***Health Equity Advisory Commission Meeting Notes***

Date: September 5, 2023

Facilitator:  Rev Mark Hughes

**Agenda Consensus, Previous Meeting Notes**

**Public Comment** No public comments

**Status of RFP** - Director Davis

* Updates on progress of the RFP were limited
* Review group committed to evaluating the bids
* Both proposals included a budget
* Panel: Director Davis, Chair Hughes, Sara Chesbrough.

**Status of Report due to legislature** – Kirsten

* Kirsten has been unable to make any progress on developing the draft
* Discussion on how the group can share the load in this process.
* Monica, Director Davis, Sara and Chair Hughes agreed to assist.

**Equity Moment -** Mark(10 mins)

* Chair Hughes led a brief discussion on the National Mental Health Crises and reviewed a BIPOC Mental Health Fact Sheet.

**Succession Planning for Chair and Vice Chair – Chair Hughes and Director Davis**

* Chair Hughes reminded the group that the Chair and VC terms will end in October and that it would be at that meeting that nominations for the upcoming year would be taken.
* Director Davis reminded the group that the 2 years terms are also ending –and reappointments for these terms were due in October. Director Davis to send notifications
* The Commission was encouraged to engage in participation outreach

**Act 117 (2022) (15 mins)**

* [Office of Professional Regulation](https://wfck1gw3.r.us-east-1.awstrack.me/L0/https%3A//sos.vermont.gov/opr//1/0100018a1d5b6197-5e2cf161-0f56-454a-8c32-7a7a7a2d3d6b-000000/-w2f388Qbb4NCRxwHEQNVO7Myzo%3D336) (OPR) study to assess Vermont’s mental health profession licensing regulations.

**Medicaid recertification**

* Tabled

**Budget Advocacy –** Kell

* Discussion on the Equity investment. Kell stated that “zero racial justice dollars” were invested in next year’s budget and asked what the Commission can do to advocate for racial justice funding. How can we work together as a coalition? How do we divert $ into the system?
* Monica states that the State continues to invest in housing. Act 250 is problematic. She will work to bring additional information. Everyone Eats has been extended. Schools? Population continues to diminish. There is some work that we should do together.
* The budget process starts now.
* It is Leg’s responsibility to appropriate funds
* Leg resolved racism: A Public Health Emergency R-113 (2021)
* Kirsten mentioned residential support for people with disabilities – Spending Plan. Since closing of Brandon no housing has been created.
* What do our calendars look like and do we have time to organize?

**Mental Health –** Kell and Chair Hughes

* The mental health crisis in Vermont is placing a tremendous impact on the BIPOC and LGBTQIA community, particularly youth.
* What do we do to address the impact that the mental health is having on BIPOC and LGBTQIA youth ion Vermont?
* Kell mentioned the Vermont Diversity Health Project (VDHP). Natahsa Chang was mentioned as an example of a provider.

**Department of Children and Families –** Chair Hughes

* Discussion on the disproportionate removal of Black and Browm children from their homes in Vermont.
* What legislative proposals could the HEAC put forward to address this as an issue?
* Brief discussion on substantiations and the need to make view the findings of Mr Crist as an equity issue.
* Discussion on the existence racial disparities in the Field Offices.
* Equity training is currently optional.

**Next Steps**

Next meeting was announced: October 3, 2023 12:30-2 PM

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