

DEI Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 13, 2023 - 12:00 -1:30

The DEI Council advances diversity, equity, and inclusion and addresses the problems of bias, systemic inequities and underrepresentation in the legal profession and legal system.

Member Attendees: Raina Wagner, Nam Nguyen, Lauren Boyd, Sharon Sakamoto, Sunitha Anjilvel, Alec Stephens, SaNni Lemonidis, Miryam Gordon, Mia Little, Michael Rhodes, Noelle Chung

WSBA Staff: Saleena Salango, Diana Singleton

Action Items

February Meeting Minutes

Miryam Gordon motioned to approve the February meeting minutes with an amended attendee list that includes Miryam Gordon and Mia Little as attendees. Seconded by Sunitha Anjilvel. Motion carries with one abstention.

Board of Governors Updates

Meeting with Supreme Court

Sunitha Anjilvel shared that she gave a DEI Council report to the Supreme Court with focus on the collaborative efforts of Council members, which was well received with few questions.

Definition of Diversity

Sunitha Anjilvel thanked the subcommittee and the Council for efforts to update the definition of diversity which ultimately passed 10-1. The Board of Governors had a substantive discussion around removing geography in the definition. Sunitha urged the DEI Council to consider working with the Small Town & Rural Committee to help them incorporate an equity lens in their recruitment and outreach efforts. Raina Wagner added that the BOG considered whether rural representation is considered underrepresented, and suggested we continue to engage in those conversations as well. Diana added that bylaw changes need to be approved by the Supreme Court, so this bylaw change is not yet effective and encouraged the Council and Definition of Diversity Workgroup to do outreach with groups who shared input, including following up with groups to share how their input was or was not incorporated into the final version. This outreach can also help with recruitment efforts for the At-Large Seat.

Equity & Disparity Workgroup Proposed Changes to GR 12

Alec Stephens reported that he will work on the materials for a first read at the next Board of Governors meeting and intends to include the DEI Council letter she wrote in support of the proposed changes. This will remove the narrow interpretation of the administration of justice that prohibits WSBA from engaging in advocacy activities.

FY24 BOG Planning Process

Diana Singleton shared that the BOG will engage in a discussion about FY24 BOG goals at the June meeting. Terra will gather input from BOG and staff to inform FY24 planning. If there are specific goals that you believe the BOG should prioritize, please email one of the governors. One example is an internal DEI plan to create a more inclusive board culture. Alec urged Council members to not to add too many new goals, but instead create specific and measurable goals around existing priorities to help

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ensure BOG members can deliver on them. Sunitha added that the Council could submit a set of recommendations to the BOG that they can use during their planning process to outline how they can increase commitments to DEI. The deadline to submit materials is on June 5th. Alec, Raina, and Sharon volunteered to collaborate with Sunitha to draft this letter. This should include preparing Board of Governors to follow up with MBAs on the Ad-Hoc MBA Task Force. Diana recommended inviting Michelle Su and other MBA leaders to collaborate on this letter. Sharon Sakamoto offered that this would be a great opportunity to urge the BOG to fully respond to each piece of the MBA letter.

Planning for MBA Connections

Diana shared that Saleena, Sunitha and her will meet with BOG President-Elect Hunter Abell tomorrow about creating authentic connections to MBAs. In addition, current BOG President Dan Clark has organized a meeting to discuss ways to connect with MBAs. Sharon reminded the Council to continue centering MBAs. Raina recommended documenting the BOG's lack of response either verbally at the next meeting or by writing a letter noting the lack of response. May will mark one year since the 2022 proposal was presented to the Board of Governors.

Board of Governors Elections

- ❖ **Update on District Elections** – Congrats to Mathew Dresden who'll continue for a second term. District 6 and 8 elections begin March 15th and close at 5 p.m. on April 3rd, 2023.

- ❖ **Recruitment for At-Large Governor Candidates** – Diana shared that the candidate filing deadline for the At-Large Governor seat is April 17th, 2023. As the outgoing At-Large Governor, Alec Stephens urged DEI Council members to run for the At-Large Seat. Existing knowledge about DEI efforts would be a huge asset to the BOG. Alec suggested convening the MBA Leaders meeting before the candidate filing deadline. Raina suggested thinking about reaching outside of MBA Leader and DEI Council members since they are already leaders in their respective spaces. Saleena recommended articulating a specific goal around recruitment for both the DEI Council and the At-Large governor role and thinking about how to do more individualized outreach to people with existing connections. Raina and Sunitha asked all Council members to reach out to at least one person for the At-Large Governor and the DEI Council seats.

- ❖ **At-Large Governor Applicant Review Process** – Diana asked members to provide final input on the questions for At-Large Governor applicants, who agreed that the questions should remain the same as last year.

DEI Council Workgroup Updates

Membership Demographic Study Workgroup

Nam Nguyen opened a discussion asking for feedback on the membership demographic survey questions. Diana asked members to email Diana and Nam for feedback. Alec suggested calling a special meeting of the workgroup to gather input for the survey to get the information back to the consultants. Diana will work with the consultant to try and coordinate a meeting to share feedback directly. The consultants will also convene focus group sessions with underrepresented groups to supplement the demographic survey data.

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DEI Plan Workgroup

Miryam Gordon shared the difficulties of developing the DEI Plan in a way that is conducive advancing DEI in WSBA BOG, entities, and membership. The DEI Plan Workgroup will work with Christiana Obey-Sumner from Epiphanies of Equity, who is also leading an internal equity process. Sharon added that Workgroup members are invested in innovation and not just recreating the 2013 Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

DEI Council Events

DEI Council Retreat

Diana offered two dates for a potential retreat: Saturday, May 13th and Saturday, September 16th. Raina asked for suggestions from Council members to make sure the retreat time is helpful and produces meaningful results. We will use that to create an agenda and understand the length of time. Diana will send a calendar invite for those dates 10 – 1 p.m.

DEI Council Representation at Upcoming Events

- ❖ Latino/a Bar Association of Washington Annual Gala – Friday, March 17th
- ❖ Pro Tem Reception with DMCJA – Friday, March 17th

Meeting adjourned at 1:32 p.m.