

MINUTES  
CULTIVATING CULTURES COMMITTEE  
(EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE)  
Meeting of April 6, 2022  
TEAMS Meeting

**Members**

Stephanie Banner - Human Resources - ABSENT  
April Blathers - Veterans Benefits/Claims - ABSENT  
Leslie Busby-Amegashie - Veterans Benefits/Grants - ABSENT  
VACANT - Veterans Benefits/SAA  
Kevin Hampton - Veterans Museum - Present  
VACANT - Veterans Benefits/VORP  
Russ Horton - Veterans Museum - Present  
Jeff Hughes - Veterans Benefits/Cemeteries - ABSENT  
Jeanne Lind - Veterans Homes - Present  
Patrick Meyer - Veterans Homes - Present  
Shannon Miller - Public Affairs - Present  
Matt Niehaus - Enterprise Services – Present  
Kristy Hartke - Veterans Benefits/Cemeteries - Present  
VACANT - Veterans Homes  
Victoria Simonson - Human Resources - Present  
VACANT - Public Affairs

Angela Zilliox - Human Resources – Non-Voting – Present  
New: Amanda Ney – Human Resources – Non-voting – Present

**Others Present (not all inclusive)**

No public participants

**WDVA Present**

Chad Koplien  
Secretary Mary Kolar

Total Voting Membership present: 8  
Total Attendees: 12

Total Voting Membership: 12  
Necessary for Quorum: 4

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 at 2:02. Roll was called and a quorum was present.

2. Certification of notice of meeting

The meeting was notified as being properly noticed.

3. Adoption of Meeting Minutes:

Russ Horton circulated the January meeting minutes via email. No discussion was had. Matt Niehaus moved to adopt the meeting minutes; Jeanne Lind seconded; motion passed by unanimous vote.

4. Subcommittee chair reports:

*Appreciation:* Jeanne Lind, Chair, reported that the subcommittee met since the last meeting. Amanda Ney joined the meeting. Talking about changing “catch a coworker” to promoting Random Acts of Kindness. Russ Horton and Amanda Ney expanded that “Catch a Coworker” could have negative connotations so perhaps rebranding it to “Random Acts of Kindness”.

*Diversity:* Russ reported that they are looking for a replacement chair for Larry Graves. Angie Zilliox gave a brief overview of Diversity and Equity efforts. At the end of this month DOA will be here doing an audit of our Equity and Inclusion Plan – every 3 years there is a random audit (normally of recruitment and hiring processes) but with the new plan the monitoring visit has been increased from a 3 hour window to 1.5 days (we have a designated diversity officer, go through our entire plan, scrutinizing our deadlines, etc.). She may reach out to Russ if needed during the audit. She will review with new Diversity Sub-Committee Chair once they’re selected. A big issue is membership. Kevin Hampton asked if it was significant to have a Sub-Committee Chair today.

Russ talked about meeting with DOR’s equivalent of CCC. They gave some good ideas for recruiting members. One of the things he found out was that they really chair the sub-committees. Russ volunteered to temporarily if necessary. Opened the floor to any volunteers. Seeing none, Russ will temporarily serve.

*Involvement and Input:* Patrick Meyer, Chair, reported not really any attendance in last month’s meeting. Got Amanda up to speed. In a holding pattern waiting for Survey Results

*Morale and Fun:* Shannon reported that we had 45 people participate in NCAA bracket. Larry Graves is the champion. Shannon is currently working mostly on the suicide prevention events for the department (6 upcoming), so looking more toward the summer events – perhaps with Brat Fest. Want to look at programming at Non-Central Office sites. Russ added that we had decent representation from non-CO areas in the NCAA activity.

*Wellness:* Victoria Simonson, Chair, reported that they have started a Friday Fun Fact email that goes out every Friday – information related to EAP, nutrition, physical activities, etc. If anyone else has any ideas for them, please feel free to share since there are 52 weeks in a year.... Looking at doing a walking challenge in May and a water challenge later in the year. Still meeting monthly.

5. Old Business:

*Employee Survey:* Russ thanked everyone for helping spread the word. Responses were received by April 1 so there hasn't been time to totally digest it yet or evaluate the data so we will table it for now. 166 responses were received.

6. New Business:

*Co-chair Nomination:*

Russ nominated Shannon Miller. Kristy Hartke seconded. No other nominations. Vote in favor passed unanimously.

*CCC Recruiting Message – Who we are and what we do:*

Russ said the survey results will hopefully help us understand that employees might not know who we are or what we're doing.

Shannon mentioned that reintroducing the employee newsletter might come up with Colleen the new comms director. There is a chance to do a part of it as a column in that newsletter. Angie Z suggested to Shannon that maybe we could do a monthly newsletter from CCC.

Amanda mentioned a suggestion that the CCC could ask the Secretary's office to send something out quarterly or so encouraging participation and awareness.

Russ added to that the folks in DOR emphasized the importance of top-down from the Secretary's office is considerably helpful. Involving Division heads to recognize who is representing the different divisions is good too.

Angie Z mentioned including in communications that were sent out about the "national months" to help encourage awareness. She mentioned that perhaps we could send these out via the CCC mailbox instead of from Angie Z. Russ brought up the idea of having a signature included in the CCC mailbox that includes a little blurb about what the CCC is, etc.

*Other New Business Discussion:*

Shannon asked if the CCC was included in the New Employee Orientation. Angie jumped in that there currently really isn't an orientation session for CO with the lack of an HR assistant. It currently is a handbook and a slideshow. It is in the plan to reintroduce an orientation session and improve that messaging.

7. Public Input:

None

8. Future Agenda items:

CCC Recruiting Message: Include this again for additional discussion after survey results are available for review and to help inform the messaging.

Angie, the Department's Diversity Officer, requested a standing slot on the agenda for updates at the CCC meetings. Would like to invite Victoria Perreault for a presentation.

We will talk about the survey results next time.

Shannon wanted to open it up if there are any ideas for anything for the subcommittees, please feel free to share.

## 9. Adjournment

Russ thanked everyone for meeting. Russ noted that the next meeting is in July. Russ also noted that Secretary Kolar joined us. She thanked everyone for everything they do.

Chad Kopljen wanted to thank everyone as well for all they do, especially Russ for his leadership and involvement.

A motion to adjourn at 2:40 from Matt; Patrick seconded the motion. Motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Russell Horton, Chair