



Draft

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 6, 2023 | 4:30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82052385825?pwd=eUQvd01rN1RSRfdXNUN1LWkMvV0VmUT09>

Meeting ID: 820 5238 5825

Passcode: 274052

Attendees (virtual): Dan Taylor, E. Marie Sissle, Haiqiong Deng  
COCA Staff: Kathleen Spehar

E. Marie Sissle, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

Review of the minutes from the October 22, 2022, meeting was tabled until the next meeting.

E. Marie announced the inaugural Creating Spaces event will take place on March 20, 2023 from 6-7 pm at the Legacy Center, a brand new performing arts facility that is part of the Freedom Church off of Thomasville Rd. Dr Genna Styles-Lyas, the equity director for the Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6) survey project, is the guest speaker.

The committee started discussing how to frame the evening's conversation. E Marie briefly stepped away from the meeting to manage a call. Dan asked if Dr. Styles-Lyas would serve as a moderator. E. Marie returned, and Kathleen clarified the committee needs to meet with Dr. Styles-Lyas to review the content and format for the conversation. Dan asked if she was coming just for this talk, and Kathleen confirmed she is coming for Arts Advocacy Day on Wednesday, March 22. She is arriving early to speak at Creating Spaces. Kathleen confirmed there is another opportunity to have lunch with the board on Tuesday. Dan affirmed Dr. Styles-Lyas will have the opportunity to get to know the community during this visit. Kathleen shared her equity work so far in the AEP6 project and affirmed that is what she can bring to the conversation.

Kathleen shared the two topics from E. Marie's email to form into questions, one on equity and another on diversity. Since the event is one hour long and Dr. Styles-Lyas will be there, she asked the committee to define what is important, so the conversation can be framed. Dan affirmed this is an exciting opportunity and we need to get people there. E. Marie shared she went on social media and started inviting people, to get as many people as possible there. E. Marie wants to know from Dr. Styles-Lyas what the event should look like. She also wants the community to have time (2-3 mins) to talk at the beginning, to share what their program is, how they have incorporated it, what they would like to see in the future, and what challenges they have had incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion in their programming. E. Marie suggested follow-up, suggestions and resources could be shared. E. Marie then shared

examples of how participation could be facilitated to ensure everyone has a voice and opportunity to participate. Dan agreed being interactive and participating is important, and it is a wonderful opportunity to ask specific questions to a DEI expert about what they should be doing. More discussion ensued about impact and effect.

E. Marie liked the questions proposed- “What does inclusivity mean to your organization and artistic practice?” and “How should diversity intersect with artistic programming and events throughout our community?” She shared how these questions can be used, and other questions could also be shared, like the City does in its community forums.

The committee continued discussing Kathleen shared publicity and attendance tracking options, and confirmed the Facebook event is available. She shared some other ways facilitation can help the conversation stay on track and encourage participation. E. Marie offered to help with this. Roles were discussed- E. Marie as facilitator and Kathleen as assistant. Kathleen talked through the schedule for the evening, including refreshments, discussion, and tour of space. E. Marie and Dan shared preferences for start time. E. Marie asked that a staff member be at the door. Kathleen shared which staff members will attend. Logistics for the event were discussed, including maps & signage. E. Marie asked about providing a thank-you swag bag, reviewed staff assignments and discussed tech. Kathleen confirmed the event is in-person only and Dan affirmed to keep the event simple. Dan excuse himself from the meeting as Haiqiong joined.

E. Marie reviewed the conversation from the meeting with Haiqiong. Kathleen shared the board communication to date and the meeting times Dr. Styles-Lyas is available to meet with the committee. The meeting purpose, schedules and alternative dates and times were discussed and confirmed.

Creating Spaces was the only topic discussed today.

E. Marie reviewed the action items for Creating Spaces that were shared at today’s meeting. Kathleen shared how exciting it is to bring this from an idea to presentation. Haiqiong asked clarifying questions about the event that were answered by E. Marie.

Kathleen asked about projecting the questions and projecting COCA information. E. Marie will follow up with the Legacy Center about projections.

The meeting with adjourned at 4:35 pm

*Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Spehar*