



CAN Board of Directors Meeting

12/11/20 Minutes

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Present: **Eric Bustos**, Capital Metro; **Sue Carpenter**, United Way for Greater Austin; **Chris Cervini**, Austin Community College; **Nora Comstock**, CAN Community Council; **David Evans**, Austin Travis County Integral Care; **Jimmy Flannigan**, Council Member, City of Austin; **Sherri Fleming**, (for Margaret Gomez, Commissioner, Travis County Precinct Four); **Trey Fletcher**, City of Pflugerville; **Simone Talma Flowers**, Interfaith Action of Central Texas; **Juan Garza**, (for Mike Geeslin, Central Health); **Suchitra Gururaj**, UT Austin; **Stephanie Hawley**, Austin ISD; **Patricia Hayes**, Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce; **Kenny Hill**, Goodwill Industries Central Texas; **Yael Lawson**, (for Tamara Atkinson, Capital Area Workforce Solutions); **Dan Leal**, One Voice Central Texas; **Jeremy Martin**, Austin Chamber of Commerce; **Rudy Metayer**, Pflugerville City Council Member; **Becky Pastner**, St. David's Foundation; **Rich Segal**, Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce; **Ingrid Taylor**, Ascension Seton;

Other guests: Gladys Acosta, Office of Rep. Hinojosa; State Rep. Gina Hinojosa; State Rep. Donna Howard; Cicely Kay, Office of Rep. Hinojosa; Eliza Martin, Office of Rep. Howard; Ara Merjanian; Julie Wheeler, Travis County.

CAN staff in attendance: Raul Alvarez, Carlos A Soto, Jelina Tunstill

Call to order and Introduction: Board Chair Jimmy Flannigan called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm and introduced the meeting.

Minutes: The 11/13/20 meeting minutes were approved, after a motion submitted by Rich Segal which was seconded by Dr. Comstock. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Community Council Update: Nora Comstock informed the Board that the Council had its first planning session on Nov 30, added 5 new members, and may add up to 2 more members by next meeting. Members look forward to working on civic engagement next year, with the intention to connect with CAN goals. The Council will invite Board members to participate with the Council as they look at basic needs. Dr Comstock thanked the Executive Director and Staff for their work, and welcomed the new Community Council Chair, Nancy Gilliam, and Vice-Chair Rachel Hampton.

Executive Director report: Executive Director Raul Alvarez noted that one of the new Community Council members is Kelly Crook, who served as Board of Directors Chair in the past. The Community Council has made significant progress in mapping out its work for 2021. The 2020 CAN Stakeholder Survey had a total of 81 responses. Of those, 69% of the respondents actively participate in CAN. Results show that 72.6% of respondents strongly agree or agree that CAN is effectively increasing awareness about community needs and trends. The Community Council is creating a Policy Committee and a Community Engagement Committee to work on following up once priorities have been identified and discussed. Results also show that 61.3% of respondents strongly agree or agree that CAN effectively serves to connect community stakeholders across areas, disciplines, sectors and jurisdictions, and that 58.1% of respondents strongly agree or agree that CAN is effectively creating opportunities for partners and community stakeholders to work collaboratively.

The response to the "We CAN! ATX" website has been positive. When Alvarez presented to AARO and the Pflugerville City Council, folks were very interested in the new website. The Together We CAN celebration (usually held in January) will be delayed until March (which usually does not have a meeting). The date for the celebration will be March 5, 2021. In January we will not have a board meeting, we will focus our work instead on launching new efforts around the new workplan. Nominations for Butler Awards are still open, please feel free to nominate.

We are closer to finalizing the Race Equity Asset Map and will have something to share in February. We are planning a community session to gather feedback about the tool. We have already done feedback sessions with the One Voice Social Equity Committee and with the Equity Action Team at the City.

Discussion and Possible Action: CAN 2021 Budget; 2021 Language Access Fund Budget; CAN 2021 Work Plan; Executive Director's Evaluation: Raul Alvarez introduced the agenda item by mentioning that today we will discuss two budgets: CAN budget and Language Access Fund budget. The Language Access Fund Budget was discussed first. The policy adopted said that when we present the CAN budget, we will also present a budget for the Language Access Fund so the Board would know how language access funds would be expended. Alvarez then explained each item in the language access budget. The language access fund also provides an avenue for fundraising for a very specific and defined purpose.

The CAN Budget is very similar to previous years. Partner contributions remain the same and have remained the same over the past 5 years. Some small changes are due to cost of living increases from our partners. In February we plan to resume work on the effort to establish CAN as an Unincorporated Nonprofit Association (TUUNAA). Total expenses remain relatively unchanged. In terms of Fund Balance, we currently have more than 120 Days of Operation. This year the Executive Committee suggests that we take the balance above 120 Days of Operation and put it into a Special Projects Fund. The proposed budget shows the Special Projects Fund at about a \$50,000 level.

The Work Plan follows the strategic plan. It is presented in a format that shows how it supports each goal area. The items on the work plan reflect the suggestions we heard from our partners in the conversations we have had leading up to today. Highlights include: developing CAN news to cross-promote our partners; expanding data collection around COVID response; continuing work with One Voice, Integral Care, and Mission Capital around supporting nonprofits and the mental health needs they may have; and continuing work on preventing housing evictions. In terms of priority issues, we decided to commit to: holding a regional plan this year including creating a committee look at what issues might be the focus of the regional summit; and continuing the language access work. The plan also includes the creation of a work plan update template accessible in real time. A motion to approve the 2021 Budget, the 2021 proposed Language Access Fund budget, and the 2021 Work Plan was made by Sherri Fleming. The motion was seconded by Rich Segal. The motion was approved unanimously.

Discussion, Legislative Priorities and/or Concerns of CAN Member Organizations: For Austin ISD, priorities center on accountability and assessment, charter schools, education funding, local control and flexibility, and Transportation. Integral Care is taking a "do no harm" approach with regard to compliance with the state's direction to its agencies to reduce spending by 5%. Mental health and disability programs have been excluded to date. They would like to see this approach carried forward. Regarding Medicaid, they would like to see a 1-year extension of district funding under the 1115 Waiver which has been wildly successful. Integral Care would also like to see coverage of a diagnostic group called the SMI (Severe Mental Illness) in the State Plan, as well as directed payment by the managed care companies for any mental health organization that is certified as a Community Behavioral Health Clinic. They also call for support for the Austin State Hospital which is going through its second phase of construction.

Preview of Legislative Session and Presentation of Legislative Priorities: Julie Wheeler of Travis County mentioned that going into the session there are going to be three main topics: budget, COVID, and redistricting. For the County's priorities, these include maintaining the role of counties as it relates to emergency situations, potential cuts to county services resulting from budget reductions (especially in light of revenue caps from last session), and maintaining and protecting the County's ability to pay for the services and needs of our communities.

State Representative Donna Howard mentioned that the upcoming session will be a challenge due to factors such as COVID and a \$4.6B budget shortfall. Although there has been more revenues that had been projected, that

may change with the surge. The comptroller predicts an economic improvement in 2021, but we will not see growth until 2022. We have constitutional limits on what we can do with the budget and a spending limit (last session determined to be 7% of general revenue). Constraints such as these make the state budget lean. This in turn drives our message to not just immediately go to cuts since the budget is already lean to begin with. It is important to look at how we can bring any ideas to the table about revenue that will allow us to continue to invest in Texans as we weather the storm of the recession and the recovery period and get people back to work. Public education has been one of our biggest challenges. Disparities such as the digital divide are much more glaring now. Ensuring people have access to the credentials they need to get back to work is another focus, considering that some industries may not come back, and other industries may blossom. Health is another priority, including ensuring that the estimated 1 million or more people in the state who are uninsured have access to healthcare. After COVID, it is estimated that the number will jump to over 2,000,000 now. Medicaid expansion could bring in crucial federal dollars and save costs in the long run. Due to the pandemic, the session will probably be truncated. It will probably have fewer committee hearings, fewer bills, and less opportunities for people to be at the capitol.

State Representative Gina Hinojosa mentioned redistricting as a task that is supposed to be taken up this session, but the President's botching of the census combined with the pandemic create challenges. The state constitution also requires that (state) redistricting occur in a regular session. Congressional redistricting will likely take place in a special session. Regarding public education, our students are in an emergency situation. Most kids are falling behind in this hybrid/remote learning environment where nobody is in an ideal situation. As the virus spikes across the state, we can expect more disruption for our students and schools. This means we will need a broad remediation plan. There seems to be bipartisan support for protecting that HB3 funding that was approved last session. Another bill she is working on is to incrementally pull Medicaid funds down to pay for health care and trying to pay for school nurses with Medicaid funds so all schools can have nurses on campus.

There are more bills that have been filed than at the same time last year. Whatever gets a hearing and is passed out of committee will come to the floor. The expectation is that legislators will be on the floor much less than normal. Legislation will probably be very narrowly focused to things that are pandemic related and hot-button issues of interest to the Republican leadership, and budget related items. There have not been many bills related workforce and formerly incarcerated. There is a bill based on a California bill that would provide for a "right to know" if somebody has been infected with COVID at your place of work. There is a bill to address equity in education for incarcerated women. There is some money left over from this year that may be used to supplant the expected budget shortfalls this year. Despite efforts to address food insecurity, it continues to be a challenge.

Adjournment: Jimmy Flannigan adjourned the meeting at 2:47 pm.