



University of Pittsburgh

Community Relations Committee
University Senate

1234 Cathedral of Learning
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260
412-624-6504/6505 • Fax: 412-624-6688
E-mail: usenate@pitt.edu

Community Relations Committee
Meeting Tuesday October 26, 2021
1pm – 2:00pm
Zoom Video Conference
University of Pittsburgh

Minutes

Attendees: Sue Whitney, Victor Bench, Nikita Chakraborty, Jamie Hammond, John Maier, Anne Hays, Mary Beth McGraw, Marissa Arlet, Lina Dostillo, Donovan Harrell

Presiding: LaMonica Wiggins

I. **Call to Order:** 1:02pm

II. **Welcome and Introductions:**

Welcome to the second official meeting of the Community Relations Committee. Shenay, our co-chair is on vacation. Agenda has been made available via the Faculty CRC TEAMS page. This will be our main communication hub with updates from our community-based members, meeting notes and recordings.

III. **Meeting minutes approval**

Meeting notes from last meeting are available. We need to approve the minutes so they can be uploaded to our University Senate landing page (<https://www.univsenate.pitt.edu/committees/community-relations>) The minutes have been distributed, are there any corrections? Do we have unanimous approval of the notes as distributed? Call for a vote with zoom reactions. Meeting minutes approved.

IV. **Updates from Community Relations Liaisons and Engagement Officers at Pitt**

Lina Dostillo: 1. Historic Christmas Day at Pitt event will continue this year. Will be set up as a grab and go event at the student union. 2. Paid time off for staff has been approved to participate in campus activities, to volunteer or for professional development. 8 hours per week policy. Staff Council has advocated for this. 3. Looking for volunteers to follow-up on booster clinics. 4. Be a Good Neighbor Town Halls are being offered. 3 events targeting employees who live in Oakland. Hosted in part with Councilwoman Erica. 5. The Community Engagement Center in Homewood will be hosting a Black Maternal Health event led by the School of Rehab Science. The STEAM Saturdays at the Hill District CEC are going well and wrapping up. 6. The Greensburg campus will host its

annual “Fall into the Streets” event followed by a week of volunteering opportunities. 7. Proposal are being accepted for the Community Engaged Scholarship Forum through December 22.

V. Updates from Community Pro-tem Members and Partners - OPDC, OBID, Oakwatch, CHS, Peoples Oakland and OTMA

No pro-tem members were present.

LaMonica Wiggins: 1. OTMA sent an email with updates. The Oakland Plan process continues. Over the last year, Action Teams met monthly to review input from last summer's online open house which attracted over 2,500 visitors providing over 800 comments, reviewed data, heard from local and national experts, and generated a set of strategies. During the month of September, staff and Steering Committee members attended a variety of events in Oakland to get input from the broader Oakland community on the draft strategies. Access each of the Action Team pages (Community, Development, Mobility and Infrastructure) to review strategies and the input received. During October, input will continue to be received online while Action Teams review this input and make their final recommendations to the Steering Committee who will begin the work of integrating public comments and strategies into a draft plan starting in November. (<https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/oakland>); PennDOT is hosting Virtual Innovation Days (November 2-4, 2021) to provide a unique opportunity for collaboration among PennDOT employees, local government representatives, and other transportation partners and stakeholders across Pennsylvania; Hazelwood Green Transportation Improvement Project – Phase I: Upcoming construction requires relocation of Bus Stop. Stop relocation of the current Hazelwood/2nd Avenue bus stop (stop #12079) to Flower Avenue 2. People's Oakland No major updates for Peoples Oakland other than sincere thanks to everyone that helped make our Virtual Gala a couple weeks ago a great success!! We have been busy, continually readjusting back to regular programming, masks and social distancing still of course in place. But being able to do a few outings (such as a trip to a pumpkin farm this week) has been very well-received and uplifting for our folks. Referrals are being submitted and processed, we've welcomed a new full-time staff member to provide resource coordination, and we look forward to continued good health and wellbeing as we approach the holiday season.

VI. Senate Council Update

Kris Kanthak: No new updates from Senate Council.

VII. New/Other Business

Committee vision exercise

LaMonica Wiggins: Let's continue our discussion from last meeting about the mission/vision for this committee and the future work we want to pursue. Before we begin, I'd like to get a sense of why everyone is here? Why did you run for a position on this committee? Or if you were appointed to this committee, where's the connection for you to this topic? What do you think we do or should be doing?

Sampling of responses from attendees:

I do community engaged work; We're doing valuable work for the long-term and short-term residents; an opportunity to direct activism; being informed and informing; concerning ourselves with the university as an asset; ushering in relationships with people and trying to find success in developing solutions; the university and committee as an anchor for the community; Heavily involved on the student side to reach out to the community through volunteerism-being a resident comes first.

Review anti racism final report

LaMonica Wiggins: A good mission and vision not only communicates to others what our group is and wants to accomplish, but also draws us together under common work and can give us clear and specific action-oriented goals. Our current mission from the Senate website: The Senate Community Relations Committee observes, engages in, and promotes relationships between the University of Pittsburgh and the broader community. Shenay and our former co-chair Jennifer Cousins did some recent work on our mission via the anti-racism report last/this year. If you haven't had a chance to read the Anti-racism document, you'll find in the TEAMS files. In a nutshell they make the argument that community engagement, education, and support for DEI initiatives should be at the core of our work with this committee. The outlined new goals include:

- Embody and actively promote mutual benefits, reciprocity and knowledge creation between the university and the communities through active listening, humility and caring.
- Build upon commitment and action with diverse communities and neighborhoods.
- Strengthen partnerships with the University of Pittsburgh's Community Partners.
- Maintain and expand community relations and community engagement efforts.
- Function as an institutional community relations and engagement review entity.
- Report findings and recommendations to the Senate.

Discussion: What do we think about these goals? What does success look like? How do we measure the impact of our work on this committee?

Senate plenary

Kris Kanthak: There is an opportunity to show the work/ projects that you're doing with the community within the larger university. The Senate Plenary is a program offered in the Spring. Usually there are speakers including the Chancellor and/or roundtables or other events. The Senate Committee for Research is interested in co-hosting with the CRC for Spring 2021.

Plenary themes discussed by the group:

- Pitt as an anchor institution
- Shared empathy and engagement
- Engaged Scholarships – what students get out of it

- State of engaged scholarship – **selected as possible topic area.** Revisiting the original “The State of Engaged Scholarship”, from 2004 that Tracy Soska and his colleagues convened on Engaged Scholarship (later followed by one in 2015 or 16). Where is the university now? How has this work evolved since then?

Lina Dostillo: Could be combined with Community Engaged Scholarship Forum. Lina will reach out the Jamie Ducar.

LaMonica Wiggins: Shenay and I will reach out to the Research Committee and report back on next steps next meeting.

VIII. Next meeting/schedule

All present agreed to reschedule our November 30th meeting for December 7, 2021 at 1pm.

IX. Adjourn: 2:10pm

Next CRC Meeting: December 7, 2021 at 1pm via Video Conference