

Observer: Joan Taylor

Commission Members: Alejandra Ibanez, Delores Holmes, Karla Thomas, Kathy Lyons, Max Weinberg, Melissa Wynne

Staff: Kimberly Richardson, Shenicka Hohenkirk

Attending: Paulina Martinez

Strategies for Community Engagement, City of Santa Monica, California Community Engagement Playbook.

Two staff members from Santa Monica appeared virtually to discuss their program and answer questions. Santa Monica won a prize to establish a Playbook for Equity Engagement. They are a city of about the same size as Evanston. They established an Office of Civic Wellbeing. They started out to find out how the residents were doing and found out that only 1/3rd trusted government. They held a government Alliance on Race and Equity training for staff and developed a Community Engagement Project. The Project included workshops including some in Spanish, a Pico Wellbeing Project, coffee chats, middle school activities.

Lessons Learned: Staff needs clear and easy tools, translation/interpretation, institutional support, capacity/time and Equity training.

Some projects are on hold because of funding but sometimes “lack of funding” is a red herring for lack of commitment.

Community residents like concrete projects.

The staff who had the most training were the ones most engaged and influential.

It was also mentioned that Seattle is the leader in this work.

Boards, Committees and Commissions Responses: The Commission Members continued to review the responses to the questionnaire. There was considerable discussion about the importance of training new members. Kimberly Richardson said that the Arts Council was a test.

She has been working on the training with YWCA staff and Commission members should be involved. Leadership Evanston will also have a role.

Language Accessibility:

Paulina Martinez participated in this part of the meeting. Alejandra expressed concern that the language policy is not codified. There was a good deal of discussion with pros and cons and finally the decision was that there should be a board resolution. Kimberly Richardson will prepare a draft for the next meeting.

Future Leadership: Alejandra was nominated for chair and Karla to be vice-chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48.

