

Equity Committee – Agenda – 4/5

6:00 – Ice Breaker – What musician, alive or not, would you want to hear perform on Vashon?

6:10 – Land Acknowledgement – Volunteer request

6:12 – Review and approve or revise this agenda

6:14 - Approve or revise notes from 3-15 meeting

6:15 – Update: Land Acknowledgement – Jessica & James

Outreach Initiative

6:20 - Plan: Arranging interviews with community leaders – the Outreach spreadsheet

6:25 – Issues / questions about the Outreach Initiative?

~~6:55 6:35 – Second round: Equity Toolkit, additional thoughts? – Kathleen and Terry~~

6:55 - Discussion: “Ouch”, “Roses and Thorns” and “Don’t yuck my yum” – Kevin **Did not discuss**

7:20 – Decision: Committee meeting frequency - Kevin

7:25 – 4/19 Committee meeting call for priority topics

7:30 – Adjourn

FINAL

April 5, 2023 VMCC Equity Committee Meeting Notes

Present: Debra Anderson, Jessica Lisovsky, Jenna Riggs, Kevin Jones, James Rickard, Kathleen Fitch, Hunter Davis, Milla Stigall, Yve Suskind

The meeting convened at 6:00 pm with Ice Breaker.

The land acknowledgement was read by Kevin Jones.

Approve/revise tonight's agenda:

Agenda was revised as shown above.

Approve/revise notes from 3/15/23:

Approved without objection and ready to be published on the VMCC website.

Update: Land Acknowledgement and associated actions – James

At the last Community Council meeting they posted ways that people could take action in the chat (beyond just reading the acknowledgement) and will continue to do so at every upcoming meeting.

At the end of the notes for this meeting is a list of ideas that will be shared with the community.

Discussion: Arranging meetings with community leaders and what has the experience been so far?

- Tip: you can reserve a space at the library, works great for interviews
- Suggestions that came from interviewing each other for practice:
 - Would be helpful to interview in pairs, so that at least one interviewer can keep eye contact and be more engaged
 - The repeating question “With which community are these barriers most closely aligned?” was confusing. Kevin explained that the original intent of the question is to help understand some of the barriers that occur in specific V-MCC sectors. This would be helpful info for the Community Council Board liaison to those sectors. It might also provide insight into how we might suggest V-MCC policies might be modified to better address these barriers.
 - Seniors, Renters and Unhoused were suggested to be added to the current list of sectors
 - Opinion: overall the questionnaire worked well, it takes a while though to be effective — one pair took 2 hours to get through all of the questions. Others have had the interviews last an hour or slightly more.
 - Questionnaire was useful as a prompt, and then more meaningful conversation followed
 - Regardless of what data we get, the act of having as many discussions as possible will spread equity and conversation beyond us. Just getting the conversation started will create its own energy.
 - Even if the questionnaire isn’t followed exactly, that is ok – it creates great conversation.
 - Simplifying the questions will be helpful especially when we need to use translators
 - Have found that the questions are more like guideposts — the question opens the door, we need to be curious as interviewers (“tell me more” etc.)
 - Found the interviews to be very enjoyable, and the folks who were interviewed were very happy to have participated in the process and made connections.
- **Discussion: Yve S. shared her professional opinion about our structured question protocol**
 - Should we ask people to self-identify first? More conversational, not just checking a ‘box’

- Is the structured question protocol the best tool for what kind of information we are seeking? Would a semi-structured/guided interview form work better to get the answers we are seeking? At the least, the questionnaire should be edited down to be less wordy, to make the language easier to understand and more approachable.
- We might want to consider having two different surveys — one for people who are in a leadership position, one for individuals.
- Clarified that our survey is not focused on exploring people's relationship/feelings toward with the CC (the conversation about how to make people feel like the CC belongs to them is a community building exercise, not a survey process).
- There is value in having good conversations and building relationships, even if the survey tool isn't perfect.
- The value is not the answers to each question, but the big theme takeaways – what's good, what is broken, who are the people that are part of our community that we didn't know before.

Action Item: Volunteers to work with Yve (offline) to discuss alternative survey approaches and if they should be incorporated into the Outreach Initiative

Deborah, James, Hunter, Jess, Kevin, Kathleen, Milla, Terry

Suggested topics/agenda items for next meeting:

Ouch, Roses and Thorns, Don't yuck my yum, postponed to next meeting
 Discussion about the Thunderbird Treatment Center (into the old VCC building)
 Restarting coffee dates with new committee members

Meeting adjourned: 7:30 pm

Next meeting: April 19, 2023 — 6:00 pm

Group voted to continue to meet twice a month. We will take a new poll at the April 19 meeting.

While working to define the Land Acknowledgement statement(s) for the V-MCC a recurring question was raised regarding how individuals can take action to bring the statement(s) to life. Here are a few opportunities, for those who want to get more involved.

1. The Land Trust and the Heritage Museum have worked in close coordination with the Puyallup Tribe on the Vashon Native Sign Project. Puyallup artist Daniel Baptista designed the signs. The first run of printed signs have been distributed so the Land Trust and Heritage Museum are seeking donations for a second printing. To donate, go to <https://vashonheritagemuseum.org/donate/donation/> , identify the donation amount then insert "Vashon Native Sign Project" into the "Please explain your reason for donating today" field.

Here are the mostly financially based suggestions.

[Friends of Pine Ridge Reservation](#)

Friends of Pine Ridge Reservation are working with Pine Ridge Reservation to collect blankets, quilts, comforters and heaters. Online donations can also be made to help with propane or firewood. [Donate here.](#)

[Rosebud Sioux Tribe Blizzard Relief Donation](#)

The Rosebud Sioux Tribe is asking for monetary donations to assist in the relief efforts of those recovering from the blizzard. Phone: (605) 747-2381. [Donate here.](#)

[One Spirit](#)

One Spirit is working to get essentials to people on the reservation. Any donations received at this time will be used to purchase firewood, supplies and food to take care of those critically in need. Phone: (570)-460-6567 [Donate here.](#)

[First Families Now](#)

First Families Now provides support for countless Native American children, elders and families living on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. (605)-407-0414. [Donate here.](#)

[Sičanġu Community Development Corporation](#)

Sičanġu Community Development Corporation is raising money for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. Donations will go to purchasing woods for families and cover the cost of tools to help clear pathways for safe travel. [Donate here.](#)

Here are some actions related to education.

https://puyallup.k12.wa.us/departments/native_american_education_title_vi_college_info_scholarships_financial_aid

Donate to the NW Indian College (in the name of the Council, or perhaps arrange a fundraiser?). <https://www.nwic.edu/>

There is also a Puyallup Tribe of Indians scholarship program at Central Washington University.

Here are additional ideas: (that may require funds at some time, but don't rely on money initially):

1. Work with the tribes to identify ways to restore habitat, remediate the impacts of some destructive "modern" development, and introduce a degree of re-wilding. There are plenty of ways to do this.
2. Work with the tribes and the County to amend land use codes and practices to allow individual property owners to benefit from habitat restoration, reforestation, and removal of invasive species, in ways that are more significant than exist today.
3. Work with the tribes and whoever else we can find as partners to identify existing programs and initiatives that do things like the above, expand upon those where we can, modify others, and take our message to a wider audience.
4. Develop meaningful relationships between tribes and institutions, to support tribal businesses, to recreate on native ancestral lands mindfully and respectfully and to continue to deepen understanding of tribal communities."
5. Donate a percentage of their rent/mortgage to actually reimburse the most local native tribe for the land on which we prosper. (<https://www.realrentduwamish.org/>)

6. Rather than, or in conjunction with giving money, preserve or restore native lands in a more pristine state, and create a place for native people to harvest their native staple, salmon, that is otherwise on a trajectory of local extinction.
7. Clean up trash and restore the island to its native state.
8. Establish relationships and partnerships between the Vashon Maury Community Council and Tribal Councils (create a task force to determine how to make this a reality).
9. Increase the education of the communities on Vashon and Maury islands regarding the impact of invasive species and how to remove them.