

Multicultural Advisory Committee of the State of Utah's COVID-19 Response

Meeting Minutes

Friday, August 28, 2020 | 3:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Google Meet | Online

Members: Chair Nubia Peña, Co-Chair Byron Russell, Co-Chair Ze Min Xiao, Dr. Marc Babitz, Aden Batar, Mayra Cedano, Neelam Chand, Rebecca Chavez-Houck, Dulce Díez, Mike Haddon, Emma E. Houston, Dustin Jansen, Celina Milner, Dr. Len Novilla, Asha Parekh, Tami Pyfer, Ming Wang

Absent: Jess Anderson, Juan Becerra, Silvia Castro, Jake Fitisemanu Jr., Deneiva Knight, Mikelle Moore

Guests: Ramy Ahmed, Ciriac Alvarez Valle, Karla Arroyo, Joél Arvizo-Zavala, Rozanna Benally-Sagg, José Borjón, Mayra Cardozo, Maegan Castleton, Joelle Fierro, Jenny Hor, Jenny Johnson, Ephraim Kum, Josh Loftin, Nate McDonald, Angelo Papastamos, Katherine Potter, Jeremy Taylor, Taysha Tiatia, Rocío Torres Mora, Jeannette Villalta

Welcome – Byron Russell, Co-Chair

Byron Russell welcomed attendees to the meeting.

COVID-19 Racial Equity and Inclusion Grant – *Byron Russell*

- 124 applications submitted; \$5.4 million requested total
- Have \$4 million to give away
- Deadline officially extended until Tuesday 9/8 at 11:59 pm
 - Make an announcement to inform the public there is more funding, and the deadline is extended.
 - In the interest of being fair to those who applied to the original deadline, will allow those who had errors, or incomplete paperwork a chance to submit again.
 - Meeting with the Advisory Council to overlook applications.
 - Challenge will be: Getting the word out statewide across all communities of the extended deadline.

Leavitt Partners – *Byron Russell*

- Special thanks to Rebecca Chavez-Houck and Dr. Len Novilla for shaping what the study will look like.
- Study officially approved: Analysis on racism as a social determinant of health.
- Open to feedback and criticism from the commissions, and the communities.
- Funded by GOMB

Facebook Small Business Grants Program – *Byron Russell*

- Dedicated to Black-owned businesses
- Deadline: Monday 8/31 at 7 pm. Make sure information is available.

Plain Language Continued – *Joelle Fierro and Jenny Johnson*

- Plain language is the process of presenting information in the most effective way. Plain language must be comprehensible the first time reading it, and accessible to everyone; The goal is to bridge the gap in information. Using plain language also allows translations to be faster and more efficient.
- Challenges: Often the plain language process is overlooked. Either by not having a dedicated staff to review, not giving enough time, or overlooking it entirely.
 - Constantly looking for gaps in information:
 - Background Knowledge
 - Misunderstanding
 - Misinformation
 - Pain Points
 - Reviewing for plain language takes time in order to process the work.

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- Example: How do you tell someone how to make a peanut butter sandwich, when they have no knowledge of it? Language must be broken down into basic steps and in the right order (i.e., unscrew the lid before putting butter knife in).
 - Plain language will look different depending on the community, the needs, and the process.
- Some of the gaps of information identified
 - Quarantining, testing, understanding the processes to its basic level (i.e., how do you find where to get tested).
 - Example: Image from a care book
 - Limited capitalization for readability
 - Three days were spent to decide what to do if you do not have a thermometer
- Question: How does reading levels help in this process?
 - Reading levels determine how difficult the words used are, and do not account for comprehension.
 - Visual and audio with little writing is helpful, but often difficult to come back to
 - Charts and graphs can be a disservice if people do not know how to read a chart/graph.
- The Center for Plain Language conference this year is available for those interested. This year's theme: "Plain Language is a Civil Right."
 - Visit centerforplainlanguage.org for more information.

Language Access Updates – Ze Min Xiao

- Ze Min Xiao acknowledged the hard work of the Language Access Work Group members and partners.
- Current projects:
 - Survey to gather feedback from communications professionals
 - Develop one page best practices info sheet
 - Goal: to be able to share with others
 - Language access providers/community listening tour
 - Continue work with Plain Language Review

Economic Sustainability Updates – Neelam Chand and Rocío Torres Mora

- Three Pillars/Priorities
 - Business Development
 - Workforce Development
 - Financial Literacy
 - Work with other partners and identify gaps, create problem statements, and policy briefs to fill in gaps.
- Rocío Torres Mora with Neighborhood House:
 - Trust in community
 - Story 1: A mother works 40 hours at the airport, during COVID-19 her hours are greatly reduced (16 hours). No amount of careful budgets, or financial literacy can help with a drastic cut in pay. Neighborhood House helps with sliding scale pay, funds set aside, and offering daycare to help keep the mother afloat.
 - Story 2: A family immigrating to America, the father was turned away at the airport and now the family is a single mother of two on an international student visa. Mother kept the family afloat by doing odd jobs (house painting, etc) but due to COVID-19 lost her main form of income, and no longer has a place to live. Relies on the programs of Neighborhood House.
 - It is because of the trust the community has in us that allows these stories to be heard, and allows us to help.
 - Nourish to Flourish

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- Local restaurants are paid to provide high quality meals that are handed out for free for those in the communities.
- Now serving 200 daily starting at 3:30 pm at Neighborhood House
- Streamlined process: No contact, available in English and Spanish
- Open to everyone, no ID, or paperwork required, only need to wear a mask (masks can also be provided).

Other Business: No meeting on September 4th due to Labor Day weekend.

Next Meeting

Friday, September 11, 2020 from 3:00–4:00 P.M. through Google Meet with updates from:

- Food Security
- Housing and Social Services
- Transportation Equity Project
 - UDOT
 - UTA