

City of San Antonio



Minutes Community Health Committee

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Chair: Teri Castillo, Dist. 5

Dr. Sukh Kaur, Dist. 1 | Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3

Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4 | Marina Alderete Gavito, Dist. 7

Monday, August 21, 2023

2:00 PM

City Hall

The Community Health Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Media Briefing Room beginning at 2:00 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Teri Castillo, *Chair*
Dr. Sukh Kaur, *Member*
Phyllis Viagran, *Member*
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Member*
Marina Alderete Gavito, *Member*

Members Absent: None

Approval of Minutes

1. **Approval of minutes from the Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee meeting on June 29, 2023.**

Councilmember Viagran moved to Approve the minutes of the June 29, 2023 Community Health meeting. Councilmember Kaur seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Castillo, Kaur, Viagran, Alderete Gavito

Absent: Rocha Garcia

Public Comments

Jack Finger spoke in opposition to declaring racism as a public health crisis.

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. **Updates on the Resolution of Racism as a Public Health Crisis and 2nd Annual Health**

Equity Symposium Highlights. [Erik Walsh, City Manager; Claude A. Jacob, Director, Metro Health / Andy Segovia, City Attorney; Dr. Jennifer Mata, Director, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility]

Dr. Jennifer Mata, Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA), introduced Marjorie White, Assistant Director of Metro Health. Mata provided background on the Item mentioning that the American Public Health Association (APHA) declared racism as an ongoing public health crisis in 2016 and noted that in 2020, with the murder of George Floyd, municipalities began adopting the declaration. She noted that the San Antonio City Council passed a Resolution in August 2020 which declared racism as a public health crisis in San Antonio.

Mata reported that the Resolution led to policy initiatives related to health equity which included establishment of DEIA in 2022 which was expanded from the 2017 Office of Equity with a focus on Budget Equity Tools/Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, Equity Action Plans, and increasing diversity on Boards and Commissions.

White reported that Metro Health established its own Office of Health Equity in FY 2017, developed an Equity Action Plan which was adopted in FY 2021, instituted training opportunities for health care providers and created an Office of Policy and Civic Engagement (PaCE).

White announced the 2nd Annual Health Equity Symposium scheduled for Friday September 2, 2023 with a goal to center community knowledge, co-learning and collective action to address health inequities with panels, grassroots organization exhibitors and diverse breakout sessions. White expected 250 participants both in-person and virtually.

Chair Castillo thanked the staff for their presentations and looked forward to facilitating the conversation on mass incarceration and other public health concerns.

Councilmember Viagran commented that she had attended a health conference on the southside earlier this morning and commented that there were historical health disparities tied to redlining and other past discriminatory practices. She mentioned that the closure of the Texas Vista Health Hospital on the southwest side posed another challenge for people of color as they tended to use emergency rooms for their diagnostics and family healthcare. Councilmember Viagran recommended connecting with resources such as school physicals, eye and hearing exams.

Councilmember Kaur requested disaggregated data on public health inequities to include persons of Middle Eastern and north African descent. White offered to have her leadership and Data Analysts within Metro Health meet with the Councilmember. Councilmember Kaur recommended diverse methods of communication and sharing of data. Mata stated that DEIA focused on review reports such as the Status of Women to identify social determinants of health which could inform the cohort departments to build programs to address those issues.

Councilmember Kaur asked if DEIA helped produce the Fire report. David McCary explained that the Equity Atlas was a tool that was used.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito recommended more awareness regarding impacts of past redlining and requested to review the SWOT analysis performed by DEIA for Public Works, Animal Care Services and other departments. Mata offered to provide a presentation and one-on-one briefings. McCary explained the Budget Equity Tool was designed to ensure that departments thought about equity when they were developing their budgets and ensured programs considered the needs of people of color. Councilmember Alderete Gavito supported the use of equity data for city investments.

Councilmember Kaur requested that departments review their SWOT analysis and Budget Equity Tools during their Budget preparations.

Chair Castillo noted that the eastside was one of the fastest gentrifying areas of the country and wanted to ensure equity was considered related to growth plans.

Item was for discussion only so no action was taken.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Approved

Teri Castillo, Chair

Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk