

Captioning Transcript of Committee on Equity and Inclusion Meeting - November 3, 2022

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Please welcome to the Committee on Equity and Inclusion. Today is Thursday, November 3rd, 2022 the time is currently for 4:12 PM. I'm chairman Jecorey Arthur. We also have vice chair Anthony Piagentini, with committee members Markus Winkler, Cassie Chambers Armstrong, Kevin Kramer and I'm sure we'll be joined by other committee members soon. This meeting is being held pursuant to KRS 61.826 and council rule 5A today we will have 3 special discussions To give some oversight to agencies work on equity goals and another with the office for women. Thank you for being here right now we have chief Michael Meeks from the office equity. Please introduce yourself and then we'll bring up our first agency to have some back and forth. Thank you for being here again.

"Meeks, Michael"

Thank you Michael Meeks chief equity officer. Again, thank you for the opportunity to I'm sure our equity updates with the committee, we have been this is a one of a series of updates that you'll receive from all the agencies. We do have all the agencies updates available and we'll be sending them over to you as early as this afternoon or tomorrow. We will be hearing from the office for Fleet and Facilities management. We'll also be hearing from CIT the office for women. With me today, we've got Mark Zoeller and Richard Price with fleet and facilities Grace Simrall and Chris with and Gretchen Hunt with the office for women and we'll move forward with the first presentation.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Again, thank you all for being here. I think I said this a few weeks ago, but I just want to reiterate. Usually our conversations around equity goals happen, right on the brink of the budget being passed. So it's really important you are providing these updates, we can have some more detailed conversation around these goals and really like, setting us up for success, long term, as we make racial equity a priority in this city. So, hopefully you can back today we'll go back and forth work with you all and do what we can to support these. Thank you.

"Zoeller, Mark"

Thank you, Mark Zoeller, director of the office of facilities in fleet management. We appreciate our opportunity to come over this afternoon and discuss the efforts I'm joined by our

assistant director. Richard price. I'd like to publicly recognized Richard for his efforts to create a more equitable work environment, especially when it comes to recruitment and hiring of employees. He's been very creative in these efforts and I truly appreciate his work. When we met a few years ago, and started focusing on developing departmental goals, we had decided to focus on 2 key areas. The first was to increase our spend with MFDBE's vendors and contractors and then to achieve diversity when bidding an awarding work. So, I'm going to talk about goal 1, and I'm going to turn it over to Richard to run us through a goal two. Our first step to see what amount of our budget was currently being spent with MFDBE vendors. We couldn't really gauge ourselves, if we didn't have a baseline, that was an information that was readily available to us. So, we developed this chart, which you have in front of you, and I'd be glad to send you the interactive version if you would like to see it. Our staff worked with OMB and HRC and to create this and it's a little bit of a challenge because it's a couple different software's that we're pulling information out of what we did to create this is we took our total operating and capital budget. We reduced our personnel budget from it, and we reduced other spend such as a utility spend where we didn't have that effort to create our overall budget and then we looked at the percentage that was being spent with MFDBE spenders. So, this kind of shows you, how we were working to try to create a baseline of what we spend you will see obviously a large spike and FY-21 and that is mainly attributed to the covid virus during Covid we had an increase with our custodial contractor to do more cleanings of high touch surfaces and we also had a contract with a vendor that would come and disinfect areas where we had known positives and both of those vendors were MFDBE vendors. So, when you see the reduction in FY-22, that's why there was that spik. So, other, let me see other efforts that we have going on to kind of drive our spend with vendors is to make sure that we work with HRC anytime we're doing a bid to gather vendors who have been registered with the to make sure they're receiving the notification. This is done during the bid process through the SPF form, which allows us to list out vendors that we want to receive that opportunity. Another change we've done is the way we handle midsize work in the past metro had 1 contractor for general construction work. We had bid that out and awarded to 1 contractor, and that was for all of metro governments. So, as you can see that, it was a large contract and a busy contractor, so what we've done with these midsize jobs now is in working with purchasing, and I have to give them a shout out too they've been very flexible to work with is when we have jobs that are too large for us to handle in house but

they're still under 30,000 dollars, we are able to solicit 3 bids and we go to the, to get vendors to try to attract them to do our work and that's been a great success for us instead of that cost only going to 1 large vendor that was large enough to do all of metro's work we've been able to award to vendors, much smaller vendors and it's kind of when to get other people's footing the door to do our work. So, again, when we're doing this, that's in coordination with HRC to help us create a good pool of applicable vendors. When we're doing larger projects, obviously, that are go out in the RFP process the same SPF format happens, and we discuss with the HRC ahead of time how we can recruit more people to get them interested in our work. That's basically in the forefront as we do every bit for work. As I mentioned, our 2nd goal was to insure equity in the recruiting and hiring. Now I'm going to turn that over to Richard to just grab his efforts on this initiative.

"Price, Richardson"

Thank you Mark and thank you Council for having us here. Uh, Mark said, Richard price. I'm the assistant director and, uh, equity lays on for officer facilities and fleet management. So, regarding go to we got to be creative, so we wanted to create strategies as it, as we looked at our hiring and recruiting process. There is no you know, everyone knows that people like to hire people that look like them and we wanted to do some things to change that. One of the things that I felt like that that is very important that has been working very well is expanding our hiring pool, give an opportunities to get more candidates to know about us and to apply for our open positions. So, I've been working with the Kentucky career centers they got a process called focus talent and what they would do, they allow me to post our positions on this website is a statewide Website and not only just stay what I like about it it's a regional website and where candidates can see our jobs and a platform. The best part about this collaboration with is that they are able to take our job descriptions what we're looking for, and pair us with people with the resumes that they get through this process and recommend them to apply for our jobs. And this has been working well, we have had over is this when I put this PowerPoint together as 262, since it's overwhelmed over 300 people that we have had opportunity to match what we have open now. We have not had the turnout like, I really wanted to of people that actually that matches what we were looking for, but we have had some, unfortunately a lot of them has not been a lot of African American and women that we need so much to increase to help with our equity process. Also, Kentucky on the bills, which is a process that works with the originally work in

collaboration with them, these individuals that when they complete that process with contact center bills, if we got jobs, jobs, that are open, that is related to the work that they have just trained for, they are allowed to come over and apply for positions. Again, a lot of those individuals unfortunately has been going straight from that program to construction. And so, so it's been very difficult to higher skilled people during this season. Also I think what is very important is are and we look at our internal candidates are employees, workforce development, building our employees up. We have a lot of employees in our front line positions is African American most of our archive African Americans, our data shows that we have, we have 38% African American however, almost all of them is in low paying entry level jobs, so we want to do some backend, we want to create a pathway so they can walk through and see a pathway to go hire into some of our high end pair of jobs and not just African Americans, but also women also safe. Fleet is almost all Caucasian male. No, women, one African American I think we have one woman that works in there. So we so we're striving to fix that. So we're collaborating with, Jefferson Community Technical College, we gonna put together a process that would allow our employees to go and get the training and we're gonna have we plan to have a skin in the game on this and allow the employees to go be trained and get the, the quality training, so we can promote them up in our positions. So, we're doing another thing we're doing is also is revealing our existing policies and procedures to take away any kind of structural type biases that may be in that and so we're doing those things. There was a lot of employees that that may feel disadvantage because they haven't had the opportunity, so we are taking away those barriers to do that.

"Zoeller, Mark"

I think this is just some of our summary that we have put in our presentation, and I think that we've kind of covered these points. I don't want to take too much time. I know you'll have 2 more presentations behind us, but as Richard mentioned, we're facing a lot of the same things that private businesses in our field are in read the articles in the paper about not enough people going into the trades and so what we really want to focus is we have a group of people working for us that we want to give them a career path with us. And so we want to work and we're in the very early days, and very early conversations of being able to do this but we want to give people a career path to move through and stay with Metro and stay with facilities by learning the skill trade and being able to improve their work life.

So, I believe with that, we would be glad to open up with questions. Probably next steps Richard mentioned a lot of what we got early on our next step on the purchasing side is we're going to be kind of redeveloping some of that database, because as you're all are probably aware, we switch to a new format with Workday. So we're going to have to figure out that connection and to be able to pull that data out we're also going to look at our baseline because we talked about our original goal to increase by 10% over 2019 and we think a better goal may be able to set more of a percentage of our yearly budget that could spend with MFDBE because obviously spend with because obviously We're not, it'd be great if we could increase 10% every year, but it's probably not a realistic go. So that's data that we continue to scrub and a goal that we will continue to work on updating, so I appreciate you all giving us the opportunity to talk about it and we welcome any questions.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Thank you let the records show that we have committee member Nicole George and Barbara Shanklin has an excuse absence. The software you use to track MFDBE spending, does that power BI?

"Zoeller, Mark"

Yes, sir, it's power BI.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

It may be a question for Chief Meeks, do we know of other agencies that use this software?

"Zoeller, Mark"

I think other agencies use the software. I'm not sure it's a great software you can basically use to measure, or present on anything I'm not sure if any other agencies are using it to track their MFDBE spending obviously Chris would be able to speak to that as well.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

We got a friend.

"Seidt, Chris"

With the office of civic innovation and technology, so Power BI an enterprise platform that it's available to any of the agencies that want to use it we have multiple agencies that do use it, this is the case I've seen where he's tracking budget for that specific aspect, but there are agencies using it to track Budget and other within their department, and all of the Louis stats are currently done in the power BI platform as well.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

I assume that platform can disaggregate, you know, based on disability, different types of races, genders and whatnot. It can desegregate that information?

"Seidt, Chris"

So if it's available in the source system that it's reporting from yes. And if I'm not sure if you can read that on the screen, but in the upper left hand corner, and I can't do it this is just a picture of the software is what we're seeing here, but you would be able to check one of those boxes, and it would filter by each spin category, you could select all female, LGTB minority and we track the spending that way and then down below, obviously by a fiscal year, the boxes you're seeing at the very bottom, just break out the percentage that's being spent ward Edison, professional cleaning services is our largest portion. They hold a custodial contract with us clean a lot of our outer facilities. So that's kind of a way to kind of take a quick look at it.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Understood what I'm really trying to understand is if you just aggregate beyond that because when you say minority, I don't know if you've seen our minority definition, but it includes, I don't know, 50 different nationalities in it. So, I'm curious if you're breaking it down, beyond just minority specifically as we talk about race.

"Zoeller, Mark"

I don't believe that's information that we can garner the software as we pull from. I'll have to check on that, but I don't think that is a category we can't pull that from this information, came from leap the old financial system and I don't think it breaks it down that far.

"Seidt, Chris"

That being said, we may be able to look at Workday on the capabilities. We may have better reporting visibility at that level.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

If the source has it, then we would be able to?

"Seidt, Chris"

If the sources there, we can visualize it that way.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Okay. And just to Flashback January 2021 we talked about the procurement of task force here in this same committee and it showed the MSD that for their diversity spending, they spent about over half on black businesses, LGE over a quarter, the water company about a 5th, Louisville metro government 64,000,000, Less than 10% of our diversity spending with black businesses so that this disaggregation is key because how can we change that? If we don't know that when we're looking at some of the data. Committee member Marcus Winkler.

"Winkler, Markus"

Thank you, I had a couple of questions about the job posting and hiring information. So, you mentioned, you're using the online platforms. I'm curious, are we only posting jobs online or are we looking at other ways where potentially you can reach underserved communities? We know we've got a broadband access issue and in a lot of our underserved communities and so I'm wondering if we're doing enough to reach those communities beyond maybe more traditional ways, like online postings, but that may not then be accessible.

"Price, Richardson"

Yeah. That's a good question. Yes, we have, I have physically myself have walked our job descriptions and post them as symbols Bible college some of our churches. Yeah, to answer your question. Yes, we are doing that. And I do know that everybody is not online, social media we do have a lot of people that is on social media, posting on LinkedIn and some of social outlet so people can see.

"Winkler, Markus"

Perfect, I also appreciate your commentary about 38% of your workforces, African American but there's a, I don't I don't think you cited the number in management, but having a dedicated plan to try to, get people I think is admirable and appreciate your commentary around training and education to make sure that we've got we're building a bench and can afford that opportunity to people. You sort of touched on I thought, maybe I heard you mention assessments and I'm curious, do we do any sort of assessing for any of our roles? And if so are those assessments regularly screened for bias?

"Price, Richard"
At this time, no.

"Winkler, Markus"
Sorry at this time no, we don't do assessments or no we do do assessments, but we don't make sure that our assessments aren't.

"Price, Richard"
We don't do assessments at this time. That's something that I think we need to kind of get back to with our, bias training and doing things such as that, but not at this time.

"Zoeller, Mark"
I'm not sure what assessment exactly what you're referring we do like, for if someone applies for a job as an electrician with us, there is a testing associated with that so, like, with our skilled trades, there is some testing that goes on for those positions.

"Winkler, Markus"
Yeah, so I wasn't referring to any particular assessment, but just sort of the science around assessments generally, you know, would say that making sure that they are regularly reviewed for unintended bias as a best practice.

"Price, Richard"
I will tell you this 1 thing that we have started to do is to do practices. My goal for of the office of facility is the equity lays on is to have every everything we do with the equity lands. Ok, so when I look at the applications when the resumes come over we want to redact some, some geographical type information because, as I said earlier, you know, people hire people that look like them they live by them. And so we want to do things like that. We want to talk about equity in our own body. And also just have a practice of everyone thinking equity and I think if we do that, we're going to reach the goals that we are trying to do.

"Winkler, Markus"
Thank you and I have just one last question you know, we've heard concerns from some employees and other departments about when they have brought concerns about, you know, workplace, whether it's workplace safety, the environment. Right?
Sort of, you know, racist statements made by supervisors. Do you feel that you have an adequate reporting and remediation process in place that employees can feel comfortable to report concerns

and that those reports are taken with the utmost seriousness investigated and resolved accordingly?

"Price, Richard"

Yes, sir. Absolutely. We do have a I do feel comfortable with that employees. We get a process for employees to bring all their concerns I'm the one that handles those concerns and their go to person that they can come and bring those concerns. And I work closely with HR on sensitive issues like that and when people feel like there's a bias or discrimination and so to question, yes, absolutely.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Committee member George.

"George, Nicole"

Thank you. I'm interested to know what strategies and more importantly what resources you have devoted to linking your MFDBE with the human rights commission.

"Zoeller, Mark"

With the, human relations is what we try to do if someone's bidding work, I believe it's part of the purchasing process that they either require them to get registered with HRC on our small purchasing side where we're not under 30,000 we certainly suggest it. I don't believe it is a required step through purchasing, but we do tell people that that is a list that we're looking at to find applicable vendors based on whatever type of work it is, the does have a database and we're able to contact them based on what work we have and we do tell contractors that, you know, that's a good step of making sure they're registered to get work with Metro. So, are there any resources devoted to outreach? Not through the facilities purchasing has done some, basically vendor fares where we've invited people and contractors in to hear about the work that's available. And then, as part of that process, they're told how to register with Metro government and it also gives them a feel usually when they do that type of outreach they'll have besides us, Metro parks, you know, all the different agencies to kind of describe what kind of work they do and it gives the vendors idea. The last one we did a big focus was why aren't you bidding our work, you know is there something we can do to make that process easier, but most of those formats are done through in the office of purchasing.

"George, Nicole"

I recognize it's a bigger systems issue, but do you think there's something to be asked about what those points of connection are and what resources are devoted to actually being able to recruit?

"Zoeller, Mark"

Absolutely, we regularly if we don't get a bid for something, reach out to vendors to say, what was it about the language we put in the RFP or what was it that why didn't you bid? So that is something that we're always trying to improve our process on our side.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Thank you all so much for being here we'll bring our next agency up and while they're on their way, let the record show. Simmons has several degree programs, including religious studies. Thank you. For committee members and the public, these presentations are attached to the agenda, including our budget equity for reference.

"Simrall, Grace"

Good afternoon. Thank you so much. Chair Arthur, vice chair Piagentini, members of equity inclusion committee. My name is Grace Simrall. I'm the chief of civic innovation and technology and it is our pleasure to be here presenting our equity update.

"Seidt, Chris"

Good afternoon I'm Chris Seidt I'm the director of information technology. Thanks for the opportunity to talk about this today it's very important to our work and we're always trying to get better here. So, we'll focus on 3 areas that CIT has been focused on for the last year and continues to focus on in the upcoming year. First is digital inclusion and then the 2nd will be equity in our workforce and then the 3rd is equity in our procurement. So this presentation was supposed to go at the October committee meeting that we got moved so all good. So, October was digital inclusion month. It's a, it's a big national opportunity to bring the topic forward and to publicize the resources that are available so we spent a great deal of effort last month, trying to get the word out about programs that can benefit residents in the community. We focus on 3 key areas within our digital inclusion platform. The first is the availability of service so you have Internet access available to your address. The 2nd is affordability of service so is the service that's offered at your address affordable to the resident. And then 3rd is access to digital skills and devices

and this is one that tends to get overlooked sometimes, in terms of, you know, you can give some one low cost Internet, but they may only have a cell phone or something like that at home. So making sure that if they get a computer that they're able to use that computer productively to use it for going to school or looking for jobs or whatever, that might be. What makes this work for us here? I think there's 3 components. One is the commitment to the work. This is one of those cool items that I.T, it's usually a back office shop and this is one of those ones where we kind of get to get out and interact with the public a little more in terms of our work, and being able to explain how good activity works and enabling technology for residents to connect to. The second part is that having dedicated resources Ricky Santiago, who's in the offices of innovation technology works full time on digital inclusion efforts so we're, we're always having someone there to kind of spearhead the effort. And then the third piece, and this is very critical is that we don't do this on our own there's a lot of engaged community partners from goodwill to computer refurbishing programs there's all sorts of things that go into making this a successful platform it's not just the city's efforts. And one of our kind of big accomplishments this year was the launch of our public Wifi network in the Russell neighborhood this allowed us to deploy over 2 dozen access points throughout the Russell community. We've put signage up throughout the community where that's available. This particular sign was down at Baxter Square Park, but it spans anywhere from 9th street down to, I believe, about 25th street in terms of reach and goes as far south as Broadway so, it's a pretty robust network that's a partnership that we have with spectrum to operate that network force so it's, that's been a big win for us this year and we feel like that's a benefit to our residents. So, next they'll shift over to equity and our workforce, our goal is to mirror the community that we serve and how do we get there? We've been working to attend as many job fares as we can in networking opportunities. Our next one will be the women in tech conference in December of this year. Previously we've attended job news, USA fairs, the Louisville Metro government career, fair and University of Louisville, cyber program held a virtual career for this year for the first time that we were able to attend to try to find candidates for our cybersecurity team. We've been working to partner with education groups to develop the workforce so we've previously worked JPCS with academies programs to take on summer interns so that they get the opportunity to learn hands on we're always interested in growing and expanding on that. And then we are aiming for a goal of 100% diverse interview panels for every job opening that

happens in the CIT. So those are ways that we're trying to tackle, making our department look the way that our community looks. Finally, I'll focus on equity and procurement. Our work this year included an audit of all of our existing contracts. We were looking specifically for opportunities to RFP out, or subdivide those contracts into smaller ones. We just recently had a bid open for utility locate where they, if somebody calls 811, you go out and mark where the city's fiber optic network is located I believe we're close on an award on that one we've also directly sought out technology vendors that are MFBE certified to attempt to qualify them as partners that we can do business with. We have had some success in that area and then our executive administrator for contracts is continuing to look for new vendors and continuously looking for providers of services that we can bring on board. We do have some challenges in the space that we've encountered as we've kind of gone through this. One is that the technology partner ecosystems make it somewhat financially advantageous to keep our existing contracts and by that, I mean, there are hardware providers that we either buy directly from and I'll mention specifically most of the computers you all are using today are Dell computers, they sell those directly to us so, getting those from somebody else typically comes at a higher price. Some firms have been resistant when we've reached out to them, even when here locally that to go through the HRC qualification process and I'm not sure if that's because they don't have the time too they don't think the opportunity's worth it. We continue to try to push them in that direction and then, in other cases, there are services that we procure directly from a cloud provider, like Amazon or something like that where again, it's, it's a direct kind of purchase for the department. So, what's next in the digital inclusion space? Council made an ARP preparation and we're looking to deliver connectivity services for the long term for residents in that community. We would love to expand on our internship efforts in the tech sector that often requires us having internship positions to put people into. So that requires an ongoing funding commitment and then expanding our public WiFi hotspots beyond Russell, we're getting ready to have discussions with waterfront development about the phase 4 water from park project, and potentially enabling WiFi throughout that new part of the park when it comes along. And with that, we'll take any questions you have.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Thank you so much for committee members and the public, you can see every government departments, equity statements goals some of their progress on the office, the equities Web site at their 1 stop equity shop and I just want to commend you because you have about half a dozen goals maybe more than any other department. Also, when you look at this ordinance, O-596-20 version2 aka, the budget equity ordinance it defines something called smart goals and those goals need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time based your goals are perfect reflection of this. So, my question is, and maybe this is for the chief as well, when you have agencies, when you have departments that are shining stars, as far as what's setting up these goals looks like, how are you utilizing that to help other agencies? What does collaboration look like?

"Meeks, Michael"

Michael Meeks, chief equity officer, certainly there are other departments that are not doing this process as well as others. They will reach out to us and ask for advice as for council, as for suggestions recommendations. Typically, what I will do is work with them knowing that we have departments, like, and the product that they produce, I know what success looks like and I can share that with the other departments. We have not to this point at this point, established any type of mentorship type program between departments, but, maybe CIT would be willing to work with some of the other departments I don't know.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Because I remember, I heard from our last agency, we talked about somebody being a liaison. So, I assume that the different agencies have those liaisons, you know, do they ever meet together?

"Meeks, Michael"

Pre-pandemic we had, Equity liaisons that did meet on a regular basis. We have not started that process up yet. That is one thing one of our goals in the office of equity to start that process again. So each department will have a representative we'll meet on a regular basis and share success stories, share information, talk about problems, specifically with the departments and a way to share information so yes.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Right and we know we heard about issues of, like, how do you find certain groups of people for hiring? I'm sure if there's an agency that has success in that, those meetings will be really

beneficial to just work with each other on it. My last question I see a lot of what's next related to availability affordability when it comes to digital inclusion, something that really opened my eyes up joining this council is, you know, somebody like council member Benson in an area where availability is such an issue where you don't have access because of the infrastructure. Could you talk a little bit about what that workers look like for you or how you're considering.

"Seidt, Chris"

Sure, so, from an availability of infrastructure standpoint, the council appropriated funds as did the commonwealth of Kentucky to try to tackle the lack of infrastructure in areas that don't have the population density and so we're in active negotiations right now to try to solve that with a provider that exists already here in the community with the hopes of trying to get that done within 12 months, or so of award. There are some complications to that. I do want to caveat it. There are 65 Billion dollars available right now to solve this nationwide. There will be supply chain issues with fiber optic cable with networking equipment we're already seeing 40 to 50 week lead times and then the workforce to actually do the work as we've seen, there's kind of a supply shortage of even employees to do the skilled labor. So, while I think a year is realistic in a normal time it may not be realistic for what we're seeing right now. But that said, it doesn't require all of the houses to be connected before they bring the 1st residence online so, as they build out residents will start seeing service as they continue that construction.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Thank you, thank you so much let's hear from our last agency. And I'll just apologize, this was inequitable. We should have had ladies first, like my nanny told me.

"Hunt, Gretchen"

Okay, here we are, thank you chair Arthur, and thank you to Co chair Piagentini and all the members of the equity and inclusion committee. My name is Gretchen hunt and I'm executive administrator of the office for women and I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today about the urgency of issues facing women in particular women of color, black women in our community, and to also talk about the collaborative efforts that we're doing with community with nonprofits with other government agencies to raise the status of women in Louisville, and I want to underscore the urgency of this right now so we are very aware in our office that post pandemic women and in particular black

women, women of color bore the brunt of the pandemic, and the current economic crisis. So that includes the breakdown of the childcare infrastructure, rising food, insecurity diaper need rising housing and rent costs arise in domestic violence homicides and also, significantly, last week, the Kentucky center for economic policy indicated that unlike white men who have regained job losses that happened during the pandemic, black individuals and women and, of course, that also means black women and women of color still lag, and we've not made up those job losses that occur during the pandemic. So while women's issues are always important for the well being of the community, they are particularly urgent in our community right now. So I want to talk a little bit briefly I did frame this presentation with an equity lens and I think that's important just to underscore because I'm very, very grateful that this office was relocated under the office of equity in January of last year because what that has done is that much like my colleague in metro Council Director Price indicated we try to have a racial equity lens in all that we are doing every day too. So, as I was preparing this presentation in relation, just both to an update with office for women and an update on our equity goals and what activities we're doing, it's really the work that we're doing every day so, it's not as distinct and it's critical to do that. One of the reasons why and I just want to underscore that when you saw that data, for example, from facilities, which is great that they break down you often see breakdowns by minorities or more accurately, the global majority and women, but we don't see those intersections. And so who falls out of that explanation a lot of times are black women, women of color and that's important because we need to know what the needs are, and what the strategies are to address that demographic. So just real quickly, I know that we want to focus on one of our goals in particular, which is on raising increasing capacity and represented representation of diverse women in leadership and so I'm going to talk a lot about the office for women ambassadors, which is timely and we're accepting applications right now, but I just wanted to let, you know about 5 equity goals we have and these are 5 goals just in general, with our office, so 1 is to really promote a gender equity focus across governments so, as my colleagues, from other departments, we're speaking today, I can already envision ways that the office for women can help be an ally to advise on some of their equity goals as it pertains to women, we want to look at intersectionality, though, so we don't want to just be looking at gender as separate from, from ethnicity, from race from LGBTQ status. 2nd, as I said, is, we want to increase representation in leadership, especially of diverse women. A 3rd

goal is to decrease domestic violence. We know that domestic violence homicides have increased in particular in Louisville, and that they have increased disproportionately for black women in our community and so we're wanting to dive in and really look at that specific issue and what strategies are. Another goal is to increase the economic wellbeing of women I want to acknowledge that these are not necessarily smart goals these are bold goals, but I think these urgent times also demand bold goals so, I think they need to be articulated a little bit more to be smart and specific when we talk about the economic status but we are looking at ways to increase the economic wellbeing of folks in our community women, our community and the last goal that we've been working on very intensely recently with both government partners and community partners is to decrease the vulnerability in particular of Latinx next teens but also, we imagine other groups of girls who have been very vulnerable to running away and being exploited in human trafficking. So I wanted to highlight those 5 areas. Some of the things we're doing every month, we're doing a webinar to raise awareness of these issues on gender equity, I'm going to go through really quickly on these, our 2nd goal though is the office for women ambassador program, and I really want to say that when we are looking at the urgent needs of women in our community, this is not just looking at people as being in need of help or services. People are our greatest asset in the community so, at the same time, where, for example, black women, women of color may be experiencing the crux of these hardest challenges when we look at applicants already for the office women ambassador program, which is a 6 month leadership training program, so far out of the 30+ women applying from 16 different zip codes the majority are black women and women of color and what that tells me is that there's great urgency that people are feeling and there's also great capacity in terms of what they want to gain skills and to be able to improve advocacy in their community and so, let me talk to you a bit about the ambassador training program. This is modeled after the welcome academy that the office of globalization has held for many years. It is an attempt to build up leadership in individuals who are already active in their community, but we are linking them to government services to community nonprofits, giving them data about women in the community so that they can make informed judgments on what's already out there so that they can be liaisons to their community to convey that information. We've heard today several times that there is that communication gap between the government trying to reach workforce trying to reach individuals, we hope that these up to 26 individuals will be those conduits of information and that by the same token that

they will hold us accountable as government. One of the goals of the ambassador program is very much an equity goal. I'm a white woman, I do not represent every woman in the city of Louisville, women consist of 51% of our population and a woman in the West end a woman in the South end, and a woman in the eastern all may have very different lived experiences, community goals and so the ambassadors or an opportunity for office to spread out and have more people who are representative of our office and can help inform the goals of our office. A few things that are also equity considerations with the ambassador program, we will be providing child care for the participants and I want to thank council member Arthur for really holding us to do the work and recognizing that is a major barrier it's when we're seeing in workforce and we also want to be doing this, we want to be modeling. What should be happening? We are looking into a stipend to see if that's possible, but we will be trying to make this less of a barrier for individuals who are taking a day off each month for 6 months and the last thing I wanted to say just about the ambassador training is each day, they will have different themes so we have an overview of government will be coming to metro hall so that they will meet metro Council they will know the branches of government judicial we will be dealing with leadership development, health and well being in pilots prevention housing transportation lived environment, so they can understand how zoning happens housing, transportation and basic needs, including food and security, economic stability and mobility, connecting people to, you know, what are the routes if you're an entrepreneur, and you want to start a business and then really importantly, also civic engagement and autonomy, because we do see this as a pipeline for individuals who may become more civically involved, whether it be serving on boards and commissions or being, even in public service. Yes, I just check my time. Councilman I know we're at 5 so I didn't know.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Thank you. I have a quick question then there's somebody in the queue. I love how the first goal is around focus on government with gender equity. It's important to do it everywhere, but we got to look in the mirror first and foremost. So I'm curious. Do you know the baseline for women and leadership? What is the goal for the change? And then when do you hope to meet that goal?

"Hunt, Gretchen"

So these are all good questions and we need to develop those. So, the short answer is no, I don't have those specifics right now. I think data is the first piece of this. So, I could look at data for example of elected leadership in Louisville, but

when we look at, even within Metro, I think that is a good place to start with to see who are in leadership positions by gender and race because both matter but we're also looking at specifically one of the activities is on for women leadership, these ambassadors, we will be tracking them afterwards and I want to commend my colleague, Joy, director of equity, where we were talking about, how can we measure the impact of the ambassadors program we want to follow up with these women to see, did you make connections during this program that led to a business, a project, a piece of piece of legislation, did you get a position based on this? Did you choose to then go to a board or commission? So we will be measuring that in terms of what the impact of that is on, quote, unquote leadership in terms of what they are doing. I don't know if that if that helps.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Yes it does, thank you. Committee members Chambers Armstrong.

"Chambers Armstrong, Cassie"

Thank you Mr. chair thanks for being here. And thank you for all the work you're doing. My 1st question is so I know that our city just hired our 1st, ever director of early childhood education, which is really exciting that we're going to have this focus on early learning and on improving the lives of kids, particularly vulnerable kids. I also think being a mom myself I think of child care as sort of a 2 generation issue that impacts working parents, and we know women who tend to be disproportionately burdened by a lack of available affordable childcare and so I'm curious what ways you can see the office for women interacting with the director of early childhood education and if any of those conversations have started yet?

"Hunt, Gretchen"

Absolutely, and so we are already in conversation and one of the things I wanted to just flag is on the area of women's economic well-being we are working closely with the women's Bureau of the Department of labor, to kind of connect some of these dots to look at what are these barriers to women's economic success one is the breakdown of the childcare industry infrastructure. So, looking at that, and seeing where we might be able to leverage both federal funds to continue that growth, but also to look creative ways at how you might train women to be in child care to meet some of the specific needs someone working 3rd shift for example, someone working on the backside of Churchill downs, working until 4 AM in the morning, like, how do you find childcare for in particular overwhelmingly black and

women of color who have those needs that are most specific and childcare but yes, we are trying to work in alignment and I would say that one of the things that office for women does, because it's an office of one is that we have to work collaboratively with other branches of government we've done it with OSHN very much in the domestic violence space with health equity on some work we're doing and with that office as well.

"Chambers Armstrong, Cassie"

And you actually preempted my last question was not so much as a question is just perhaps a comment that. I know that there are a lot of new programs and a lot of new things, and the office of women is an office of 1 I have that, right and so I, for one would be very curious to know what kind of support and funding we, as council could use to help support this work. I share, sort of the priority that especially right now when we've seen domestic violence and domestic violence, homicides, reach unprecedented levels in our city violence against women is on the rise it's something that we should be thinking about and I I know that you just do incredible work all day every day and so I'm sure you're not prepared with details today but I, for one would be very interested in learning more about how we can grow and continue to support this work as it expands. Thank you for your time and thank you. Mr. Chair.

"Arthur, Jecorey"

Thank you, thank you for your time and thank you, thank you for your work. We will hear from you soon. All right and we'll see everyone else in a couple weeks. No more business today we stand adjourned.