



**RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**February 19, 2025 (6:30 P.M.)**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**ATTENDEES:**

**Community Members:**

☒ Dr. Pat Grant (Chair), ☒ Sonia Canzater, ☒ Dr. Isaac Cudjoe, ☒ Joseph Hurst, ☒ Dr. Tasnuva Khan, ☒ Shane Lloyd, ☒ Akufuna Ngonda, ☒ Judith Thomas, ☒ Gustavo Torres

**County Staff Members:**

☒ James Stowe (Vice Chair), ☒ Selena Mendy Singleton (Parliamentarian), ☒ Dr. Anthony R. Alston, ☒ Ilana Branda, ☒ Lieutenant Oneil Ormsby, ☒ Dourakine Rosarion, ☒ Aisha Williams

**Guests:** David Hill, Richard Madaleno, Kate Stewart, Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, CASA Attorneys, and individuals from the impacted community.

**Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice Staff:**

Tiffany Ward (Chief Equity Officer)

**CALL TO ORDER**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Dr. Pat Grant.

**AGENDA**

- Approved as presented.

**MINUTES**

- Black History Month Recognition
  - Acknowledgement of Black History Month and celebration of black excellence.
  - We are observing, however, that many references to Black History Month and other diverse celebrations are being removed from public platforms, including Google.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **Item:** The chair stated that any unfinished business would be discussed at the March 19, 2025, meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Item:** To educate, engage, and inform the committee about Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and immigration. Executive orders (EO) and policies, listen to the policymakers and deliver clear, actionable recommendations to them. The committee will be informed and educated on the new administration's DEI and immigration executive orders, policies, and their impact on our residents in our County.
- **Gustavo Torres** was the Lead Facilitator for the following discussions:
  - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives face challenges due to misunderstandings about their goals, fears of reverse discrimination, resistance to change, economic concerns, and political ideologies.
  - The discussion included information on the impact of the DEI executive orders. The presenters were:
    - **Shane Lloyd and Corporate Inclusion Strategist**
    - **David Hill, President, D. Hill Professional Services LLC**
      - The DEI Infrastructure is broad and includes laws, regulations, institutions, policies, and communication and marketing.
      - The evolution of DEI in the US begins but does not end with affirmative action. Over time, multiple events or “waves” have shaped how modern-day DEI is constructed.
      - Backlash and retrenchment are a part of the process, but work needs to be done to “bend the moral arc” as Dr. King described.
      - Trends in DEI: Some companies eliminate DEI, some integrate their work into HR, and some sunset their efforts.
      - The Trump Administration DEI orders January 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.
        - A backlash to the racial reckoning in response to the murder of George Floyd.
        - The first order targeted government agencies and contractors.
        - The second order sought to “restore merit-based opportunity” and to target private sector DEI activity.
        - The Department of Education's Dear Colleague Letter instructed public workers to extend the ruling of the Supreme Court's SSFA (Harvard, UNC, and Affirmative Action) order to all educational activity, which the Supreme Court did not rule.
      - What to do: The presenters suggested that we can challenge the overreach in court (lawsuits have already been filed) and understand that EOs are not the law; lean into state protections (Maryland Attorney General (AG) has joined fifteen other AGs to file suit to force the new administration to identify what policies are illegal and explain why); and demonstrate that DEI is consistent with Civil Rights Laws and beneficial.

- Black and brown immigrants face substantial challenges because of immigration executive orders. This platform will facilitate comprehensive discussions on the immigration crisis and offer effective strategies for navigating this intricate situation.

**The presenters were CASA attorneys, organizers, and members of the community (Black and Brown immigrants) who have been impacted by EOs.**

- The CASA attorney shared how it felt when there was an attack on the immigrant community.
  - There are 260K undocumented Marylanders, 11K on temporary status, and 1 million+ immigrant Marylanders.
  - Policy changes challenge sanctuary jurisdictions and target non-profit organizations that support immigrants to expedite removal.
  - Black immigrants are more likely to be exploited by these immigration policies.
- The CASA attorney provided the following thoughts on how to fight back:
  - Pushing and leading “know your rights” (KNR) training.
  - Remain silent and do not open the door.
  - Knowledge is power, and amplifying the message is strongly encouraged.
  - ICE Encounter Hotline: 888-214-6014
  - Legal and social support. The Federal government has granted immigration enforcement authority to various other agencies (ATF, DEA, etc.).
- The impacted community members shared:
  - There is a focus on data collection to bring force against members of the immigrant community.
  - Spoke about the importance of protecting the sensitive communities.
  - Stated it is important to advocate for immigrant rights.
  - Have advocated in Annapolis on the importance of legislation to support immigrant communities.
- Policymakers described how they are responding to the above issues.
  - **Kate Stewart, President, Montgomery County Council**, shared:
    - Montgomery County is supporting the KNR training as well as bystander training.
    - Montgomery County has not experienced a targeted raid.
    - There is an immigrant support page on the MCPS website.
    - They are working on resource-fair efforts. In addition, the county will hold virtual meetings starting February 25<sup>th</sup> on various topics (i.e., unemployment and immigration issues).

- **Richard Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer, Montgomery County Government**, shared:
  - The County has a commitment and moral responsibility to support communities in need.
  - It also remains unchanged that the County leadership prioritizes diversity and inclusion initiatives.
  - The county will continue to be a partner with the community.
  - A litigation tracker is available, and information is available from the National Immigration Law Center.
- **A motion** was made by Joseph Hurst (RESJAC) and seconded by Sonia Canzater (RESJAC) that the committee complete and submit letters of support to the legislation, including the Maryland Data Privacy Act, the Maryland Values Act to address the 287G program, and the Protecting Sensitive Locations Act. The motion was carried.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES**

None

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m. by Dr. Grant.