

MINUTES

May 12, 2023

Governor's Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council

State of Wisconsin



Location:

This meeting was held via a Zoom virtual meeting platform.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mai Xiong, Chair
Nisreen Atta
Jessica Boling
James Bond
Kevin Carr
Marie Cornelius
Dan Hereth
Ruben Hopkins
Dasheika Kidd
Mai J. Lo Lee
Elmer Moore, Jr.
Adin Palau
Amy Pechacek
Shaundel Spivey
Beth Wroblewski
Dr. Odawa White

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:

Markasa Tucker
Greg Steinberger
Dr. LaVar J. Charleston
Emilie Amundson
Vanessa McDowell
Robyn Davis
Percy Brown, Jr.
Que El-Amin
Rev. Dr. Alex Gee Jr.
Dr. Carlton Jenkins
Tammy Rivera

GUESTS:

Sara Rodriguez
Justin Koestler
Danielle Williams
Donna Moreland
Dennis Winters

STAFF:

Laurice Lincoln
De Anna Sellers

Nicole Bailie
Suzanne Lidtke

A. CALL TO ORDER

Madam Chair Xiong acknowledged technical difficulties and called the Governor's Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council (Council) to order at 9:06 am.

Announcements

Madam Chair Xiong announced that on March 31, 2021, Governor Evers declared April Hmong Heritage Month. May is Mental Health Awareness Month and Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Cinco de Mayo is also in May. Madam Chair Xiong also reminded council members to plan for Juneteenth celebrations in June.

Madam Chair Xiong congratulated Jessica Cavazos, who was recently appointed to the Biden administration as the Deputy Undersecretary for Minority Business Development at the U.S. Department of Commerce. This the second member of the council to move into a role with the Biden administration.

Madam Chair Xiong also congratulated Mai J. Lo Lee, who was recognized by Insight as a 2023 Women of Influence in the New North Region.

Roll Call

Madam Chair Xiong acknowledged that quorum had not been reached and moved on to the remarks.

B. STATE OFFICE UPDATES

Madam Chair Xiong introduced Lt. Governor Sara Rodriguez.

Lt. Governor Sara Rodriguez Remarks

Lt. Governor Rodriguez also acknowledged technical difficulties with her camera and began her remarks. Lt. Governor Rodriguez expressed her commitment to supporting the work of the council and centering diversity, equity, and inclusion in the state government. Lt. Governor Rodriguez discussed the proposed budget and how it supports the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion priorities. Lt. Governor Rodriguez announced that provisions were cut from the budget, including investments in healthcare, education, mental health care and expanded access to affordable childcare. Lt. Governor Rodriguez expressed her disappointment with the cuts in light of the budget surplus. Lt. Governor Rodriguez and Governor Evers remain committed to ensuring that Wisconsin is a more equitable state for years to come. Lt. Governor Rodriguez also noted that the Wisconsin for All provision was stripped from the budget but reminded the council it was still early in the budget process. The Evers administration remains hopeful about ongoing budget discussions and Lt. Governor Rodriguez thanked the council for their work and support. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Lt. Governor Rodriguez for her participation and remarks.

Madam Chair Xiong introduced Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams, who provided an update on the work of the Department of Administration and the state workforce. Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams thanked council members who met with Chair Xiong, Paegge Heckel, and Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams recently. Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams explained her role with DOA is to manage external relations for the agency and emphasized that the council is important to Governor Evers and DOA Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld. Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams reviewed some DOA programs, including DOA's wellness program providing resources in support of Mental Health Awareness Month. Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams highlighted a visit to the Friendship Circle in Milwaukee. Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams highlighted the 3 affinity groups at DOA, which cultivate a sense of belonging amongst employees as well as the work of the IDEAs committee, which is the equity and inclusion advisory committee at the DOA. The DOA also reestablished the equity and inclusion planning committee, which is evaluating the outcomes of the first DOA equity and inclusion strategic plan. This activity sets the stage for the committee to work on the new draft of the DOA equity and inclusion strategic plan, which will go into effect in January of 2024. Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams provided a preview of a new initiative at the Division of Personnel Management (DPM). In April, DPM launched a new project that re-imagines DPM's structure and processes. DPM is centering the feedback from the council in that project.

Madam Chair Xiong thanked Lt. Governor Rodriguez and Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams for their participation and remarks.

C. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Mai J. Lo Lee thanked the subcommittee members for their work and reminded the council of the charge and guiding statement of the Community Engagement Subcommittee. In February, the subcommittee met with Ajamou Butler, the founder of Heal the Hood from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Heal the Hood has a unique approach to building community collaborations within the city of Milwaukee with the goal of creating a more progressive and peaceful Milwaukee. The subcommittee learned about how Heal the Hood is run by volunteers and its growth over the last decade. In March, the subcommittee met with Tonya Webster, chairwoman of the Oneida Nation Pow Wow Advisory Council and learned that the Oneida Nation Pow Wow had been in on hiatus for the last two years, due to COVID-19, and over 15,000 people attended the Pow Wow when it was held again in the summer of 2022. Mai J. Lo Lee announced the 49th Pow Wow would be held on June 30 – July 2, 2023 at the Pow Wow grounds at the Norbert Hill Center in Oneida. In March, the subcommittee also met with Leah Stroobants, the Cultural Coordinator for the Oneida Nation. In 2023, the Oneida Nation commemorated the 200 year anniversary of the treaty signing with Wisconsin. In May, the subcommittee will meet with John Breuninger, who is the board member president of the Woodland Indian Art Board to learn more about the Festival of the Woodland Indian Art and Culture Show. The festival will be on November 10th and 11th in Oneida with the theme of Honoring Our Veterans:

Past, Present and Future. Future subcommittee meetings will include learning from the Ho-Chunk Nation and the Hmong Cultural Agency from La Crosse. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Mai J. Lo Lee for her leadership and the subcommittee for their work.

DATA AND POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

Madam Chair Xiong provided the update for the Data and Policy Subcommittee as the new subcommittee chair has not been identified. At the February meeting, the subcommittees were tasked with selecting one or two of the current strategies in their work plan and identify actionable recommendations. The subcommittee decided to develop a survey and gather additional input from the larger council to use in their formulations of those recommendations.

ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Madam Chair Xiong provided the update for the Economic and Business Subcommittee as the new subcommittee chair has not been identified. There was limited attendance during the subcommittee meeting, however the members there had a robust discussion about possible actionable recommendations related to the current subcommittee strategies. There was also the identification of some repetitive language that should be revisited in the in the written strategies and updated. The members also discussed clarification of the terms marginalized and minority groups.

Madam Chair Xiong asked if there were any questions about the subcommittee reports. Ruben Hopkins provided an update on the work of the Wisconsin Black Chamber of Commerce.

D. BUREAU OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE

Madam Chair Xiong introduced Laurice Lincoln, the Director of the Bureau of Equity and Inclusion (BEI). Director Lincoln provided an overview of BEI's responsibilities contained in Executive Order 59 for the council. Those responsibilities include supporting and monitoring agency equity and inclusion plans, reviewing and evaluating affirmative action and equal employment opportunity programs and policies, developing and offering professional development opportunities and collaborating with state agencies to collect and analyze relevant data. Director Lincoln provided a comprehensive review of BEI's leadership and support of the agency equity and inclusion strategic plans, including the development and monitoring of the plans. Director Lincoln discussed outcomes of the monitoring process, including continued focus on improvements in communication, training in data literacy, data collection, process mining and setting and achieving EI performance benchmarks. Director Lincoln also outlined the next steps for 2023, including developing the equity and inclusion strategic plans for the next three-year cycle, beginning on January 1, 2024. Madam Chair Xiong thanked Director Lincoln for the update.

E. 10 MINUTE BREAK – RESUMED AT 10:04 AM

F. THE STATE OF WISCONSIN'S ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE

Madam Chair Xiong introduced Department of Workforce Development's Chief Economist

Dennis Winters. Chief Economist Winters provided a comprehensive overview and history of Wisconsin's economy. Key insights include the record low unemployment in Wisconsin, increases in wages, the flattening of the labor force in Wisconsin due to demographic shifts, job changes due to artificial intelligence (AI) and automation, and labor quantity challenges. Chief Economist Winters then took questions from the council.

Madam Chair Xiong thanked Dennis Winters for his remarks.

G. GEIAC LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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

H. AUGUST MEETING AND CLOSING REMARKS

Madam Chair Xiong reminded council members that the August meeting will be in person. The meeting day has been extended to include an opportunity for a luncheon presentation and networking. Subcommittees will also have the opportunity to meet in the afternoon, from 1-2 pm. Madam Chair Xiong reminded council members that we are 5 months into the year, with two large meeting opportunities ahead, and highlighted goals for the year. The collective insight and expertise of the advisory council are important to the successful work of this council. Bringing to the table actionable recommendations focused on the priorities the council selected is an important part of the work. Over the next several months, the subcommittees will continue discussions and review actionable recommendations that will be presented to Governor Evers for consideration. Subcommittee members should plan to have draft recommendations ready to review with the entire council at the August meeting, with the goal of voting on the final recommendations at the November meeting.

I. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Madam Chair Xiong then thanked the council for their work.

The next council meeting is Friday, August 11, 2023, from 9 am – 2 pm (in person).

The Council adjourned at 11:11 am (Quorum was not reached during this meeting. No official actions were voted).

Date Approved: _____

Signed: _____

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