

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

PANDEMIC RESURGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE – EQUITY SUBCOMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 30, 2020 – 4:00 PM

Pursuant to the Governor's State of Emergency,
this meeting was conducted solely by videoconference.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Eugene Young, Chair, President, Metropolitan Urban League of Wilmington
James Collins, CIO, Department of Technology and Information
Claire DeMatteis, Commissioner, DE Department of Corrections
Rep. Sherry Dorsey Walker, State Representative
Van Hampton, CEO, True Access Capital
Dr. LeRoi Hicks, CMO, Wilmington Hospital
Sen. Elizabeth Lockman, State Senator
Lolita Lopez, CEO, Westside Family Healthcare
Maria Matos, CEO, Latin America Community Center
Rev. Rita Paige, Pastor, New Beginnings Community AME Church
Rosa Rivera, COO, La Red Health Center
Freeman Williams, NAACP State Conference Executive Member
Rep. Lyndon Yearick, State Representative

STAFF PRESENT

Shavonne White, Director, Office of Supplier Diversity
Sydney Garlick, Behavioral Health Coordinator, Office of the Lt. Governor

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Eugene Young called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Remarks

Mr. Young started by thanking everyone for their attendance then gave an overview of how the meeting will flow.

Health Update and Review of PRAC Common Goals

Mr. Young discussed the goals of today's meeting which focuses on understanding the financial impact of the pandemic on individuals and the economic impact on minority-owned businesses. He then provided a situational update on the State's hospitalization and death rates since the last meeting and; an overview of the topic of discussion for next week's meeting, which will focus on disparity in COVID health outcomes related to employment in essential industries and social determinants of health.

Emerging Findings on Individual Financial Impacts of COVID-19

Ms. White gave an overview of the economic impacts of COVID-19 on individuals in our State which included data showing Delaware's unemployment rate compared to national rates and that of surrounding states; elevated unemployment among Black and Latino workers in threatened industries and for people with lower educational attainment; the racial wealth gap among individuals in Wilmington; and increased food insecurity and reliance on community support to fill gaps for low-income families.

Emerging Findings for Equity Analysis of Economic Impact of COVID-19

Ms. White reviewed the emerging findings on the economic impacts of COVID-19 for minority-owned businesses. The data revealed that Black and Latino owned businesses in hard hit industries have limited access to support and federal relief programs were not well-suited to support small and minority-owned businesses.

Comments from Subcommittee Members

Mr. Young opened the floor for discussion on the findings.

Van Hampton advised that minority-owned businesses had the same issues prior to COVID-19 and stated that more money should go towards communities that need it the most. The State gives millions to companies for development however nothing is used to develop minority communities.

Rep. Lyndon Yearick noted that the personal care services sector took a big hit and more legislative work should be done. He stated that we should consider looking at licensing and regulatory issues; minority hiring practices and standards and having a percentage of construction contracts go to the minority businesses. Rep. Yearick also stated the State should make it easier to start a business and eliminate the hurdles.

Rep. Sherry Dorsey Walker stated that people who have access and opportunity should reach back into the community to help minority businesses. She also noted that are a few big construction projects taking place and more needs to be done in order to ensure that people of color have access those contracts. Rep. Dorsey Walker advised of the DE Black Legislative Caucus initiative asking the Governor to put \$1M aside for minority businesses to prevent them from closing and called on the committee members to show their support for this initiative. She

agrees that the State should not spend money on studies rather spend it to help communities and businesses.

Sen. Elizabeth Lockman noted that there is money in the bond bill for a disparity study to look at lack of diversity in procurement practices. She suggested the committee put pressure on to ensure measurable outcomes.

CIO James Collins noted the lack of broadband connectivity for families in rural areas which impacts schools, businesses and telemedicine. He stated there was a lack of digital equity across the State when the school's shutdown and that the committee take note of this when making recommendations.

Maria Matos questioned the results of the last disparity study done by the State. She suggested more money be added to the amount being used for the disparity study and use that money to help minority businesses. Regarding testing, Ms. Matos stated that the White population are being tested more and the focus should shift to the minority community.

Mr. Young asked the committee to discuss their thoughts on resources individuals are relying on to meet their needs.

Lolita Lopez stated that there was a lack of coordination with the testing and we need to be more proactive. She also hopes that we use this opportunity to connect people with food and housing.

Rev. Rita Paige stated that testing sites and food resource sites should be separate. She advised that mobile units are more useful when they go into residential developments and noted that the State has seen the value of using churches as testing sites.

Dr. LeRoi Hicks advised that we should look at the underlying data; we may not be seeing the full impact on communities of color.

Rep. Yearick asked about the reduced transit schedule and how that impacted communities of color. Rep. Sherry Dorsey Walker stated that people of color living in Odessa and Townsend were greatly affected by the reduced transportation schedule.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

CIO Collins moved seconded by Rep. Dorsey Walker to approve the July 23, 2020 minutes. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

No other business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next meeting of the PRAC Equity Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, July 7, 2020 at 4:00 PM, and conducted by Zoom. Zoom meeting registration will be provided on that meeting's agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, Chair Eugene adjourned the meeting at 5:01PM.