

Commission on Inclusion
Quarterly Meeting
Morganton Community House
Morganton, NC
Wednesday April 17, 2019
9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Facilitators: Secretary Machel Sanders/Betty Marrow-Taylor

Present: Emily Turner, Barbara Rimer, Secretary Sanders, Lydia Lavelle, Paula Kohut, Pat Martinez, Cecelia Surrat, Andrew Spainhour, Naveed Aziz, Christy Foster-Smith

Guest: Andria Knight, Mark Edwards, Nan Sanseverino,

Guest Presenter: Bob Coats,

Welcome Secretary Sanders

Approval of Minutes (Jan. 30 & March 13, 2019 minutes) Approved

Election of Secretary

Secretary Sanders thanked Andrew for the great job serving as Secretary over the past year.

Emily Turner was nominated by Pat Martinez. Motioned and properly seconded by Christy Foster-Smith. Emily accepted- Unanimously approved by Commission members.

Parliamentarian- Pat Martinez agreed to continue serving.

Announcements/Updates Secretary Sanders & Betty Marrow-Taylor

- **Diversity and Disaster** breakout groups at the last meeting focused on recovery as an inclusive process that considers the needs of a diverse NC. One follow up item concluded was to meet w/Emergency Management Operations. Katie Webster (previous presenter) attended as deputy director and Sarah Bolton, policy director. At that meeting, they were provided priority recommendations, and Secretary Sanders will follow up in August to make sure things are moving forward on recommendations. Commissioners are encouraged to add groups to the task force list (included in meeting materials)
- **Exclusion of health coverage for transgender people in State Health Plan.** Commissioners were thanked for edits on letter sent to Treasurer Falwell. Gov. Cooper also advocated for inclusion. Commission's letter received response from Tr. Falwell. He took no action to open a dialogue or make changes. Secretary Sanders followed up with deputy to ask about a public forum or meeting. Meetings are open and Secretary Sanders will be notified of upcoming opportunities. Lydia Lavelle volunteered to attend. Discussion of having diverse array of speakers. Copies of response note from Treasurer was previously sent to commissioners.

- **Medicaid Expansion.** Gov. has requested in his budget expansion in NC for all who qualify. 4 Billion would be infused into NC economy w/ expansion, and it is expected it would create over 40k jobs. MI expanded and created about 43k jobs. One reason in particular that expansion is important is the coverage gap, particularly for veterans and the opioid addiction crisis. Both parties have introduced expansion bills, but with some key differences in implementation. Secretary Sanders requested that commissioners continue to be advocates for policies for the good of NC.
- **Status on Women.** Initial report was on employment and earnings. Currently in the process of reviewing draft on second report, on health and wellbeing, to be launched next month. Partnering w/ businesses like SAS and AAUW. Will continue to do listening sessions. Issues include health, reproductive rights. This report is critical for the wellbeing of all in NC. Draft of second report shows that NC ranks in the middle or bottom half nationally on health indicators. Ranked best for breast cancer mortality (25) and worst for AIDS diagnosis (44). Report will be catalyst for conversations and change. Report includes sections on chronic health, reproductive health, violence against women and infant mortality. Report will be shared with commission members. Advocacy by DOA has created movement in actions including executive orders and budget decisions. In the Secretary's last one on one with the Governor, they spoke about Status on Women report. One current focus is improving gender diversity on public boards. Question about whether there is data or report on higher ranking higher paid women in senior status are more likely to be downsized. There is a general concern in the state work force about aging out with over 20 % of employees eligible to retire. Discussions ongoing about how to retain work force.
- **Policy Updates:**
 - Executive Order 93 (in packets with fact sheet) prohibits the use of salary history in the state hiring process.
 - Executive Order 24 Update. Purchasing policy in hands of governor currently. Subcommittee heavily involved in language. Agreement has been reached and should have a final version soon.
 - Executive Order 80. Mark Edwards gave update on state's actions on climate change, including creation of intergovernmental commission on climate change. Three public meetings so far discussing EO objectives. For DOA particularly, tasked with 2 goals—one, to increase number of zero emission vehicles in state motor fleet, and two to make state buildings and leased buildings more energy efficient. This is an exciting moment for NC to step up at a moment the federal government has fallen down on its obligation. The administration was commended, and a suggestion was made to take a new look at a report on Coastal Resilience in the Face of Climate Change (B. Rimer will provide to DOA). All meetings on this are public and comments are welcomed. A question was asked about what improvements are being made to buildings. The process is currently in the assessment process to see what can be done most efficiently. They are considering a variety of potential improvements, from HVAC to windows, etc. Scheduling is also a major factor. Second question was about whether there is a policy regarding working from home. That has been something Secretary Sanders has advocated investigating since joining. It has just become a focus at state level. There are currently two draft policies for telework and flex work (at DOA level). This change is not

only policy, but also a culture change. These policies can reduce building energy load and transportation. A comment was made that these policies are also important for people with health issues, disabilities and increases talent and retention as well as carbon footprint.

- Executive Order 91. Broadband access is a statewide top issue that comes up repeatedly.
- Executive Order 82 Accommodations for Pregnant Women.
- Executive Order 92. Employment First for North Carolinians with Disabilities.

CENSUS 2020 Presentation, Bob Coats, Governor’s Census Liaison, NC State Data Center, Office of State Budget and Management, Demographic & Economic Analysis Section

Secretary Sanders introduced Bob Coats. He presented on “Making NC Count,” and the Statewide Complete Count Commission. He addressed the impact of the census, first conducted in 1790. The census is crucial for apportionment and redistricting. It affects federal funding and government planning and is vital as the largest survey with reliable data that can be used by business and local governments. NC is currently looking at projections of gaining one seat (some potential for two) based on census counts.

Planning begins about 15 years ahead of a census. It starts with a geographic foundation creating accurate units for measurement, followed by the demographic foundation, the largest picture we get about who are our communities. Data is used to inform a wealth of things, including classroom size, service audience, and infrastructure workload. Census is completely self-reported. It is confidential and protected by law.

Promoting the census and ensuring its success in NC requires local community participation to include the experts on local barriers and connections to make sure people participate.

This is the first census that can be filled out online. It can also be done on the phone, or a paper form can be mailed on request.

A few consistent threats to participation: recent migration, linguistic isolation, African American males between 18-35 missed at highest rates, literacy, preschool age kids missed at higher rate (even in households that participated), poverty. Local participation is also critical to identify local communities that are hard to reach.

ROAM—Response Outreach Area Mapper. This tool allows you to zoom in and see at-risk populations and projected low response scores. Another tool is the Census Engagement Navigator. An additional visualization tool is the Type of Enumeration View (TEA). This lets you know how outreach will be conducted in an area. This can be helpful for decreasing fear. All are available free online at census.gov.

The NC Census website is <https://census.nc.gov> and the bureau is hiring. The website has many tools and information on NC’s census goals and work.

Remarks and Special Guest Recognition

Secretary Sanders introduced the Burke County officials present, Mayor Ronnie Thompson, Sally Sandy, City Manager, Assistant City Manager Sonja Marsten, Chief of Public Safety, Ronnie Rector, Rus Scherer, Director of HRC Morganton, and Maynard M. Taylor, County Commissioner

Commissioner members introduced themselves to Burke County visitors.

Mayor Ronnie Thompson made remarks to the commission. He spoke to the importance of the census to Burke County and welcomed the Commission. Manager Sandy also welcomed commission members and gave an update on new growth and opportunities in Morganton. She spoke of the history of honoring diversity in Morganton. Rus Scherer also spoke to the commission members. Morganton is proud of engaging all members of the community and the HRC has been a great conduit for community concerns to City council. Chief Rector spoke about inclusion in the policing world. He spoke of serving the Latino community in Burke County, and affirmed that the officers do not ask citizenship documentation status. He discussed serving the homeless population that is embedded in the community. He also spoke about the difficulties of hiring and retaining minority candidates in the Burke County force because of competition for minority applicants and because of decreased interest. He spoke to the importance of not working in isolation and building relationships before any crisis arises. They work through many programs such as Partnership for Change, where there is community support and knowledge to draw on.

Secretary Sanders introduced Commission member Cecelia Surrat who delivered remarks to the Commission. She thanked allies for helping create more diversity in Burke county leadership and professional employment.

Nan Severino introduced the break - out session regarding Hard to Count Populations Community Engagement. The two small groups were tasked with the following questions:

- 1) What are the hard to count populations? What are effective ways to reach these populations?
- 2) What events/forums/locations should we have a presence to raise awareness for Census 2020? What are three ways to increase engagement across NC communities? How do we mitigate or eliminate these? Challenge and Barriers?

The meeting broke for lunch and reconvened.

Each group was asked to give a 30 second report out on their small group discussions.

Question 2 Group: A. Spainhour reported back that the top priority was thinking through fears that intersect in our communities and how to reach people and address these fears through safe people and safe spaces where people are and can be reached.

Question 1 Group: Christy reported back that priority target communities include elderly and Latino community, looking for more culturally adaptive messaging, and considering young African-American men and communication that addresses their baggage.

Small groups were tasked with meeting before the next phone meeting to further flesh out this work.

Meeting and presentation information will be shared so commission members can bring Census information to the public as needed.

Tentative phone date is June 19. Tentative face to face meeting August 21 (Charlotte).

The secretary thanked Cecelia Surrat for the wonderful location, food, and engagement. She thanked the Commission members for their participation and Bob Coats for his expertise.

Pat Martinez launched a new business venture the Urban Post, a bilingual newspaper with a target audience of 18-35 to maintain cultural vibrancy. The publication contains art, national authors, and recognition of influential Latino leaders. The Post will run an insert to promote the Census in English and Spanish, with credit to the Commission.

Emily Turner was thanked for agreeing to serve as Secretary. Pat Martinez was thanked for agreeing to continue to serve as Parliamentarian.

S. Sanders thanked all members for their participation and urged them to embrace the urgency of the moment and to be firm in their belief they were selected with intention to work to make our world better.

The meeting was adjourned.