally be included in discussions like these. She affirmed the power that the group and members have as a community council and encouraged members to exercise this by becoming involved in planning and implementation workgroups, as well as by being educators for their communities on what they learn from their involvement.

State Legislative Director Alexis Kochanski gave a brief update on the timeline for the 2020 legislative session and shared that the CECLC legislation continues to move through the DHS process. The policy advisor in the governor's office is also aware of this legislation. 2020 is not a budget year in the legislature, the supplemental budget will determine how many budget proposals will be passed, but there will still be a priority on moving the

policy language. Contact Helly if you would like to be in the council workgroup focused on this legislation. Alexis and Helly continue to work together to find the best way to engage this council and broader communities to receive feedback on DHS policy proposals. Council member Adesola Oni suggested that all of the DHS proposals be shared with the council. Council member Jean Lee offered training on how to interact with legislators, such as when to meet, what materials to bring, etc. She also stated that there needs to be a better way of keeping the council informed during the legislative process on opportunities to support both DHS and legislators who may be introducing legislation important to this council.

## **Community Open Space**

Council member Maria Sarabia shared information on [a BlueCross BlueShield podcast](#) episode featuring herself and former CECLC Chair Vayong Moua, which talks about the CECLC and equity work in Ramsey County.

Council member Jean Lee shared upcoming events such as the Overcoming Racism conference, Community Connections Conference, BushCon, the Government Innovation awards, and potential grant opportunities. More information will be sent in a follow up to council members.

## **Next Meeting**

Date: October 18, 2019

Time: 11:30-2:00

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: 10/18/19

Minutes prepared by: Lydia Pfluger

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

### Attendance

- Members: Sarah Clyne, Shannon Geshick, Raie Gessesse, Emilia Jackson-Kalley, Jean Lee, Kia Moua, Maria Sarabia, Rebeca Sedarski, Marcia Soto Bierschenk, Petronellah Thomas Shanobi, TaShonda Williamson, Serena Xiong, Lucas Peterson.
- DHS Staff: Helly Lee, Nicole Juan, Lydia Pfluger, Tamir Elnabarawy, Christa Spielman, Verona Mitchell, Crystal Fairchild, Diego Diaz Rivero, Charles Lawler, Stacy Wells, Chris Zempel, Leslie Garcia, Alex Kotze, Dan Kitberger, Maisha Giles

### Decisions Made

- Review/approve minutes from previous meeting and today's agenda:
  - Motion to approve September minutes and October agenda: Lucas
  - Seconded: Jean
- Minutes and agenda approved by voice vote

### Action Items

- Nicole will email out tentative workgroups that were created based off of what was discussed at the council retreat. Council members should participate in at least one workgroup. Please send the workgroup(s) you would like to participate in to Nicole by October 25<sup>th</sup> and Nicole will facilitate scheduling meetings.
- Members should also let Nicole know if they want to be part of the review process for open council seats; the group is meeting soon.
- Additionally, Nicole will be surveying members the week of October 28<sup>th</sup> to get input on dates and times for 2020 council meetings.

- If members have items that they want to share with the entire group, please send them to Nicole to be included in the council updates. These can include community events, jobs postings, etc.

## Agenda

- 11:30 Welcome
- Networking/Light Lunch
- 12:00 Introductions
- 12:20 Review and Approve Meeting Minutes & Agenda
- 12:25 DHS Updates
  - Community Relations
  - Federal Relations
- 12:35 Legislative Engagement Discussion
- 1:05 Equity Lead Introductions and Overview
  - Crystal Fairchild, Health Care Administration
  - Verona Mitchell, Children and Family Services Administration
- 1:35 Priority Action Items
  - CECLC Legislation Workgroup Update – TaShonda Williamson (5 min)
  - DHS/MDH Workgroup Update – Serena Xiong (5 min)
  - Council work groups (5 min)
  - Council Calendar 2020 (5 min)
- 1:55 Open Community Space
- 2:00 Adjourn

## Meeting Notes

### Introduction and Chair Remarks

Community Relations Director Helly Lee began the meeting by introducing the new Council Chair, Maria Sarabia, recounting the process of electing the new chair and thanking members for their interest and participation in the process. Helly reiterated that the Community Relations team is working to ensure that they are doing all they can to support the council and the work to come.

Council member Maria Sarabia then introduced herself as Chair and shared the vision and mission of the council and emphasized the council's role to work together to effectuate better outcomes for all those who live in Minnesota. Council member Shannon Geshick then gave a Native land acknowledgement. Maria continued her introduction to the meeting by asking for grace as the group figures out what works for them as they begin their duties as a council, and she acknowledged the transition that group is experiencing. Attendees of the meeting then introduced themselves and shared a word that comes to mind with regard to fall, a season of transition.



## DHS Updates

Federal Relations Director Tamir Elnabarawy discussed new updates regarding the public charge rule and a new proposed rule from the USDA. The original proposed public charge rule had an effective date of October 15<sup>th</sup>. There were two nationwide injunctions filed against the rule, preventing it from taking effect. Therefore, the rule is not in effect right now, and the timeline of what is to come from these recent changes is uncertain. Tamir will continue to keep the council updated.

Tamir provided information about a new proposed USDA rule that would change how household utilities are factored into income when applying to SNAP benefits. Currently, states set a standard utility rate to deduct from an applicant's income. There is a new proposal for there to be a nationwide utility rate, instead of allowing states to set their own. Through this proposed rule, some states would benefit and some would not. Comments are being accepted through mid-December. DHS has not yet submitted a public comment, but is working to get one submitted. Tamir will provide any updates to the council on this rule by the next council meeting. Feel free to contact Tamir if you have comments or questions at [Tamir.Elnabarawy@state.mn.us](mailto:Tamir.Elnabarawy@state.mn.us), (651) 431-6439.

Equity Directors Crystal Fairchild - Health Care Administration (HCA) and Verona Mitchell - Children and Family Services Administration (CFS) both spoke about their roles as Equity Directors at DHS and the equity work and initiatives that they are instituting within their respective administrations. Verona discussed CFS's equity committees, equity lens analysis metrics, and her internal equity work with staff – including the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and trainings. Crystal discussed HCA's equity committee and the equity analysis tools that she has developed and used in HCA. The Equity Directors noted that whenever there is a proposed policy change the equity impact of those proposals are assessed. Council member Petronellah Thomas Shanobi asked the Equity Directors if they had a reporting, noting that individuals and providers rarely get data surrounding these issues, but they see disparities and inequities in their practice. Verona and Crystal mentioned they are collecting data on their projects and initiatives, but do not have a report.



CECLC Update  
2019.pptx

## Council Updates

Chief Financial Officer Alex Kotze and Interim Director of Legislative Relations Dan Kitzberger were present to follow-up on the council's expressed interest in having DHS share legislative proposals with the council. Alex stated that her team is committed to making sure that communities are engaged in the legislative process, recognizing that they haven't necessarily done so well at engagement in the past. Alex and Dan noted that they want to build a structure for the council's involvement in the legislative process at DHS. They are also working to ensure that the council's potential participation doesn't get stifled by concerns that it is "too early" or "too late" for the council to be involved in these ongoing discussions. Alex and Dan asked the council for suggestions regarding what would be most helpful and how members would like to be involved moving forward. Council member Lucas Petersen suggested the council be provided with all of the proposals and/or information on their equity impact, then council members can decide which proposals they would like the legislative team to present on. DHS staff and council members then discussed forming workgroups to discuss legislation or joining

workgroups that currently exist at DHS. Dan also provided a brief overview of the differences between policy and budget legislation and their separate timelines, and Alex clarified that the legislation that DHS proposes does not necessarily make it into the governor's bills. Helly also noted that the CECLC legislation is moving forward in both policy and budget proposals for the upcoming session. Council member Lucas Petersen recognized the potential power that council members have in the process, noting that members can advocate for inclusion of CECLC language to the governor. Council members should let Helly know if they have any additional suggestions that she can pass to Alex and Dan post-meeting.

Council member TaShonda Williamson provided an update on the recent CECLC legislative workgroup meeting. She mentioned that there were updates to the language and talk of eliminating the council's sunset, however, it's possible that negotiations may lead to an extension of the sunset if necessary. A conversation continued regarding some of the language in the existing statute about council duties and its actual charge and capacity. A council member expressed concerns around some of the language changes; the council agreed to review the changes at the next workgroup meeting. The Chair reminded the group that Council members need to be a part of ongoing workgroups and trust each other to make some decisions there and bring them back to the larger council. DHS staff mentioned that the CECLC legislative workgroup will soon be speaking with Representative Rena Moran who was the author of the bill, where the historical component of the language and next steps can be discussed. The next legislative workgroup meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on October 30<sup>th</sup> at the Anderson building, RM 2223.

## **Next Meeting**

Date: November 15, 2019

Time: 11:30-2:00

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: 11/15/19

Minutes prepared by: Liz Stein

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Maret Banks, Marcia Bierschenk, Marquita Cammon, Sarah Clyne, Raie Gessesse, Emilia Jackson Kalley, Kia Moua, Lucas Peterson, Maria Sarabia, Rebeca Sedarski, TaShonda Williamson, Serena Xiong, Adesola Oni
- **DHS Staff:** Helly Lee, Liz Stein, Nicole Juan, Beth Dansie, Jennifer Blanchard, Charles Lawler, Verona Mitchell, Olivia Anderson, Leslie Garcia
- **Guests:**

### Decisions Made

- Review/approve minutes from previous meeting
  - 1<sup>st</sup> motion to approve: Kia Moua
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> motion to approve: Rebeca Sedarski
- Review/approve today's agenda:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> motion to approve: Kia Moua
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> motion to approve: Rebeca Sedarski
- Minutes and agenda approved with unanimous consent

### Action Items

- Helly Lee to invite Blue Ribbon Commission Interagency Leadership team to future council meeting.
- Contact Nicole Juan if you are interested in joining a workgroup or participating in the Health Care Administration's interview process.

### Agenda

- 11:30: Gathering, Networking/Light Lunch, Council member feedback on 2020 CECLC calendar

- 12:00 Welcome, Land acknowledgement, Chair remarks and grounding
- 12:05 Introductions
- 12:25 Review and Approve Meeting Minutes & Agenda
- 12:30 DHS Updates
  - Community Relations
- 12:35 Priority Action Items
  - DHS/MDH Workgroup Update – Serena Xiong (5 min)
  - CECLC Workgroup Updates (10 min)
    - External Workgroup Update
    - Internal Workgroup Update
    - Topics/Issues Update
- 1:50 Council Priorities Discussion
  - Blue Ribbon Commission
  - Process for official stances and statements
  - How do we make decisions?
  - Discussion on council agenda making
- 1:10 Workgroup Breakouts
  - Internal
  - External
  - Issues/Topics
- 1:40 Workgroup Report-Outs
- 1:55 Community Open Space
- 2:00 Adjourn

## Meeting Notes

### Welcome

Council Chair Maria Sarabia opened the meeting with a land acknowledgment and gave remarks on the importance of understanding our longstanding history and the contemporary systems that challenge our communities. Using this knowledge to recognize our place and time helps build connection to this work, to each other, and to communities.

### DHS Updates

DHS Director of Community Relations Helly Lee thanked the council for their grace and understanding as DHS continues to move through transition. Despite the news surrounding DHS, the work continues and the work related to this council is more important than ever. Helly and Nicole continue to welcome any questions council members may have. Helly shared an update from the last council meeting where Alexandra Kotze and Dan Kitzberger spoke about how to best engage with the council through the policy process. The DHS legislative team will work with the council's legislative workgroup to decide on items that

will be brought to the full council. DHS Community Relations staff shared that these workgroups are open and any interested council member can join.

Helly also shared that she has applied for council members to be able to attend the BushConnect Conference, more information to follow.

The Community Relations team is working on the council's annual legislative report. They are interested in any feedback based on reactions from past reports. This year's report will switch to a more narrative structure to talk about this council and equity at DHS.

There are several leadership positions open at DHS, some having already begun the interview process. Positions currently in the interview stage include the Assistant Commissioner for Health Care Administration and Medicaid Director. The goal for the second round of interviews for the Medicaid Director and Behavioral Health Director is to include community members and stakeholders. Maria Sarabia asked if there is an opportunity for community involvement in the Assistant Commissioner interview process. DHS staff will follow up. Contact Nicole Juan if you are interested in being involved in the interview process.

Two council appointments have been forwarded to the Commissioner after a recent review panel, with the goal of having them join by the next council meeting. The final two remaining positions are also under review and will hopefully be appointed by the start of the new year.

## **DHS/MDH Workgroup Update- Serena**

Council member Serena Xiong updated the council on the Interagency Workgroup, which aims to support providers and create an integrated community of practice in Health Care Home, Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs), and Behavioral Health Home (BHH) programs.

## **CECLC Workgroup Update**

1. External/Legislative Work Group. This group is looking into the council's legislative language and refining what would be in the final bill. This group is working with DHS legislative staff and plans to meet with the original bill authors: Representative Rena Moran and Senator Jeff Hayden. This group is also looking into how to build processes on how the council interacts with DHS. Council members Lucas Peterson and Marquita Cammon are leading this workgroup.
2. DHS Internal Policies and Operations Workgroup. This group is planning goals for next year, looking at updates on the DHS Equity Policy and council bylaws, and will assist with planning council agendas. Council members Kia Moua and Raie Gessesse are leading this workgroup. The council reaffirmed their interest in being updated on moving forward with an Assistant Commissioner level equity position, which was first developed under Commissioner Lourey. Council members expressed support for a centralized equity effort at the agency, noting that there is currently a hierarchy as equity staff are split between director and coordinator level positions. Council members also discussed IDI efforts at the agency. DHS staff working in Children and Family Services shared their strategy with administering the IDI and providing the

necessary support to move people along the spectrum. This administration is creating work labs to support employees and has set boundaries on its use and the resulting data.

3. Topics and Issues workgroup has yet to meet.

## Council Priorities

Council member Kia Moua sits on the Team for Retention and Employee Engagement (TREE) committee at DHS, which plans and carries out activities related to the Affirmative Action Plan. Council members are interested in learning more about this group and requested for information to be brought back to a future meeting.

Activities for the [Blue Ribbon Commission](#) are underway. There is a very tight timeline for this initiative. DHS Interim Deputy Assistant Commissioner for HCA Jennifer Blanchard updated the council on the contracted vendors who will be working with this commission on their planning and community engagement activities. The council submitted a proposal through the Commission portal and discussed how they want to engage with this commission, potentially as part of a council workgroup. DHS staff will look into having the interagency leadership team at a future council meeting. Council members went through the submitted proposal to identify topics they want to discuss (Points C & F).

December's council meeting will begin right at 11:30 (instead of 12:00) to allow time for discussion on several pressing topics.

## Next Meeting

Date: December 6, 2019

Time: 11:30-2:00

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

## Meeting Minutes: Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council

Date: 12/06/19

Minutes prepared by: Lydia Pfluger

Location: Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

### Attendance

- **CECLC Members:** Sarah Clyne, Jean Lee, Kia Moua, Lucas Peterson, Russell Pointer, Rebeca Sedarski, Jenny Srey, Petronellah Thomas Shanobi, TaShonda Williamson, Serena Xiong
- **DHS Staff:** Helly Lee, Nicole Juan, Liz Stein, Lydia Pfluger, Crystal Fairchild, Jennifer Blanchard, Verona Mitchell, Leslie Garcia, Krista O'Connor, Jennifer Sommerfeld, Laura Lane, Cassandra Finley, Matt Burdick, Ariana Didion, Olivia Anderson, Dan Kitzberger, Lisa Bailey, Jamie Sorenson, Marvin Davis
- **Guests:** N/A

### Decisions Made

The minutes and agenda were not approved as the meeting did not have quorum.

### Action Items

- Community Relations team will send out information regarding any upcoming interview panels for leadership at DHS as well as information on upcoming Blue Ribbon Commission meetings.
- Provide Nicole with suggestions on meeting location ideas for 2020.
- Reach out to Nicole or legislative work group members if you would like to participate in the legislative work group.

### Agenda

- 11:30: Welcome, Networking/Light Lunch, Land acknowledgement, Chair remarks and grounding
- 11:35: Introductions
- 11:45: Review and Approve Meeting Minutes & Agenda
- 11:50: DHS Updates
  - Community Relations

- 11:55: Blue Ribbon Commission
  - Krista O'Connor, Strategic Development Director, Health care Administration
- 12:15: DHS Legislative Discussion
  - Dan Kitzberger, Interim Director of State Legislative Relations
  - DHS Legislative Directors
- 1:15: Addressing Minnesota Child Welfare and Foster Care Overrepresentation and Outcome Inequity
  - Marvin Davis, Deputy Director, Child Safety and Permanency
  - Jennifer Sommerfeld, Director of Legislation and External Affairs, Children and Family Services Administration
- 1:45: Priority Action Items
  - CECLC Workgroup Updates
    - External Workgroup Update
    - Internal Workgroup Update
    - Topics/Issues Update
- 1:55 Community Open Space
- 2:00 Adjourn

## Meeting Notes

### Welcome

Council member Lucas Peterson began the meeting and introduced two new members, Russell Pointer, a representative of a faith-based organization and Jenny Srey, parent of a human services program participant.

### DHS Updates

Community Relations Director, Helly Lee, shared the news of the recent Assistant Commissioner and Deputy Assistant Commissioner appointments within the Community Supports Administration. Helly also shared that Commissioner Harpstead testified to the Minnesota Legislature and presented to staff on her 90 day plan.

Helly Lee relayed updates from the Federal Relations Director that DHS submitted public comment regarding USDA's [proposed rule](#) to revise the calculation of standard utility allowances (SUA) in SNAP. The proposed rule would lower Minnesota's SUA, likely resulting in benefit reductions among 40% of the state's SNAP households. Helly also noted that 2020 Census is soon approaching and it is an important issue for DHS. The department has been talking with the MN Department of Admin and working on developing materials. These materials will be shared with the council in the future as they become available.



MN DHS Public  
Comment - SNAP SU

Lucas shared his reflections from being part of the interview panel for the Medical Director position. He encouraged members to participate in these types of panels in the future and mentioned it is a great



opportunity for council members to make sure that there is that community voice in the process. The Community Relations team will send out information regarding any upcoming interview panels.

Nicole provided updates on the 2020 CECLC calendar and the proposed time change. For future meetings, the meeting time has moved an hour later to better accommodate council member's schedules. There has also been time carved out after the meeting for council members to have time to meet in their work groups. Nicole is seeking recommendations for a meeting space for future meetings as the council is no longer able to secure rooms at the Wilder Foundation. Meeting location can occur anywhere throughout the Twin Cities, prioritizing locations with parking and transit access.

#### 2020 meeting dates

January 24  
February 21  
March 20  
April 17  
May 15  
June 19  
July 17  
August 21  
September 18  
October 16  
November 20  
December 11

#### Proposed timing

Light Lunch 12:30 – 1:00 p.m.  
Meeting business held from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.  
Workgroup time 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. (as needed)

### **Blue Ribbon Commission**

Krista O'Connor presented an overview of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Health & Human Services, the commission's timeline of activities, and an update of what has happened since the commission began in the late summer of 2019. The commission is charged to create an action plan to improve program efficiencies, produce savings, and promote better outcomes in health and human services. The action plan's intent is produce \$100 million in savings by FY 2023. Krista noted that the action plan cannot include recommendations that may result in the loss of benefits or exacerbate health disparities and inequities in access to health care and human services. This fall, the commission solicited public comment on strategies to consider. Over 300 ideas were received that have been broken out into topic areas. The commission will meet monthly and members will be listening to presentations on topics and strategies to consider. Krista shared that the commission is committed to conducting an equity assessment on every one of the strategies put forth. The commission is also contracting with the Improve Group who will help with authentic engagement with the communities who may be impacted

by the proposed changes. A meeting will be occurring on December 19<sup>th</sup> from 9:00-11:00 a.m. to react to their initial engagement framework. Members are invited to attend this meeting and Krista will get the information to the Community Relations team to be sent to the council.

Krista provided suggestions for how council members could be involved in the commission, such as helping with the equity assessment process, presenting to the commission, providing technical assistance, or meeting one on one with commission members. There is an opportunity for council members to put forward what is known to have an impact for communities and influence the commission's decisions on what strategies move forward. The work of the commission is moving fast and it changes quickly. Jennifer Blanchard acknowledged that the tight timeline set in statute doesn't allow for true engagement. Krista and Jennifer offered themselves as a resource and thanked the council for the opportunity to present.

Dr. Jean Lee said that she and Helly Lee attended a Blue Ribbon Commission meeting and there were subjects applicable to the Council. The Commission was focused on where they could reduce costs.

## **DHS Legislative Discussion**

DHS legislative staff presented information on the legislative proposals ideas that may be put forth by the department to be included in the Governor's package. Council members were provided a list of the policy ideas that are being considered that had been identified by the council's legislative work group as being of interest to members. The ideas were bucketed into the council's priority areas. A few ideas were highlighted on the handout that are no longer being considered as they are not ready to move forward at this time. Dan Kitzberger shared that many of the items included in the document are in draft phase. Jennifer Sommerfeld, Laura Lane, Matt Burdick, Ariana Didion, and Olivia Anderson described the policy ideas according to their areas of work and answered questions on their respective proposals. Many of these ideas are intended to address administrative challenges, service gaps, and racial disparities within the system. DHS legislative staff discussed how they are working both internally and externally with stakeholders on the development and implementation of these proposals and potential programs that may arise.

Before the policy ideas were shared, Lucas noted that there is quick window of time for feedback from council members to be considered for this session. He encouraged members to consider what they want to prioritize as a council moving forward and what the council is capable of accomplishing in this time-frame.

As the policy ideas and areas were discussed, council members had questions for and brought up concerns to legislative staff. Dr. Jean Lee had several questions and a number of concerns. She said it was important to tell legislators that the Council does more than get equity coordinators hired, and that legislative amendments were still needed on CECLC legislation, including what she has raised in earlier meetings. During the discussion, DHS staff discussed the implementation of best-practices in service delivery. Lucas encouraged staff to consider "best-practices for whom", noting that research on program effectiveness is often not conducted with diverse populations. He noted that the council will be interested in what the department is considering when defining best practices. Staff confirmed that they will be considering this. Petronellah asked if staff were engaging with universities and community providers that are working with the communities targeted by these initiatives. Staff confirmed that they have begun working with universities on how they are going to measure success. Council member TaShonda Williamson expressed concerns that there is not a lot of accountability for the racial

disproportionality and asked if there is going to be accountability at certain touch points within the system. Lucas noted that clarifying the legislation's intention is helpful in building up council members' knowledge of these efforts and how the system works.

Dan noted that distilling legislative information into short descriptions can be challenging for the legislative team. He also mentioned that intentional engagement with communities and being open with this information is new and uncharted territory that poses opportunities and challenges. Council member Petronellah Thomas Shanobi suggested that jargon be stripped from documentation as much as possible. Legislative staff noted that they are welcome to feedback and willing to answer questions. Council members should write down comments or questions that can be passed to the legislative team. Council members should also consider participating in the council's legislative work group if they are interested in reviewing legislation.

## **Addressing Minnesota Child Welfare and Foster Care Overrepresentation and Outcome Inequity**

Jamie Sorenson and Marvin Davis presented on the Child Safety and Permanency Division's proposed efforts to reduce inequities in child welfare and foster care systems for African American children. Jamie noted that the system is not adequately serving African American children. The division is considering ways to target investments in community-based programs and agency functions to improve family preservation, prevention, safety planning, reunification, and culturally specialized care. The effort is trying to narrow in on big decision points within the system that can influence change to reduce disparities. Looking to community-based providers to provide services was mentioned as an approach to address these issues. TaShonda brought up concerns that child protection reports are often made when they should not have and wants to know if there will be ramifications for individuals who make these reports. Division staff discussed the process for screening in calls and when there is not enough evidence, the call will not go on to investigation, however, there are moments of discretion in the system. Marvin noted that the division will be further looking into the decision points within the system using case reviews to address where this disproportionality is occurring, and the intent is for services to be more culturally competent. Council member Rebeca Sedarski shared concerns she has heard from families in her community engagement events that say the system is quick to take children away from parents. Council member Jean Lee noted that enough people need to come forward with these concerns in order for them to be taken seriously and addressed. Petronellah mentioned that parents are often mandated to complete case requirements without support and that more resources should be put towards family services to support parents involved in child protection. Jamie and Marvin noted that it would be helpful for the council to take a deeper look at the proposals and provide additional feedback.

## **Closing Remarks**

The last items on the agenda were skipped over in order to continue the legislative discussion. Lucas thanked guests for coming to the council spending time today to discuss activities, proposals, and how members can be involved. Lucas asked DHS legislative staff to reflect on what went well or not so well from the meeting, how was the meeting helpful, and what they are taking away from bringing this information to the council. DHS legislative staff noted that they want to hear feedback and it is essential to making the services and supports of DHS better. Legislative staff noted that they are listening and are open to speaking with members, however,

they want members to be aware that the response time in the interim may be longer than usual. Legislative staff noted that they would like council members to be able to review legislation when it is soon enough to provide feedback, not when it is halfway out the door, and they are making an effort to try and have that happen. Council members noted that it would be helpful to see language when it is available. Dan asked the council to help the legislative team understand how they want to receive information from them and what would be most helpful moving forward. Helly suggested members and staff use the Community Relations team as a facilitator. She noted that she hopes the discussion today opened the conversation. This is the first time legislative proposals are being brought to the council in this manner and things are expected to change and get better. The discussions that are happening now are setting the expectation for staff and council members that the conversation is going to continue and a structure can be built to do this. Please feel free to reach out to the Community Relations team with questions or comments.

## **Next Meeting**

Date: January 24

Time: 12:30-3:00

Location: Rondo Library, St. Paul