



## **CAN Community Council Meeting Minutes, 3/19/2018**

**Community Council Members in Attendance:** Laura Griebel, Mikail Davenport, Gloria Souhami, Nora Comstock, Sandra Castillo, Nancy Gilliam, Eileen Schrandt, Ara Merjanian, Kirsha Haverlah, Hunter Ellinger, Aletha Huston, Monica Guzman, Carmen Levanos, Taylor Kerr, Leslie Puckett, Caroline Reynolds

**Guests in attendance:** Eva De Luna Castro, Deece Eckstein, Brie Franco

**CAN Staff:** Raul Alvarez, Carlos Soto, Jelina Tunstill

**Call to order & announcements:** Chair, Laura Griebel, called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Laura started introductions and opened the floor for announcements related to CAN. Gloria announced the Traffic Jam event with a flyer. Kirsha announced that next Tuesday, there will be a special guest from Washington D.C. for the International Women of Courage Awards. The State Department has been doing the awards since 2007. Global Austin has agreed to host a special guest who has done great work in her home country working with DNA, forensic science, and fighting against femicide. The meeting will take place in Multipurpose Room B from 1:00-1:00. At 11:30 am Travis County will have proclamation for her. Monica announced that Restore Rundberg would be having a meeting Thursday at 6:30 at the North Austin Y with 2 discussion groups, one on economic development and the other on housing. Aletha Huston announced that United Way is trying to fund two-gen programs locally and make a strategic plan for two-gen activities.

**Citizens Communication:** None

**Approval of Minutes:** The meeting notes of 2/12/2018 were approved as submitted on a motion by Ara, seconded by Mikail, with amended changes to add Ricardo Garay, Sandra Castillo, and Monica Guzman to the attendees.

**Community Council Chair's Report:** Laura announced that Kent Herring has resigned. She pointed out that at the bottom of the agenda we have listed the dates and please take notice that we do not meet in July. There was no board meeting in March due to SXSW.

**2018 Work Plan and Committee Updates:** Laura reminded the group who the chairs of the committee were, then opened the floor to committee updates.

Hunter, head of the data committee, provided a sheet to each table to ask for suggestions for the steering committee. He said that the committee would meet the following week. They would like to know where people see a gap in data and if there is something the Community Council would like to see people have conversations about. He asked the community council to write down things they would like to learn about that isn't necessarily tracked year to year and therefore not suitable for the dashboard but still worth discussing.

Eileen, head of the Person-Centered Care committee, said that she is currently trying to solidify her membership. She stated that she met with Ara and together they decided on 4 –key focus areas: assigning individuals to make a survey and self-assessment, community schools, reviewing previous presentations, and 1-2 members reach out to big players about the community schools model. Plans are to do a PCC case study focused on education. She asked that her group meets face to face for the first couple of months to focus on producing deliverables.

Laura, head of the engagement and messaging committee, said that this committee will be about getting the reports and information we have distributed out to people who need it the most, with an added focus of identifying the specific populations that we want to reach. Raul stated that Laura's committee is following up on the work from last year around child poverty and highlight key issues that rose to the top in that report. Legislative issues were one of the highlighted issues that will be further explored at today's meeting. .

Rebecca confirmed that DVISD will be able to host us and the culinary program will feed the committee that night. She wanted to encourage everyone's participation in this site visit. Laura said that there will be a survey to go out to poll attendance and the desire to carpool from Allan Elementary, where the CAN offices are located. Ara suggests that we should send an invite to Board Members to attend the meeting in Del Valle and put out a press release to shine a positive light on Del Valle.

**Executive Director's Report:** We didn't have a board meeting in March due to SXSW and Spring Break. We have been moving along with our Language Access work. We had our second Language Access Action Team meeting and they are working to implement recommendations in the LAWG report to create resources that community stakeholders and CAN partners can use. He announced that Deliberative Dialogue Planning Team meeting will take place the following week. The dialogue topic for this year is addressing the opioid epidemic. We are waiting to start planning for our summit in San Marcos that will happen in November. One of the topics will most likely be workforce development.

#### **Preview of Issues Re: 2019 Legislative Session:**

**Eva De Luna Castro-** Passed out a handout that explains the state budget for 18-19, which will give a good idea of what we can expect to see in the 2019-2021 state budget. Most of the state budget is for education and health and human services. Health is mostly Medicaid. The vast amount of Medicaid users are children, but most the spending goes to adults. 1 in 3 children in Travis County is on either CHIP or Medicaid. Public education, Higher education and Health and Human services makes up 85% of the budget. The numbers look big but this is a 2-year budget trying to serve 2 million in Texas. Texas has the 48<sup>th</sup> smallest budget per capita. Different activities have been using general funds that had not previously done so (i.e., highway fund) and tax exemptions/cuts have reduced revenues coming into the general fund (increased homestead exemption, and cuts to state franchise tax). One good outcome of the 2018-2019 session is that more funding was allocated for Child Protective Services and mental health. However, Texas still ranks pretty low (51<sup>st</sup>, usually after a territory). Public and higher education are flat funded so most of the money for those core functions must come from property taxes or tuition. The next budget cycle planning begins in June. That's a good time to testify on those budget proposals at stakeholder meetings at the Capitol.

**Deece Eckstein-** The philosophical hostility towards local government from state government is as bad as its ever been. Over the past couple of years, a philosophical belief has formed that the local government is somehow the enemy of the public. In the City of Denton, residents voted to ban fracking in the city limits and the legislature overturned it. 80% of the budget of Travis County comes from property taxes. So the discussion around revenue caps would have a negative effect on Austin and an even worse effect on the county. Most of the services local government provides are constitutionally or statutorily mandated, like running courts, providing jails, or running elections. What tends to happen in enlightened cities, like Austin, is that we throw a little money on top of that and open parks, pools and community centers. When you start thinking of what revenue caps do, the first dollar that gets cut under

revenue caps is your dollar. Its not the police dollar, or the dollar that keeps the jail operating that is cut, it is the dollar spent on social and cultural services. A lot of the problems the state has are easy to solve. In order to fix school finance, we need to spend more money. Where the funding comes from and where the political will to spend that money is going to come from is the hard part.

**Brie Franco-** Even though advocates are getting better at articulating needs, the legislative environment is very hostile. The legislature is not looking to fix the problems that you specifically want them to address. They are focused on other things (i.e., trees, bathrooms, paper bags, etc.) They want to deflect and to pick and choose what they think are the real problems. They base the budget on appraisals being higher. They estimated that appraisals would be higher by 7% and so the state has to fund less and then they come back to say that we are taxing too much. The money that taxpayers are sending back doesn't just go to education. They are using at least \$1.5 billion or more to fund other things that Eva mentioned in her presentation. DPS for the border is 800 million a year. They aren't talking about education finance. The belief is that current funding for the public education is enough. 67% of our budget is public safety; police, fire and EMS and there is not much in the way of saving to be found there.

### **Notes from Q &A with Panelists**

- Get to know legislators that are persuadable by visit or phone. NO EMAILS!
- Leveraging
- Focus on public education
- Town Halls
  - Go in person
  - Have 2-3 points
  - Keep stories memorable
- Clear with ask
- Common belief in democracy
- Make your point positive
- Make connections and be personable
- Energize people
- Educate population
- Outreach strategy
- Case studies
- School finance is an area we can make an impact and impact poverty
- Involve people on the periphery of the metro area and other people who feel isolated politically

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.