

MINUTES  
CULTIVATING CULTURES COMMITTEE  
(EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE)  
Meeting of August 4, 2021  
TEAMS Meeting

**Members**

Stephanie Banner - Human Resources - ABSENT  
April Blathers - Veterans Benefits/Claims  
Leslie Busby-Amegashie - Veterans Benefits/Grants - ABSENT  
Jeanette Galarza - Veterans Benefits/Claims - ABSENT  
Larry Graves - Veterans Benefits/SAA  
Kevin Hampton - Veterans Museum  
Shantell Henderson - Veterans Benefits/VORP - ABSENT  
Russ Horton - Veterans Museum  
Jeff Hughes - Veterans Benefits/Cemeteries  
Jeanne Lind - Veterans Homes  
Patrick Meyer - Veterans Homes  
Shannon Miller - Public Affairs  
Matt Niehaus - Enterprise Services  
William Ray - Veterans Benefits/Cemeteries - ABSENT  
Linda Reek - Veterans Homes - ABSENT  
Victoria Simonson - Human Resources  
Carla Vigue - Public Affairs  
Rachael Weiland - Human Resources  
Angela Zilliox - Human Resources

**Others Present (not all inclusive)**

No public participants

**WDVA Present**

Secretary Mary Kolar  
Executive Staff Assistant Kelly Behling  
Chief Legal Counsel Chad Koplien

1. Call to order, roll call

The meeting of the Cultivating Cultures Committee – Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee was called to order by Russ Horton. Roll was called and a quorum was present.

2. Certification of notice of meeting

The meeting was notified as being properly noticed.

3. Secretary's Comments

Secretary Kolar thanked the committee for their work and looks forward to working with them.

4. Election of Officers:

Chair: Jeff Hughes nominated Russ Horton for the position of Chair, Carla Vigue second the motion; motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Co-Chair: Kevin Hampton nominated Carla Vigue for the position of Co-Chair, Shannon Miller 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion; motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Secretary: Kevin Hampton nominated Angela Zilliox; Angela declined the nomination as she is a non-voting member of the committee. Shannon Miller nominated Kevin Hampton for the position of Secretary, Carla Vigue second the motion; motion passed on a unanimous vote.

5. Approval of By-Laws:

Discussion: Larry Graves had questions on Section 1, "Representation" and Section 2 "Membership". Chief Legal Counsel, Chad Koplien shared the template from Department of Administration (DOA) was meant for all employees to participate on the committee, the By-Laws are not meant to create exclusion of any employees to participate on the committee. No further discussion was had.

Shannon Miller made a motion to approve the By-Laws of the Cultivating Cultures Committee; Jeff Hughes second the motion prior to Matt Niehaus second; motion passed on a unanimous vote.

6. Sub Committee chair reports:

*Appreciation:* Jeanne Lind, Chair and Angela Zilliox reported they are looking to bring back the Catch a Co-worker program, last input was from June 2020, committee looks to re-introduce the program. Jeanne added suggestion boxes may be placed in break rooms for employees not regularly on the intranet.

*Diversity:* Larry Graves, Chair reported he participated in a meeting with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary regarding the possibility of creating a Mentor group for new employees. Additional details to come.

*Involvement and Input:* Patrick Meyer, Chair reported the need for a broader approach to reach more employees. Staff input was heard, the committee would like to learn what are the barriers and brainstorm why and how to fix employee barriers.

*Morale and Fun:* Shannon Miller, Chair reported as employees return to work of possible having and ice cream social, via TEAMS may be an option. Celebrate skilled nursing week, have a team

spirit week and possible Packer (NFL) event. A possible option of going to the homes to do events too. Central office would like to have the coffee club back again.

*Wellness:* Victoria Simonson, Chair reported additional details will be coming on a walking initiative, a virtual run/walk event, a possible recipe/cookbook combined with a possible virtual cooking event, a drive through flu clinic at the Rimrock building along with a drive through vaccination clinic.

*Goals of committees:* Increase employee participation, diversity, and shared ideas. Enhance employee orientations by holding them quarterly. Employees starting during that quarter would attend the orientation. Additional attendees would be someone from the Secretary's Office, Division Administrators and Chair(s) from the sub committees to talk about the different events through the year/locations. Additional thoughts: Increased participation from Supervisors (top down), during evaluations talk about the different committees and encourage participation. Carla Vigue shared she and guest Chad Koplien will share this information with the Secretary at their next meeting.

7. Public Input: None

8. Future meetings:

Chair Russ Horton noted the committee will continue to meet on the first Wednesday of each month, the next meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday, September 1, 2021. He will send out a re-occurring meeting notice through TEAMS.

9. Future Agenda items:

Collect input and suggestions on how to gain more employee participation.

10. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn by Matt Niehaus, Rachel Weiland second the motion. Motion carried on a unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 2:54pm.

Russell Horton, Chair