

May 15, 2025

Subject: Racial Equity Commission Implementation and Technical Assistance Committee November 21, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Reporting Period: July 2024-November 2024

Prepared By: Toya Davis, Operations Manager

Reviewed By: Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Recommended Action

Approval of the November 21, 2024, Racial Equity Commission Implementation and Technical Assistance Committee Meeting Minutes.

Racial Equity Commission Implementation and Technical Assistance Committee November 21, 2024 - Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item #1: Welcome

A. CALL TO ORDER: Per the bylaws of the Racial Equity Commission, Commissioner Virginia Hedrick called the meeting to order at 4:31 PM.

B. REVIEW OF THE AGENDA

C. ROLL CALL: Quorum Met*; 4/4 Committee Members Present

Commissioners Present:

1. Commissioner Angelica Salas (Virtually)
2. Commissioner John Kim (Virtually)
3. Commissioner Jolie Onodera (Virtually)
4. Commissioner Virginia Hedrick (Virtually)

*Quorum is met using teleconference rules for advisory bodies outlined under California Government Code § 1123.5, which allows Commissioners to participate remotely and the Committee to vote on proposed actions to bring to the December 19, 2024, Commission Meeting.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

Public Comment

No public comment on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #2: Public Comment on matters not on the agenda

No public comment on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #3: ACTION: Selection of Committee Lead and Committee Overview

Commissioner Virginia Hedrick, Acting Committee Lead

Commissioner John Kim, Recommended Committee Lead

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Motion to recommend the appointment of Commissioner Kim as Committee Lead to the full Commission

Motioned by Commissioner Salas and seconded by Commissioner Onodera.

Motion passes (3-0-1*). *Marks abstention or absence from vote.

*Commissioner Kim abstained.

Agenda Item #4: 5 Minute Recess

Commissioner Virginia Hedrick, Acting Committee Lead

Commissioner John Kim, Recommended Committee Lead

Acting Lead Hedrick called for a recess at 4:53 PM.

Recommended Lead Kim called the meeting to order at 5:10 PM.

Agenda Item #3: ACTION: Selection of Committee Lead and Committee Overview

Returned to agenda item #3, as it was not completed before the recess.

Commissioner John Kim, Recommended Committee Lead

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Commissioner Discussion

Kim: Invited Commissioners to offer thoughts on Committee bylaws.

Onodera: Asked staff for other framework examples in other states or local agencies.

Kim: Requested best practices and studies from California state government with successfully-implemented enterprise-wide change mandates. Interested in understanding how to provide enterprise guidance and technical assistance efficiently and how departments approached progress tracking, leadership identification and accountability, and onboarding and training.

Estes: Asked for clarification on whether Commissioner Kim also was interested in examples from other governmental bodies or jurisdictions outside of California.

Kim: Specified interest in California state government.

Onodera: Specified interest in other bodies and jurisdictions, such as the local level or other states that have achieved positive results or practices.

Hedrick: Interested in case studies of what did not work.

Estes: Mentioned attendance at Race Forward Conference, which highlighted many examples outside of California.

Kim: Clarified interest in tracking data around systems change itself. Interested in outcomes, not just outputs. Suggested bringing the question of what did and did not work back to the full Commission for broader perspectives and invitation for public comment on this topic.

Estes: Suggested bringing that question to the full Commission through the Implementation and Technical Assistance Committee's report at the December 19, 2024 Commission Meeting. Also suggested bringing this question back at future Committee meetings.

Public Comment

No public comment on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #5: DISCUSSION: Moving Beyond Theory to Implementation of Racial Equity Strategies – Fireside Chat and Committee Discussion

Commissioner John Kim, Recommended Committee Lead

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Dr. Rashaad Abdur-Rahman, Director of State Strategies, Race Forward

Panel Discussion

Estes: How do organizations address concerns around difficulty or risk of implementation and build buy-in towards the implementation of racial equity strategies?

Abdur-Rahman: Calculate the risk of not doing this work. Type of harm and damage historically as it relates to not doing racial equity work outpaces the risk of implementing racial equity strategies. Be deliberate about how we name and identify risk. Use tools, such as risk registries. Allows you to think proactively. City and State governments frequently conduct risk analysis.

Estes: What are some examples of implementation for racial equity strategies that were successful and what made them succeed? Are there any models or efforts we should be mindful of?

Abdur-Rahman: Think about agencies that are not perfect but have been consistently doing the work over time. We are really talking about who is invested and who is not invested. Seattle created a blueprint for how local government creates racial and social justice initiatives. Led to the creation of Government Alliance of Race and Equity that then became a more national framework. States like Washington and Illinois have statewide equity offices that have been thinking about significant investments in racial equity, legislation, and institutional policy. Applying tools like social vulnerability indices. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Kentucky's largest state agency, has been implementing a racial equity strategy since 2020. Putting in racial equity action plans for all departments. Lessons that can be learned from places like Kentucky. Consider how we do work in a variety of environments.

Estes: In other states where this work may be seen as less favorable, is there specific language being used that helps this work move forward without losing the importance of centering race?

Abdur-Rahman: Coalition-building and intersectionality are critical. There may not be language that folks will not come after. There is a wide range of ways that folks will continue to pursue language. Even though folks are going after language, folks may not have the analysis to go after strategy. Those are some useful things to be thinking about as we ponder the way that language is being weaponized against our work.

Estes: What are some best practices or things that this Commission should consider for balancing the need to advance racial equity and address structural racism and to be mindful of budget staffing capacity challenges at every level?

Abdur-Rahman: Tether the work of racial equity and racial justice to the core functions of government. Use plain language. If we can solve the greatest problems, all of us benefit. Talk about it from a quality improvement perspective. When the work of government is progressing poorly, where we see that poor progress is often where there is the greatest disparity. The greatest increases are often at the intersection of where we see the greatest disparity. It is not ancillary but central to what we are doing. If you have budget and staffing limitations, the most productive approach is to address those greatest disparities. Maximize time and resources to produce the greatest outcomes.

Estes: Are you aware of any tools or strategies to ensure accountability for the racial equity commitments that this Commission moves forward?

Abdur-Rahman: Setting KPIs [key performance indicators] and metrics is not the hard part. Accountability is the largest hurdle. Ensure that we can get some agreement and commitment about what accountability looks like in the work. Accountability is not necessarily about punishment and consequences. It is about having difficult conversations and being clear about what to expect. In the implementation process, establish easy-to-understand, simple metrics. Have conversations early in the process about what accountability looks like, cadence for accountability, and how to maintain it as a transparent process.

Estes: What are 2-3 initial actions that practitioners can take to begin moving from theory to practice?

Abdur-Rahman: Things do not need to be fully baked before starting. We need to have urgency, not in a way that is toxic, but in a way that we are serious about the work that needs to be done. Plan, Do, Study, Act cycles that can be really useful ways of testing strategies, understanding what if effective, and then expanding and scaling work. Think about quick wins. What can be done in the short-term, prioritized, and completed to build momentum and not stalling from the beginning. Resist the temptation to have very detailed, very sophisticated, very detailed action plans that can become unwieldy. Build something usable and can effectively build momentum with those quick wins. Be consistent. Get work moving without waiting too long to gather data and reports. No such thing as perfection. There is the commitment to continue growth and improvement.

Commission Discussion

Kim: Thanked Dr. Abdur-Rahman. Invited Committee to provide initial reflections and questions.

Salas: Asked for an example of an organization that found and addressed the risk.

Abdur-Rahman: Local government often have offices of performance improvement that do risk analysis. Health departments have been known to use fishbone analysis or 5 Why's analysis. GARE offers a racial equity tool that does ask questions about partnership with community in identifying unintended consequences. Nonprofit and other sectors have many case studies.

Kim: Asked about skillsets required to assess and overcome risk specifically for racial equity work.

Abdur-Rahman: Project management professionals often have a significant amount of depth in thinking about risk analysis. Health equity professionals often conduct risk analysis around community factors and social determinants of health.

Kim: Prompted the Committee on what key points to lift back up to the full Commission.

Onodera: A lot of this work is currently being done. Important to hear what those examples are being done in terms of best practices and what is not working.

Salas: Implementation chart. What will get done very quickly.

Kim: Appreciated the idea of sophistication over time.

Hedrick: Curious about specific examples of implementation.

Kim: Worry that we go for the low-hanging fruit but also want to go for the bigger shifts and systems change with scale.

Public Comment

Elena Santamaria of NextGen California.

Agenda Item #6: DISCUSSION: Next Steps for Staff Action

Commissioner John Kim, Recommended Committee Lead

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Commissioner Discussion

Estes: Bring selection of Commission Kim as the Committee Lead to the full Commission. Provide a Committee report at that full Commission Meeting. Identify examples of implementation of frameworks, specific practices within California, progress tracking, necessary leadership skills and capacity to drive change, and accountability practices and outcomes to drive systems change. Bring conversation to full Commission to expand insights. Continue conversations with Dr. Abdur-Rahman.

Agenda Item #7: Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:09 PM.