



CAN Board of Directors Meeting

01/13/23 Minutes

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Present: **Sundal Ali**, Austin ISD; **Emily Cicchini**; One Voice Central Texas; **Devon Darden**, Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; **Donovon DePriest**, CAN Community Council; **Amy Einhorn**, St. David's Foundation; **David Evans**, Austin Travis County Integral Care; **Simone Talma Flowers**, Interfaith Action of Central Texas; **Vanessa Fuentes**, Council Member, City of Austin; **Juan Garza**, Central Health; **Suchitra Gururaj**, UT Austin; **Kimberly Holiday**, Pflugerville City Council Member; **Liz Johnson**, St. Edward's University; **Jeremy Martin**, Austin Chamber of Commerce; **Rudy Metayer**, Pflugerville City Council Member; **Monica Muñoz Andry**, Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber; **Edna Parra**, Cap Metro; **Pilar Sanchez**, Travis County; **Ingrid Taylor**, Ascension Seton; **Annette Tielle**, Del Valle ISD; **Jeffrey Travillion**, Precinct 1 Commissioner, Travis County; **Chris Weddle**, Del Valle ISD.

Other guests: Leroy Alloway, Cap Metro; Charles Curry, Joint Inclusion Committee; Jeremy Garza, City of Austin Equity Office; Celia Hughes, Art Spark Texas; Ara Merjanian;

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

Call to order and Introduction: Austin City Council member Vanessa Fuentes called the meeting to order at 1:06 pm. New members introduced themselves.

Minutes: The 12/09/2022 CAN Board minutes were approved, after a motion submitted by Suchi Gururaj which was seconded by Juan Garza. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Community Council Update: Donovon DePriest updated the board on the work the Council is engage-in to support the mental health initiative, including an upcoming report highlighting access to data & information and community insight into what resources are needed and/or wanted to support the initiative. Voting for the vice chair will take place at the next meeting.

Executive Director's Report: The draft workplan will be presented to the Executive Committee next week, along with the draft budget. These will be subject to board approval next month. The 2023 CAN Work Plan Priorities include continuing our work around ensuring an equitable economic recovery, addressing community mental health & wellness, improving language access and resources, and equity in the pandemic response (and emergency response generally). This year's work is building from the work at the 2021 CAN Regional Summit and the 2022 Expanding Opportunity Forums. This year we will create an Expanding Opportunity Planning Team to sort through what we have learned and develop/identify action areas or strategies for CAN to promote and pursue. We are working with ACC to do our first Profile of Partnership between ACC and a variety of public sector partners, and hope to use it as a model to highlight other effective public private partnerships.

Alvarez then shared highlights from the 2022 CAN Community Dashboard update related to Mental Health. The Percent of Travis County residents who report poor mental health has increased to 27% in 2020, from 20% in 2016. The data source has also expanded the subpopulations for which they offer data, so this year we have expanded the drilldown section for this indicator including disaggregation by sex, income, age, employment status, education level, health care coverage, disability status, and sexual orientation.

Quality of Life Studies Presentation: Charles Curry, Chair of the Joint Inclusion Committee, provided an overview of the quality of life (QoL) commissions. The Joint Inclusion Committee is tasked with coordinating the activities of the 10 QoL commissions and prioritize their recommendations. Some of the commissions have carried out quality of life studies. Some of these studies were carried out years ago and may need updating. Therefore, there exists a need for QoL assessments for commissions that have not carried out a QoL study and those with QoL studies that are out of date. City Council authorized funding for the 5 commissions who have not carried out QoL studies to do

so. Many of these commissions serve intersecting populations, and data gathered by one commission may be relevant to a different commission's population of focus. Demographic information that is more challenging to gather reliably is information related to sexual orientation and gender identity. The QoL study for the LGBTQ+ community inquired about mental health. One of the questions asked was how often they had experienced specific feelings associated with poor mental health, and the surveyors identified among which groups these were of concern. Results showed that responses were higher for youth and transgender or gender expansive individuals than for respondents as a whole. Suicidal thoughts were another area of concern, 12% of overall respondents and 31% of responding youth and 20% of trans and gender nonconforming respondents reported suicidal thoughts in the last 30 days. Meanwhile, only 3% of older adults reported suicidal thoughts in the previous 30 days. Regarding the quality-of-life studies, the ability to do surveys with good demographic information would give all the commissions timelier information on how the issues are changing.

Jeremy Garza, City of Austin Equity Office, provided an update on the quality-of-life studies currently under way. There are 4 currently in process planned to be completed this fiscal year: Commission for Women, the Early Childhood Council, the Commission on Immigrant Affairs, and the Commission on Aging. Each commission will participate in a retreat to determine their goals for the study and subsequent report. Ultimately, these studies should be a guiding pathway for the advocacy work and organized efforts of each commission.

“Mental Health First Aid” Model and Opportunities: Councilmember Fuentes introduced the initiative, highlighting the goal of getting as many folks in our community trained as possible. [Mental Health First Aid](#) is a course offered by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing designed to help folks to assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis. It covers risk factors, warning signs, strategies to help in crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.

Group Discussion: Raul Alvarez introduced the three options for the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) campaign moving forward. All three include work we can do with our partners, and work we can do as a community-wide campaign to get folks trained on these issues. The main differences are that one option seeks to have each CAN partner host a MHFA training for their organization in 2023, another seeks to facilitate MHFA trainings for as many CAN partners as possible through the end of June, and the other would schedule as many MHFA trainings as possible in the month of May (mental health awareness month). Celia Hughes mentioned that everyone in her organization completed the training, and reported positive reviews. May is Mental Health Awareness Month and it might be easier for everybody to coalesce around a particular goal. It's also wise to have an actionable, reasonable timeline. Approximately 5 of the folks present reported their organization has had employees trained with Mental Health First Aid. It may be helpful for organizations to identify who from the organization benefits from the training the most. Also, it might be an opportunity to invite external partners who collaborate with CAN partners to participate. We will have a deeper conversation at Executive Committee about this proposal and bring something more substantial to the next Board Meeting, which will be in person. Members should go back to their organizations and ask about how many employees have completed this training so that at our next meeting we can get a good sense of who already has the skill. Also think about what our community goal should be. There have already been 11,000 austinites trained since 2007.

Adjournment: Vanessa Fuentes adjourned the meeting at 2:35 pm.