



City of Gainesville

Office of Equity & Inclusion



Equal Opportunity Director Memorandum No. 22002

To: The Honorable Mayor and City Commission

From: Zeria K. Folston, Interim Equal Opportunity Director

Date: May 13, 2022

Re: Nine Month Progress Update

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on the work I've done in partnership with our community builders within the Office of Equity and Inclusion over the last nine months:

Equity

- Equity Staff have developed 5 strategies to operationalize equity including:
 - Department Partnership Model: A department-level training and development process to operationalize equity within a department's programs and services.
 - Budget Equity Tool: A tool to assess how budget increments for GG advance equity.
 - Policy Review Process: Within stage 4 of the policy review process, equity performance measures and a data collection plan are created.
 - Leadership Training: Training to create shared definitions of key terms, a shared understanding of success, and city-wide results and indicators using Results-Based Accountability.
 - City-wide Training: Introducing staff to key concepts such as diversity, equity, inclusion, and racial equity.
 - We're currently hiring another Equity Specialist to help support the above initiatives.

Equity staff is preparing a report detailing each of these new strategies and timelines for implementation.

GINI

- GINI is a new initiative the office is leading in collaboration with the other Charters. The GINI process map timeline is coming back to the Commission during the May 26th Commission meeting.

Compliance

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- In an effort to better serve our internal and external community, I made the decision to create a Compliance Manager position and place the position and Compliance team closer to me. The Compliance Manager is a direct report to me.
- On May 2, 2022, Shakayla Birch was selected as the Interim Compliance Manager. Hiring for a vacant Compliance Investigator position is in progress.
- The new case management system, I-Sight, is in its final stages of implementation. This system will streamline our internal and external investigative processes while centralizing case information and attachments to one system. I-sight will also produce accurate reports of current and past cases to monitor case processing time, resolutions, and areas with high reports of discrimination.
- I-sight will also strengthen our confidentiality surrounding our cases.
- On December 2, 2021, during the City Commission meeting, OEI presented information about the current source of income protections in Chapter 8 of the City ordinance and proposed revisions to the ordinance. The Commission adopted the revision, clarifying to landlords and their agents that they may only consider the portion of the rent that a housing choice voucher holder is required to pay out-of-pocket.
- On February 8, 2022, OEI and the Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office hosted a virtual event titled “Housing Source of Income Webinar for Housing Providers”. Housing providers learned about local source of income protections, prohibited practices, and received an overview of the complaint process.
- On April 27, 2022, OEI and the Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office hosted a webinar titled “Community Forum: Fair Housing”. The webinar consisted of a presentation from OEI and local partners on topics such as fair housing and renter’s rights ordinances as well as housing protections for Section 8 voucher holders, veterans, victims of domestic/intimate partner violence, and persons with disabilities.
- Additional quarterly training will be delivered to community builders and neighbors throughout the year. Internally, community builders will learn about the investigation process and disability discrimination. The Compliance Team will also facilitate discrimination and harassment training for the management team at RTS. Externally, OEI will be co-sponsoring the 11th Annual Employment Law Seminar as well as a training in celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with the Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office.
- One pagers outlining the internal and external complaint process were updated to reflect current investigation procedures.
- The Compliance Team has been diligently working on the backlogged cases. The majority of those cases have been resolved or are in the final stages of the complaint process.
- The Compliance Team is updating all eight (8) of our Equal Opportunity (EO) policies. The policies will be termed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies. Following review from the Policy Review Committee, the Charters and/or their designee we will convene to further

explore ways to revise and simplify our policy language. Any changes will come back to the full commission for approval.

Affirmative Action Program

Audit Findings

- Two of the four Audit findings have been resolved and two remain open. OEI is responsible for the first open audit issue #1 and has implemented a management plan that is currently in progress. HR is responsible for the remaining open audit issue #2, and has a plan for resolution in progress.

Diversity and Inclusion Specialist position

- The OEI has created a requisition to re-open the Diversity and Inclusion Specialist position to perform full-time duties to support the Affirmative Action program. The anticipated job announcement date is May 20, 2022.

Small Business Program

Small Business Outreach

On March 9, 2022, OEI staff participated in the *Annual Supplier Diversity Exchange* in partnership with the University of Florida and the Office of Supplier Diversity. OEI staff participated as a panel expert at the supplier diversity outreach event after the panel discussion. This event was designed to help small business owners better understand and secure government procurement opportunities. It also allowed business owners to market their firms and discuss upcoming subcontracting opportunities with participating procurement agencies.

On March 18, 2022, OEI participated in the quarterly *G-Tech/GCRA luncheon* and staff presented on the City's Small Business Program and provided additional resources to participants.

Small Business Supplier Diversity Roundtable

OEI staff initiated a Supplier Diversity Roundtable Discussion with supplier Diversity Champions and facilitated a Supplier Diversity Kick-off Meeting to discuss future collaborations designed to better serve the small business community. The purpose of the kick-off was to:

- Leverage strengths amongst partners

- Create synergy
- Discuss challenges and the current climate for our local small businesses
- Discuss a collaborative one-stop-shop website to guide small business owners on all levels
- Discuss current challenges that we each see our small business community facing
- Create an effective way to survey the small business communities in our respective areas

Small Business Departmental Collaboration with Procurement & Workday Team

OEI has been collaborating on a continual basis with City departments to create important internal business processes and support departments with internal reporting preparation.

- Creating a process in Workday to certify vendors and process spend reporting
- Method for distinguishing certified and attested small business vendors in Workday
- Workday classification process to capture all required classifications of vendors
- Classification status of suppliers for GCRA annual report
- Additional Workday/department vendor-related actions

Small Business Program Coordinator Position

- The department has filled a vacancy and selected a Small Business Program Coordinator to oversee the City's Small Business Program. The selected candidate most recently served as the Director of Small Business & Vendor Diversity Relations for the University of Florida. She also has experience serving as the Purchasing Manager for Alachua County. Her experience and skills will be essential as we grow this area and prepare for the findings of the Disparity Study, due out this Fall. This new hire will start in June.

Small Business Program Recognized

- The Small Business Association (SBA) North Florida District Office (NFDO) Government Contracting Division in their March edition of The Bulletin recognized and saluted women leaders and the programs they manage. For Women's History Month, The Bulletin put the Spotlight on our own Sylvia Warren for her service to the small business community through the City of Gainesville Office of Equity & Inclusion.

Disparity Study

- Griffin & Strong, P.C. ("GSPC"), an Atlanta based law and public policy consulting firm is conducting a Disparity Study for the City of Gainesville. This study is designed to review the City's procurement process and analyze its contract awards, including those to minority and women-owned businesses. The consultant is currently finalizing the anecdotal chapter of the

study. The Private Sector Analysis chapter is also in progress and is expected by the summer of 2022. The study's anticipated completion date is the fall of 2022.

Community Partnership

- Equity staff consulted with the Community Foundation to develop criteria for assessing equity in ARPA funding requests. The Interim Director of Equity and Inclusion participated in the panel of judges assessing ARPA funding requests from 501c3's.
- OEI staff is partnering with neighbors to create a celebration for Indigenous People's Day.
- OEI, in partnership with fellow community builders and neighbors, have planned a series of events for Journey to Juneteenth. Events will take place between May 20th and June 19th.
- OEI in partnership with the City's Office of Government Affairs and Community Relations, The Greater Gainesville Chamber, and Community Springs are developing and conducting a community conversation on Faith Chance Hiring.

I look forward to meeting with you to answer any questions or concerns you may have about the Office of Equity and Inclusion. I look forward to working with you as we make the City of Gainesville more equitable and inclusive.

**Cc: City Commission
Charter Officers
Interim Human Resources Director**