

AAQoL – Strategic Planning Session Notes

October 17, 2017

Purpose of Session

- Revisit what commission has accomplished
- Set one year and three year goals
- Outline strategy to achieve those goals

Mission

Review of AAQoL Advisory Commission mission.

[Richard] It's broad, but it not a bad thing because it allows flexibility to initiate things.

{Nguyen} Question about inclusion of AARC and why it needs to be so specific.

Richard explains the history. Ensures that the AARC, which is staffed by the city, is responsive to community needs. Taja explained the AARC advisory board, the creation of the AAQoL initiative, and the need for an organization to oversee the study and the process. The board was dissolved and the AAQoL commission was created to go under that umbrella. Taja explained that this is the same model used for the African American Resource Advisory Board.

[Cat] Question if it is the same model for the MACC.

Taja explained that the MACC has its own board. The board did not want to merge with the Hispanic Quality of Life Commission.

Kirk explained the difference between the Initiative, which is the study, and the "initiatives" mentioned in the mission statement, which are broader.

[Richard] This is why the AARC has to be one of our working groups – it is called out in the mission.

[Madeline] Are we good with the mission statement?

Discussion of the use of the term "Asian Pacific Islander" in commission communication, AAPI vs. API, and if our commission name is reflective of the entire population we serve.

[Nguyen] No mention of API community in the mission. Now would be the time to discuss.

[Vince] No. It's not the time because that has to be a council action.

[Kirk] We have our marching orders, but we can have a separate mission statement, right?

Discussion of mission vs. vision. Richard explained that this is in city code. We can make recommendations but it's not some informal thing.

Discussion regarding the creation of a separate visioning statement that is more reflective of the Commission's actual work.

[Shubhada] Let's go through our process before changing anything, in case we find we need to change it again.

[Madeline] Recommended tabling item – deserves further consideration. This is more than a five minute discussion. Warned against just changing the name without consideration of representation and outreach. It's a big set of issues...let the appropriate working group bring something to the Commission.

[Vince] Let's build from the ground up.

Health Assessment

[Richard] Purpose of this discussion was to review the previous assessments and think about what we want to do to change future health assessments.

[Vince] We want feedback on how we roll out the assessment and the executive summary.

Vince clarified that there are no future health assessments currently planned.

[Richard] Without a future health assessment, we won't have useful data on our populations (because state agencies are not tracking) to back up policy decisions.

[Vince] Suggestion to review the additional work Dr. Jang's team has done. We can go back to Dr. Jang with specific data needs – we just need to figure out what those needs are.

[Richard] The additional work is based on academic interests, not necessarily the needs of the community.

[Kavita] Dr. Jang suggested longitudinal data collection so that it doesn't just assess current trends, but also can be compared against future data that is collected.

[Shubhada] We can recommend that the city do this every so often.

[Madeline] Can the Commission take this data to make policy recommendations to the city?

Discussion that, yes, that was the purpose. Discussion of executive summary, recommendations, and pillars. Vince talked about how Austin Public Health went through five years of data to compile some meaningful statistics. That was our initiative that got them to do that.

Nguyen had questions regarding the different reports and what were the health assessments. Shubhada explained the four different reports. We need to follow through with these recommendations in the executive summary and think about redoing these reports three to five years from now.

[Madeline] Summary of thoughts on health assessment:

- Importance of continued data collection
- Request to city council that more assessments be done on three-to-five year intervals
- Not only assess progress on the goals articulated in the health assessment, but also ongoing data collection

[Kirk] Want to add to the above that we need to push departments to collect and provide this type of data. It may be miniscule now but could be valuable over time. Some departments just need to start collecting that data, tell us how they are collecting it, and figure out how to report it to us.

[Shubhada] We need to capture this item and add it to the strategic plan.

[Cat] So following up with departments on collecting disaggregated data on API, how they are doing that, and how they are ensuring that.

Individual Professional/Personal Growth

Each member was asked to speak to their history on the commission, main accomplishment, professional/personal growth goals related to their commission work.

[Kirk] Personal goal of forge relationships with other QoL commissions and their members

[Richard] Accomplishment that we have been able to obtain funding for API initiatives, but have a remaining goal to achieve funding for our initiatives in the base budget

[Molly] Also would like to strengthen relationships with other QoL commissions; knows a few and wants to build on those relationships

[Peter] Want to help immigrant community get more involved with the city; has an understanding of this perspective and wants to represent it on the commission

[Nguyen] Main accomplishment was just getting appointed to commission; want to focus on interpretation services; main goal is to bring structure and documentation to commission work

[Pooja] Wanted to have a voice from within the government; accomplishment was working with Cat on the SB1 initiative; goal is getting word out to the community that we're here and they can use us

[Debasree] Was very excited about the commission and wanted to get involved; goal is to get different perspectives of the Asian American community

[Pramod] Accomplishment was working with AISD on Diversity Day. Goal is to get us part of the mainstream, not separate.

[Kavita] Got involved because of Shubhada; feels a lot of synergy with what she her research and the health work group; main accomplishment is the outreach work the health group has done; we need to do more to capture needs of large community

[Cat] Want to create space where community has their own voice; community doesn't know about the commission and it's a problem; another goal is to build the CE workgroup

[Shubhada] Began to understand that there are underrepresented groups in the community, like elderly Asians; want to keep programs intergenerational goal is to make sure that everyone in the community is civically engaged and that underrepresented groups have their voice

[Vince] Motive to join was because of recent retirement from the city and felt there was not representation of Asian Americans in the city especially in the area of health; major accomplishment was all the stages of the AAQoL initiative from the health assessment to the study to next steps; next step is to take the health assessment to other areas; language access is current focus

Board Composition

[Richard] There are a number of significant groups not represented on the commission; brought up the difficulty in outreach efforts to underrepresented communities because the majority of commissioners are appointed.

[Cat] Talked about being intentional. Wanted to understand the process when we have an opening on the commission?

[Richard] Richard explained the community stakeholder work group and our process for screening and that underrepresented communities is a part of that. Mentioned that it is a delicate balancing act and that community connections and involvement is another one.

Shubhada explained other items to diversify, including profession. Explained that part of this discussion item is to talk about other ways we need to diversify ourselves. How can we "seed" leaders in those groups. Kirk mentioned representation from the Muslim community i.e. religious diversity.

[Shubhada] Idea is that this is more than just selecting a commissioner but also building a pipeline for work groups, as well as outreach to communities

[Pooja] We need to have someone with a finance/fundraising/accounting background

[Richard] We need to focus on the things that need to get done. Building a pipeline might be a bit ambitious. We have a hard enough time getting people to commit to the requirements of being on the commission.

[Cat] Each workgroup should have a goal to engage at least one community member

[Pramod] We can't have a good pipeline of folks if the community doesn't know about us

[Richard] We are a strategic organization; engagement is easier if commissioners come with those community connections; we need community-engaged members and leaders that can engage city council and staff on policy and the road they need to take

Discussion of areas for commission outreach including Muslim community or religious variation in general, including Pacific Islander, Thai, Laotian, Bhutanese, Burmese, etc.

Discussion about how to raise profile of commission – moved to CE workgroup due to time considerations

Guidelines for Deciding Commission Support for External Initiatives

Issue is deciding protocol for groups coming to the commission for support on initiatives. Shubhada mentioned that the Aging group has decided not to address these types of initiatives. Discussion about submitting early enough to be reviewed by appropriate commission.

Nguyen said she will take lead on developing a template. Want a clearly understood process that is consistent and doesn't have to be recreated each time.

[Pooja] Talked about the need for a disclaimer that our support is simply support; concerned about liability issues

[Richard] Wanted to clarify that we are the city; if it's just a recommendation, it might not have those kind of serious implications

[Vince] Need to look at different scenarios (ex. city department, for profit, nonprofit, etc.)

[Madeline] Send ideas to Nguyen for the template.

Workgroups

Comments

Kirk explains the initial push to create work groups that then became too many, and how some were aligned and some absorbed as work group members left the commission

[Mean Richard] Need to prioritize what we do; we always bite off more than we can chew – it's a waste of time. If we focus, we can get more done. Need a sustained effort on two or three most important issues, agreed upon by the entire commission, over the next few months.

[Vince] Each group needs at least three members so that two is quorum

[Nguyen] We need to start at the top with the executive summary. We've put a lot of work into it.

[Cat] Let's go through the list and assign to work groups.

Shubhada lists the five pillars. Some members try to align with existing work groups.

Madeline explains the goal of this session. You are trying to make an assessment of whether or not the work groups are functional.

[Vince] Question: If there are five pillars, are we then proposing five work groups?

[Shubhada] There has to be the AARC work group because it's in our mission

[Nguyen] Are we in agreement that these five pillars are our priorities?

Discussion if there is consensus about having five work groups aligned to the pillars.

[Richard] Pushed idea of two workgroups, AARC and AAQoL initiative, plus project-based work, that would go away if no further actions (ex. community stakeholder, disaster response). Reduces amount of clutter and maximizes flexibility.

[Vince] Examples would be disaster committee and community stakeholder committee

Discussion about mandated work groups. Kirk clarifies that no work groups are mandated and that the purpose here is to discuss whether or not the structure that Richard just brought up would work.

[Madeline] So if those were the two work groups, what would be the projects?

[Richard] Points out the issues with the HR working group and that we need to recognize that there are departments that are willing to cooperate with us and others that present challenges that are more than we are able to take on at this point.

[Vince] Disagrees. Can lose sight of having employment diversity within the city. It's important to focus on that. We also need to focus on the health services that the community gets, as well as parks & recs. If HR is not cooperative, I don't think we should say "forget it."

[Richard] Doesn't disagree, but we've had the working group for 2.5 years and nothing to show for it. It's preventing people from working on things like health that have been productive. We need to really focus on HR if that's what we want to do. Or we recognize that it's not working now.

[Pramod] Measure of success depends on many factors. Maybe small, incremental steps are ok. Each work group should have their own measures of success.

[Shubhada] If our goal is to get our initiatives funded in the base budget, we could organize ourselves by department. Can we map pillars to departments?

[Mean Richard] That's next to impossible. We need to be a strategic policy organization. We assess problems and bring recommendations to council. Think in those terms instead of in the weeds. Work needs to be more focused on policy

[Promod] Likes the current work group structure. Agrees with Richard on being more policy oriented.

[Nguyen] Have three work groups: AARC, Initiatives/Projects, HR

[Richard] Business planning needs to be a standing work group because it works throughout the year

[Pooja] If we are going to keep our current structure, can we ask each group come up with one or two policies that they want to push through and get with the business planning work group on how to get that financed.

[Mean Richard] This group has great ideas, but are we really able to get all of these things done. We need to figure out how to do that.

[Nguyen] Proposes the three work groups again, but business planning includes HR. Not saying to get rid of the work but let's shift the paradigm. Shift it to project based with project being a policy initiative. We have great work groups but not enough people.

[Madeline] What I am hearing is that there is not enough consensus to reduce the number of work groups. Some want to keep the work groups, Pooja suggested that the work groups change how they work to be policy oriented. Suggestion to retain the current structure but articulate specific goals – this can be where the project based orientation comes in, focusing on specific projects that can be accomplished in the next year. Have them be formulated in developing policy approaches. Three years out can be big, general goals.

[Kirk] I think we're all on the same page that you can take this project approach to each work group.

[Kavita] Not all work is policy based. Some of it is follow up on budget items that have been funded. It's cyclical.

[Nice Richard] Takes responsibility for the work groups

[Mean Richard] Need to bring accountability into work groups.

Discussion on stages of a project.

[Cat] Tools are available to set priorities and goals (ex. logic model). Will send out toolkit to group
[ACTION – Complete]

Decision was made to have each workgroup present to the full commission next month.

- *Set policy goals for next 1 to 3 years*
- *Submit proposals on change of workgroup structure*
- *Have information submitted to Joe by the Thursday before the next meeting*

[Kirk note – need to send reminder email to commissioners]