

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission Update to City Council

December 8, 2022

Summary of Commission History

August/September 2021

City Council motion adopted to establish an Equity and Diversity Commission and conduct a community survey regarding the framework and charge

October 2021

City receives \$25,000 grant through the VRSA Inclusion Project to help support Commission – Dr. Robin Stacia

February 2022

City Council resolution adopted to establish the Commission

May 2022

Equity and Diversity Commission appointed by City Council – 14 members

June 2022

Equity and Diversity Commission voted to change their name to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission; City Council approved via a resolution

DEI Commission Members

Sabrina Burress, Chair
Lindsey Lennon, Vice Chair
Lou Boden
Joamarie Garcia
Mark Jeter
Vicki Keyser
Jake Krug
Beth Nelsen
AnhThu Nguyen
Nathaniel Riddle
Daniel Stuhlsatz
Jennifer Trippeer
Susan Venable
Zavia Willis

Statement of Purpose

Who

We are community members chosen by our City Council to represent diverse segments of our Staunton community. Individually, we bring our unique lived experiences spanning age, race and ethnicity, ability, skills and insights. We each care deeply about our community and we are here to use our collective voice to bring diversity, equity and inclusion concerns and issues to light for our community.

What

We have been invited to serve on this commission for 18 months for a very specific purpose. We are tasked with objectively evaluating all available data concerning social and racial equity and conducting a series of community listening sessions to foster community dialogue. At that point, the Commission will summarize all findings and provide City Council with specific recommendations on how to address inequitable social and racial outcomes within the City of Staunton.

Statement of Purpose

How

What is the best way to support our work? We encourage citizens to attend our planned community listening sessions and to engage in thoughtful and forward-thinking dialogue to help us envision a more equitable future for the City of Staunton.

Please attend these sessions and lend your experiences and insights to help our community learn from one another. Please advocate for the support, investment and implementation of the strategic plan that will be presented to City Council in December 2023.

Deliverables

A. Provide an update on Commission progress to be shared with City Council by Dec. 2022, to include:

Timeline of workplan leading up to December 2023

Engagement with community partners

List of data gathered and Community listening session information

B. Evaluate (objectively) existing data, studies and reports concerning:

Social and racial equity within the City of Staunton

Social determinants and inequitable outcomes within the City of Staunton

Deliverables

C. Collect data and research that evaluate the same outcomes listed in item B:

Identify data to be evaluated using information gathered from existing data/research.

Create a mechanism for collecting data, i.e. a new survey, community input via listening sessions.

Evaluate and create a comprehensive report of data received.

Conduct a public hearing to preview and gather specific input based on findings.

Deliverables

D. Compile a final report for the Staunton City Council by Dec. 2023 consisting of:

An analysis of existing data, studies, and reports concerning racial and social equity as well as the Commission's own research and data collection efforts on the topic.

A summary of all public comments received by the Commission at its listening sessions and public hearing, as well as any other communications it receives from Staunton residents concerning racial and social equity.

Create specific recommendations to the council to include how to address specific inequitable social and racial outcomes within the City of Staunton.

Create a proposed framework (strategic plan) for the Commission to pursue in the next 12 to 18 months to address specific factors that may contribute to inequitable racial and social outcomes.

Timeline



July 2022 – Dec 2022

- Map out Commission responsibilities & deliverables
- Create Commission Project Plan
- Connect with Community Partners
- Begin existing data collection
- Update City Council on progress (Dec)



Jan 2023 – Mar 2023

- Complete existing data collection
- Plan community listening sessions
- Collect primary data as needed



April 2023 – July 2023

- Conduct community listening sessions
- Collect primary data as needed

Timeline, continued



Aug 2023 – Sept 2023

- Analyze all collected data
- Draft report framework



Oct 2023 – Nov 2023

- Conduct a public hearing
(October)
- Finalize and write report



Dec 2023

- Present final report to City Council

Creation of Sub-Committees



Logistics & Planning

Jake, Nate, Joamarie, Jennifer

Charge: To coordinate and organize the completion of the Commission's deliverables and the efforts of the Commission's subcommittees. This subcommittee will help plan and track stages of data collection, community engagement, and reporting

Initial tasks:

- Develop/adopt a system for project planning
- Create “buckets” for organizing data and information gathering
- Coordinate with other subcommittees to develop and start tracking specific deliverable tasks and timelines

Logistics and Planning - Initial Tasks Progress

Develop/adopt a system for project planning

- Creation of working plan document

- Development of a shared drive for managing all commission documentation

Create “buckets” for organizing data and information gathering

- Assisting data and research committee to identify “buckets”

- Using these “buckets” to categorize current/on-going community partners list

Coordinate with other subcommittees to develop and start tracking specific deliverable tasks and timelines

- Ongoing check-ins with both sub-committees and the commission as a whole

- Updating all on the progress toward final project completion

Creation of Sub-Committees



Data & Research

Dan, Vicki, Lindsey, Beth

Charge: To collect and analyze data from both secondary and primary sources. This subcommittee will lead formal data collection efforts by assessing existing data, developing data collection tools, implementing these tools, and analyzing the results.

Initial Tasks:

- Create a simple survey to send to community partners as a first step in engagement and data gathering
- Develop an initial list of known data that may be useful for the Commission's work

Data & Research - Initial Tasks Progress

Create a simple survey to send to community partners as a first step in engagement and data gathering

39 partners with questions related to:

- Resources available to share
- Data - origin, in use, available to share
- Recommendations

Low response rate - follow ups ongoing

Develop an initial list of known data that may be useful for the Commission's work

Survey responses

Community stakeholders meetings: gathering recommendations from organizations

In-depth interviews: Staunton City Departments

- Similar to survey questions, In-person
- Social services, Police, Comm & Econ Development, Court Services, Office on Youth, Schools...

Creation of Sub-Committees



Community Connections

Sabrina, AnhThu, Lou, Susan, Zavia, Mark

Charge: To connect, engage, and build relationships with community members and community partners/organizations. This subcommittee will plan and lead community engagement events and listening sessions.

Initial Tasks:

- Gather a list of community partners and organizations that Commission members are connected to, along with other partners to be contacted
- Develop a plan for engaging with community partners during the month of September
- Plan a community engagement day for the Commission to be held in September

Community Events

Presentation from Angie O'Brian, Assistant City Manager Roanoke City, Equity and Empowerment Advisory Board *July 16, 2022*

Mission and vision, priorities, subcommittees, ongoing community engagement, recommendations to Council, public hearings, and community action.

Community Events

Meet and Greet
September 14, 2022



Community Events

Meetings with Community Stakeholders

October 12, 2022

October 26, 2022



United Way of
Staunton, Augusta
County & Waynesboro



Staunton, Augusta, and Waynesboro



Community Stakeholders

Key takeaways

Language is Important

Need to be aware of the way we talk about these issues both formally and informally. Language can help and hurt the process.

Awareness

Need more community awareness of issues and services available. Commission desires more detailed information from these organizations.

Connections Between Organizations

Overlaps in data using, issues they're seeing, how they're cooperating. They are connected and want to help each other. Commission wants to understand these connections in more detail.

Community Stakeholders

Key takeaways, continued

Need Action Items

Community Partners want to help in this work and desire clear, actionable recommendations and best practices.

There is a lot of work still to be done...

Data to collect, connections to make, and experiences to understand. Need *in-depth and detailed* conversations.

Community Connections Subcommittee - Next Steps

Support Data Collection

Providing direct and individualized follow-ups with community partners who received the initial survey

As needed/decided upon by Data and Research subcommittee - providing supports for initial and potential follow-up interviews

Preparing for Community Listening Sessions

Identifying locations for community listening sessions - begin scheduling/reserving/collaborating

Reviewing accessibility needs - begin identifying interpreters

Identifying transportation needs and ways to accommodate

Final Reflections

Community Openness and support

From the beginning of our work we've seen a great deal of community support, from partners in the work to community stakeholders.

Many have shown and interest in participating/supporting our work.

This support matters both now, and later when it is time to bring our final recommendations to the city.

Strong and committed members

Our commission is large and diverse, and has constituents from many different personal and professional backgrounds.

Each brings a strong voice and has shown a clear commitment to the work of this commission.

Final Reflections, continued

Climbing the “mountain”

Early reflections on the “work ahead” for this commission felt very much like a “mountain” of a task.

We have been able to bring the mountain into focus and continue to celebrate the “climb.”

Staying the “course”

We continue to be mindful, as a commission, but also as community members/stakeholders ourselves on the current events that bring DEI work to the forefront.

We are continually engaged in conversation/processing as a commission how to address these in our final report.

We do so with the understanding that our work will be instrumental in the city’s implementation of a comprehensive DEI plan that will address future needs as they arise.

Final Reflection, continued

Dr. Robin Stacia- Insights/reflections

Needs of the Commission

Connection to as many community partners as possible- any information shared with the commission is appreciated.

Identification of many broad voice, dimension, voices, and perspectives related to DEI and their input

Continued sharing of the movement/process of the commission.

Questions for City Council

Is there is anything that is missing, that you expected, any additional ideas for us to consider?

Engage the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission



<https://www.ci.staunton.va.us/equity>



dei@ci.staunton.va.us

**Full Commission Meetings: Second
and Fourth Wednesdays of each
month, 7pm, Montgomery Hall Park**

**Sub Committee Meetings held as
needed**