

# MINUTES

February 10, 2023

## Governor's Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion

State of Wisconsin



### Location:

This meeting was held via a Zoom virtual meeting platform.

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### COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mai Xiong, Chair  
Robyn Davis  
Kevin Carr  
Dr. Carlton Jenkins  
Dasheika Kidd  
Vanessa McDowell  
Adin Palau  
Emilie Amundson  
Que El-Amin  
James Bond  
Jessica Cavazos  
Nisreen Atta  
Dr. Odawa White  
Mai J. Lo Lee  
Dan Hereth  
Shaundel Spivey  
Beth Wroblewski  
Elmer Moore, Jr.  
Percy Brown, Jr.  
Tammy Rivera

### COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:

Markasa Tucker  
Rev. Dr. Alex Gee Jr.  
Amy Pechacek  
Greg Steinberger  
Jessica Boling  
Ruben Hopkins  
Marie Cornelius  
Dr. LaVar J. Charleston

### GUESTS:

Lt. Governor Sara Rodriguez  
Kathy Blumenfeld  
Danielle Williams  
Jen Flogel

### STAFF:

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Laurice Lincoln  
De Anna Sellers

Nicole Bailie  
Suzanne Lidtke

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## **A. CALL TO ORDER**

Madam Chair Xiong welcomed the group and called the Governor's Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion (Council) to order at 9:00 am.

### Announcements

Madam Chair Xiong reminded the Council of Governor Tony Evers's fifth State of the State address, which was held on Tuesday, January 24, 2023. The address previewed the governor's plans to maintain the economy's momentum, bolster the state's workforce, and expand access to high-quality, affordable childcare. On January 4, 2023, Governor Evers signed Executive Order #182, recreating 28 non-statutory committees working to conduct studies and advise the governor on various issues of statewide interest and importance, including the Governor's Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion. The Governor's Health Equity Council recently released its report titled "Building a Better Wisconsin: Investing in the Health and Well-being of Wisconsinites." The report included 20 recommendations adopted by the Council, data revealing the state of health equity in Wisconsin, and an examination of the social determinants of health that contribute to differences in health outcomes across the state.

Laurice Lincoln, the Director of the Bureau of Equity and Inclusion, updated the Council on the State of Wisconsin Student Diversity Internship Program (SWSDIP) program. SWSDIP applications will be accepted until February 20, 2023. Over 200 full-time, paid positions are available throughout the state at 18 different agencies. Summer housing for students will be an option again this year, both in Madison at UW-Madison and in Milwaukee, at UW-Milwaukee. Lincoln emailed more information about SWSDIP to the Council and encouraged council members to share information about the program. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Lincoln for the updates.

### Review meeting agenda and meeting procedure.

Madam Chair Xiong discussed the agenda and the documents accompanying the meeting agenda. Madam Chair Xiong requested the Council review the previous meeting's minutes and this meeting's agenda and called for a motion to approve.

## **APPROVAL OF February 10, 2023, MEETING AGENDA**

***MOTION: Jessica Cavazos moved to approve the February 10, 2023, meeting agenda of the Governor's Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion, as submitted. Kevin Carr seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.***

## **APPROVAL OF November 11, 2022, MEETING MINUTES**

***MOTION: Dasheika Kidd moved to approve November 11, 2022, meeting minutes of the Governor's Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion, as submitted. Jessica Cavazos seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.***

## **B. STATE OFFICE UPDATES**

### Governor's Office Updates

Madam Chair Xiong noted that Governor Tony Evers is attending the National Governor's Association Conference in Washington, D.C., and is unable to participate in the council meeting. Youth mental health is one of the conference topics, and Madam Chair Xiong reminded council members that Governor Evers launched a "Get Kids Ahead" initiative and invested \$30 million to provide school-based mental health support and services for nearly every school district in the state. Governor Evers also declared 2023 the Year of Mental Health. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Governor Evers for his commitment to the health and well-being of Wisconsin citizens.

Madam Chair Xiong introduced Lt. Governor Sara Rodriguez.

### Lt. Governor Sara Rodriguez's Remarks

Lt. Governor Rodriguez introduced herself and expressed her excitement to work with the Council to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in Wisconsin. Lt. Governor Rodriguez shared that the Evers administration outlined a number of key priorities, including championing historic investments into healthcare education, clean energy, and critical mental health resources within Wisconsin. Lt. Governor Rodriguez remains committed to accessible and affordable childcare, supporting the success of small business owners, and investing in the reliability and sustainability of the state's infrastructure, all while ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the center of the work. Lt. Governor Rodriguez reaffirmed her commitment, along with Governor Evers, to working with the Council as well as looking to the Council for its guidance and expertise. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Lt. Governor Rodriguez for her participation and remarks.

## **C. MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS**

Madam Chair Xiong welcomed three new board members: Secretary-designee James Bond, Department of Veteran's Affairs; Elmer Moore, Jr., President and CEO of WHEDA; and Secretary-designee Dan Hereth, Department of Safety and Professional Services. Madam Chair Xiong acknowledged the contributions of departing council members Victor Barnett, Secretary Mary Kolar, Secretary Karen Timberlake, Dr. Rev. Monica Cummings, and Secretary Dawn Crim.

## **D. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Mai J. Lo Lee thanked former Secretary Mary Kolar for her work and welcomed Secretary-designee James Bond to the subcommittee. Lo Lee introduced the Community Engagement Subcommittee and reminded the Council of its charge. Lo Lee updated the Council on the subcommittee's work, including meeting with Department of Tourism Deputy Secretary Maria Van Hoorn to learn about the impact of tourism on Wisconsin's economy. The subcommittee also hosted regional cultural events organizers at meetings to learn more about how Wisconsin regions celebrate diversity and community. Lo Lee highlighted the importance of recognizing cultural events and activities throughout the state, celebrating the innovation in education and Wisconsin's diverse citizens and culture. Lo Lee requested the assistance of the Council to identify more organizers of cultural events and inclusive activities and practices. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Mai J. Lo Lee and the subcommittee for their work.

### DATA AND POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

Robyn Davis thanked the Council and subcommittee members for their contributions and expressed confidence in the subcommittee's work toward impactful recommendations. Davis reminded council members of the subcommittee's purpose and focus on employment. The subcommittee reviewed state and national labor statistics and reports and concentrated on position descriptions, recruitment, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging during the life cycle of a new hire. Those strategies allowed the subcommittee to focus on recruitment by expanding advertising and outreach efforts and also growing pipelines of diverse applicants. The subcommittee heard from the Department of Health Services Office of Health Equity, the City of Racine, the Sherman Phoenix Foundation, and the Urban League of Greater Madison. These presentations helped the subcommittee capture the lived experiences of applicants. Davis concluded her comments by acknowledging her honor to serve as the subcommittee chairperson, and she looks forward to working with the next subcommittee leader. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Robyn Davis for her inaugural Data and Policy Subcommittee leadership and encouraged subcommittee members to consider stepping into the leadership role.

### ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Secretary Emilie Amundson provided an update on the work of the Economic and Business Development Subcommittee and reminded the Council of its charge. Secretary Amundson highlighted the subcommittee's work, including identifying places inside the government to hardwire the natural communication systems better to help achieve goals inside and outside the government. The subcommittee continues working with Chambers of Commerce, minority Chambers of Commerce, and other communities on available federal funding. The subcommittee is investing in developing a data collection tool to gather information from the business community to guide its research and recommendations. Secretary Amundson thanked Dr. LaVar Charleston for his

service in leading the subcommittee. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Secretary Amundson, Dr. LaVar Charleston, and the subcommittee for their work.

#### **E. 10-MINUTE BREAK – RESUMED AT 10:01 am**

#### **F. DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION**

##### Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld

Madam Chair Xiong introduced Department of Administration Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld. Secretary-designee Blumenfeld thanked the Council for their commitment and acknowledged February as Black History Month. Secretary-designee Blumenfeld reflected on some accomplishments of the Evers administration, including over a 115 million dollar investment in organizations across the state serving businesses in economically distressed communities through the diverse business investment and assistance grant programs. Governor Evers also invested 90 million dollars through the equitable recovery grants for over 130 community-based services for programs aimed at increasing equity and eliminating health disparities, early childhood development, education, economic support, housing, and environmental justice in communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Secretary-designee Blumenfeld highlighted the Wisconsin Supplier Diversity Program, which marked the highest diverse spending in state history. Secretary-designee Blumenfeld also described a new diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging workbook made available to agency leadership as they continue to make improvements to ensure the state and state employees experience equity and inclusion in the workplace. Secretary-designee Blumenfeld thanked council members for their contributions and insights. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Secretary-designee Blumenfeld for her remarks.

#### **G. 2022 GEIAC YEAR IN REVIEW**

Madam Chair Xiong provided an overview of the Council's work in 2022, including significant progress in identifying priorities and strategies and investigating the current landscape to understand how best to support the state initiatives and work in these areas. Additionally, subcommittee guiding statements were developed, and the Council participated in strategic planning, finalized subcommittee goals and strategies, and reviewed to understand the authority and responsibility of the Council.

#### **H. MOVING STRATEGIES TO ACTIONS 2023-2024**

In 2023 and 2024, Madam Chair Xiong asked the Council and the subcommittees to focus on providing recommendations, ideas, and innovative practices to take on the identified strategies. Ensuring the recommendations apply an equity lens will take discussion and consideration within the subcommittees. Madam Chair Xiong then introduced the subcommittee discussion exercise. Each subcommittee was asked to review its goals and strategies and prepare recommendations for presentation and discussion during upcoming council meetings in 2023. Subcommittee members were also asked to brainstorm potential activities that should be considered and any additional research that may be needed.

Subcommittee members were instructed to fill out the worksheet in the meeting materials and report back to the Council at large. Additionally, subcommittee members discussed the current subcommittee structure and process. The Council reconvened, and each subcommittee provided an update on its discussion.

The Economic and Business Subcommittee discussed some successes and challenges, including resources needed to move identified strategies forward. The subcommittee has new members and requires additional time to bring the new members up to speed. The subcommittee will spend time at the March meeting to determine what goals/strategies, if anything, need to be changed. The subcommittee's presentation was offered as information only, and no decisions were made on exact dates, so no voting was necessary.

The Community Engagement Subcommittee discussed what was working well, including learning the capacity of different Chambers and organizations. Some challenges identified included a greater understanding of the subcommittee and council framework and the work's pace. The discussion also centered on the subcommittee's goal to identify towns, cities, regions, and tribal nations with significant growth in underrepresented populations and the resources needed to gather that data. There was also a discussion about equalizing attention, resources, and other information sources. The subcommittee discussed in-person meetings and the associated travel budget. The subcommittee's presentation was offered as information only, and no decisions were made on exact dates, so no voting was necessary.

The Data and Policy Subcommittee identified effective leadership and meeting structure and cadence as areas that work well. Opportunities included ensuring new subcommittee members can acclimate and understand the subcommittee's work effectively. The subcommittee also discussed the investment in learning and understanding recruitment strategies and believed they could offer some recommendations around the recruitment strategy at the May 12, 2023, meeting. The subcommittee will also discuss which goals to move into and the research required before committing to a date to provide recommendations. The subcommittee needs to consider changing their current goals or strategies.

***Motion: Dasheika Kidd moved to accept the Data and Policy Subcommittee's update of recommendations around the recruitment goal on May 12, 2023. Jessica Cavazos seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.***

## **I. GEIAC COUNCIL OFFICE APPOINTMENTS**

Madam Chair Xiong reviewed the open leadership positions on the Council, including the Economic and Business Subcommittee chair and the Data and Policy Subcommittee chair.

## **J. FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS AND CLOSING REMARKS**

Madam Chair Xiong reminded council members of the great opportunity for change in the coming year and that the collective insight and recommendations focused on how best to

leverage and implement those opportunities is the challenge for 2023.

The next council meeting is Friday, May 12, 2023, from 9 am – 12 pm (virtually).

#### **K. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Madam Chair Xiong asked if any council members had any questions. Madam Chair Xiong thanked the Council for their work and requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

***Motion: Emilie Amundson moved to adjourn February 10, 2023, meeting of the Governor's Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion. Elmer Moore Jr. seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.***

The Council adjourned at 11:34 am.

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Mai Xiong, Chair  
Governor's Advisory  
Council on Equity and Inclusion