REPORT

TO THE

MAYOR OF NASHVILLE AND THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

SUBMITTED BY

DIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MAY 12, 2015

INTRODUCTION

The Diversity Advisory Committee (DAC) was formed by Mayor Karl F. Dean by Executive Order #46 on January 15, 2015. It may be found at: http://www.nashville.gov/Metro-Clerk/Legal-Resources/Executive-Orders/Mayor-Karl-Dean/kd046.aspx . The amended Executive Order, dated April 30, 2015, may be found at: http://www.nashville.gov/Metro-Clerk/Legal-Resources/Executive-Orders/Mayor-Karl-Dean/kd046amended.aspx .

The committee's membership is as follows:

- Steve Anderson, Chief of Metropolitan Police Department
- Judge Sheila Calloway, Juvenile Court Judge
- Cynthia Croom, Ed.D., Director of the Metropolitan Action Commission
- Melody Fowler-Green, Director of the Metropolitan Government Human Relations Commission
- Veronica Frazier, Director of Metropolitan Human Resources
- Talia Lomax-O'dneal, Deputy Director of Finance
- Randy Lovett, Acting Director of Public Works
- Honorable Sandra Moore, Metropolitan Council Member, District 17
- Scott Potter, Director of Metro Water Services
- Saul Solomon, Director of Law
- Honorable Sheri Weiner, Metropolitan Council Member, District 22
- Ricky White, Chief of the Metropolitan Fire Department
- Honorable Brenda Wynn, Davidson County Clerk

As stated in the Executive Order, the DAC's goal is to develop a plan that will ultimately assist all Metropolitan Government agencies, boards, and commissions in their efforts to recruit, hire, and retain a workforce that is inclusive and representative of Nashville's local demographics and that serves as an example for the employers of this city.

The DAC met in committee on six occasions. A subcommittee was formed to conduct a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis of the Metropolitan Government's current ability to increase workforce diversity. The subcommittee met on two occasions. The DAC conducted three public listening sessions, and offered an on-line and paper survey to the community and to each employee of the government. The recommendations of this committee were crafted through consensus decision-making that included good-faith participation by committee members, the public's participation, and robust debate.

The DAC strongly asserts that all actions taken by the Metropolitan Government in attaining this goal must be transparent and demonstrate accountability at all levels of the government, especially by department heads. Achievement of the goal discussed in the Executive Order must be prominent in the policies and procedures of the Mayor's Office, each elected official, and each department. The DAC acknowledges there are entities of Metropolitan Government

(e.g. MDHA, MNPS, MTA, Airport Authority, NES, Hospital Authority, etc.) that are not included in the scope of the report.

The DAC believes there is a strong business case for Metropolitan Government employees being reflective of our community. A diverse work force, incorporating the variety of cultures, views, and approaches to service represented by our city's demographics, will directly result in better and more responsive government service.

As previously stated, the DAC conducted three public listening sessions: March 10, 2015 from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at Hadley Park Community Center; March 12, 2015 from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at Coleman Park Community Center; and March 13, 2015 at Howard Office Building from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm. The committee considered it very important to hear from Metropolitan Government employees and the public regarding the diversity of employees within the government and how the government should approach meeting the goal in the Executive Order.

Additionally, a survey (listed in Appendix A) was sent to each employee of the Metropolitan Government. The survey was also made available on line. The comprehensive listing of all the meeting and survey results can be found at this link:
https://www.nashville.gov/Government/Diversity-Advisory-Committee.aspx

RECOMMENDATIONS

The DAC respectfully submits the following recommendations. It should be noted that the recommendations are not prioritized, and are grouped for clarity. The DAC recognizes that additional funding will be required to accomplish some recommendations.

GROUP I: INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

Recommendation #1: Metropolitan Government Human Resources will further their efforts to inform and educate applicants, as well as potential applicants, who have obtained diplomas, degrees and certifications from foreign institutions that these accreditations may be acceptable and will assist them in matching these accreditations with the position requirements for jobs with the Metropolitan Government.

Discussion: Our newest citizens often have qualifications attained from non-United States centers of education that may fully qualify them for application for jobs in our government.

Recommendation #2: All Metropolitan Government hiring agencies, in all aspects of hiring processes, should continue their efforts to be as accessible as possible to those with limited English proficiency.

Discussion: We must be able to communicate effectively with all prospective applicants. This was identified as a significant issue in our listening sessions.

Recommendation #3: All Metropolitan Government agencies must make transparency in the hiring process a priority.

Discussion: Transparency in the hiring process would assist in eliminating perceptions of favoritism and/or preferential treatment. The public listening sessions made it clear that this issue is fundamental to meeting the goal of the Executive Order.

GROUP II: EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHICS

Recommendation #4: The Mayor will annually convene a "Diversity Summit" to be attended by the Mayor, senior staff, and Department Heads. Elected officials will be invited to attend as well.

Discussion: The purpose of this summit is to continue the demonstration of transparency and accountability at the senior levels of leadership through the Metropolitan Government. Department Heads will have the opportunity to brief the Mayor on successes and challenges associated with meeting the goal of the Executive Order and to share best practices. Experts could present the latest news and trends observed in the public and private sector regarding diversity topics.

Recommendation #5: Metropolitan Government Human Resources will continue to maintain, as part of their website, demographics of each Metropolitan Government department and office of each elected official. It will be updated quarterly, and be published on the Metropolitan Government open data portal.

Discussion: This will continue to demonstrate transparency in our process and progress.

GROUP III: RESOURCES

Recommendation #6: Metropolitan Government Human Resources will procure a firm with documented expertise in assisting municipal governments in achieving workforce diversity. This will include setting and implementing strategic and demographic goals, reasonable benchmarks, measures, and best practices.

Discussion: As previously discussed, the committee recognizes our government's demographics should be reflective of our community's. We also recognize this will not occur immediately. The referenced firm will provide guidance on setting reasonable expectations on meeting the goal as stated in the mission statement.

Recommendation #7: The Metropolitan Government will build cultural competencies in the recruitment, hiring, and promotional processes.

Discussion: It is important that the Metropolitan Government build relationships with groups that historically have been underrepresented in the government's workforce. This may include educational workshops and outreach efforts that foster interaction between our diverse populations and representatives from local government.

GROUP IV: NASHVILLE'S DEMOGRAPHICS

Recommendation #8: The Metropolitan Government will retain a qualified firm to perform a comprehensive demographic analysis of Nashville.

Discussion: It is imperative we have a clear and correct representation of our citizenship if our goal is to have our government be its reflection. We must know, with comprehensive specificity, our city's demographics: for example, Census data does not account for many of our immigrant or refugee populations.

GROUP V: TRAINING

Recommendation #9: Within six months of the issuance of these recommendations to the Mayor and the Council, Department Heads, as a group, will receive comprehensive diversity training that has been developed, and will be implemented, by a nationally-recognized expert in the subject. Additional training will be annually received by Department Heads. The business case for our government being reflective of our demographics must be incorporated into the training. This training will be available to the Metropolitan Council.

Discussion: Best practices by government and private industry must be introduced and facilitated. Recognized experts must be utilized.

GROUP VI: ACCOUNTABILITY

Recommendation #10: As part of the scope of work of the referenced expert, options will be developed regarding possible identification of a person (or persons) whose responsibility and reporting relationship will involve comprehensive, and government-wide, issues of diversity relative to meeting the goal of the Executive Order. The DAC recommends considering the appointment of a Diversity Officer who will report directly to the Mayor of Nashville.

Discussion: This will demonstrate prominence and commitment by our city. The DAC stresses that this position, job description, and reporting responsibility must be based on best practices observed by recognized workforce diversity experts.

The DAC extends its thanks to Mayor Dean for the opportunity to participate in the development of these recommendations, and stands ready to assist in their implementation.

Respectfully,

Brenda Wynn
Davidson County Clerk

Scott Potter, PE
Director, Metro Water Services

Diversity Advisory Committee Survey

Overview: This month, the Diversity Advisory Committee (DAC) will be holding public listening sessions to explore methods for increasing employee diversity within the Metropolitan Government and impediments job seekers may be facing. The Committee, appointed through Executive Order by Mayor Karl Dean, is addressing the question of how the city government workforce can most effectively include and reflect the changing population of Nashville and Davidson County. This survey is designed to seek input from Nashvillians. The survey will be open from March 12, 2015 to April 13, 2015.

Survey Questions

Questions

1. What roadblocks do you see to Metro employing a more diverse workforce?
2. What are the perceived problems to employing a more diverse workforce?
3. Do people know how to apply? (Yes or No)
4. Have you applied to Metro? (Yes or No)

   If no, why have you not applied?
5. What suggestions do you have to help increase diversity in the candidate pool?
6. Do you have any suggested best practices that can help to ensure all employees have the same opportunity for promotion/advancement?
7. Do you have any suggested best practices you have observed at Metro or elsewhere that increase diversity?

Demographic Information (all optional)

First Name

Last Name

Birthdate

Race/Gender

Email address

Zip Code/Neighborhood