



AGENDA

GOVERNANCE GROUP

November 19, 2021 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Zoom: [Meeting ID: 972 8256 5697; Passcode 790747](#)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Facilitator</u>
2:00	Welcome	Andrea Akita
2:03	Consent Agenda <i>Objectives:</i> review and approve the November 19th agenda and notes from October 15 th Meeting	Michael Brown
2:03 – 2:20	Grounding & Equity Moment <i>Objectives:</i> Share and highlight examples of bright spots in equitable practices or policy change, lessons, or current challenges.	All
2:20 – 2:35	Governance Group Nomination and Appointment Process <i>Objectives:</i> Provide overview of process and timing for appointments to new COO Best Starts Advisory Board.	Andrea
2:50 – 3:10	Celebration: Appreciation for Governance Group Members <i>Objectives:</i> Thank and recognize the contributions of the inaugural COO Best Starts for Kids Advisory Board. Members share reflections, provide advice and guidance by reflecting on changes in the landscape, opportunities, and challenges ahead for the next board.	Andrea & Michael
3:10 – 3:40	Open Discussion <i>Objectives:</i> Provide space for emerging topics or issues.	All
3:40 – 3:50	Updates <i>Objectives:</i> share pertinent information across the group	All
3:55	Adjourn	

Governance Group Members

Lydia Assefa-Dawson
Michael Brown
Vazaskia Crockrell
Deanna Dawson

Ubax Gardheere
Matelita Jackson
Paola Maranan
Jenn Ramirez Robson
Yordanos Teferi

Marguerite Ro
Sili Savusa
Tony To
AJ McClure

COMMUNITIES OF OPPORTUNITY GOVERNANCE FOUNDING

RESULTS STATEMENT

Create greater health, social, economic and racial equity in King County so that all people thrive and prosper, regardless of race or place.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Consistently demonstrate the values of equity, respect and partnership.
- Ensure low-income communities and communities of color affected by inequities develop and own the solutions.
- Advocate for and change institutional policies and processes to support equity goals.
- Encourage investments (both funding and in-kind resources) in long-term community capacity building and in systems, policy and practice changes that lead to greater racial and economic equity throughout King County.
- Catalyze alignment of funding streams and partner across issues and sectors to seek preventive strategies that address root causes of today's inequities.
- Be transparent and show how data and community expertise inform initiative strategies.
- Continuously learn, improve and share work publicly.
- Focus on geographic communities with the greatest needs, while simultaneously sharing lessons learned and building relationships across King County – *We are one King County.*

VALUES

We commit to guide Communities of Opportunity using these values:

Equity: work intentionally to eliminate racial, ethnic, socio-economic and geographic disparities in health and well-being

Process Equity: an inclusive, fair and open process

Community Engagement: authentic community engagement that involves listening to and understanding the unique histories of communities

Driven by quantitative and qualitative data: Data will track and report progress, as well as support given for promising and evidence-based practices

Innovation: Recognize that change involves risk and value an adaptive approach that views failure as an important part of the learning process

2_Governance Group Meeting Notes

October 15, 2021 2-4pm Via Zoom

Attendees

Governance Group Members: Deanna Dawson, Sili Savusa, Vazaskia Crockrell, Jenn Ramirez Robson, Michael Brown, Ubax Gardheere, Marguerite Ro, AJ McClure, Yordanos Teferi, Lydia Assefa-Dawson **Guests:** Haregu Kidane, Rainier Valley Partnership
Staff: Andréa Akita, Kalayaan Domingo, Cristina González, Roxana Chen, Whitney Johnson, José Camacho Martinez, Vanesa Gutierrez, Christy Becker-Motyka

Welcome and Introductions. New staff members, Administrative Specialist Christy Becker-Motyka, and Seattle Foundation's new Program Officer Vanesa Gutierrez, were introduced. José was welcomed back to work; he and new baby L were warmly greeted.

Consent Agenda. Review and approval of the October 15, 2021 agenda and notes from the August 20, 2021 meeting. Motion to accept from Deanna Dawson, and second from Marguerite Ro and Jen Ramirez Robson, passes unanimously. The decision is made at the beginning of the meeting to omit the Executive Session and to replace it with unstructured/open discussion at the end of the meeting

Several members reflected and shared **Equity Moments** which included action by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Project Selection Task Force for potential funding; the convening of the Racism as a Public Health Crisis community committee and allocation of \$25 million dollars to community; and acknowledgement of National Disability employment awareness month, learning and remembering the layers and intersection of disability, socio-economic factors, and race in our equity work.

Meeting the Moment & Upcoming Learning Community Events. *Kalayaan Domingo and Whitney Johnson presented information on the September 22, 2021 gathering using these [slides](#).*

Learning Community has unfolded in front of us in the last few years. Learning Community is a container and a space to build relationships, share knowledge and build capacity through leadership, shared platforms, and lessons, with our partners while including their narrative, and COO work.

Meeting the Moment took place on September 22nd, 2021, the theme of healing and organizing was created in partnership with the advisory group team member Sarah Tran and consultant Caroline Burney from Cascadia. A community advisory group helped to identify three themes that held the challenges of the last year with the intent to lift up and share work of COO's partners. There were three objectives: lift up and share the incredible work of COO partners, address anti-Blackness, and create a community of belonging. Sessions were organized moving participants in a journey of Connection & Healing, Organizing & Advocacy, and Future Visions.

One of the continuing themes was to address the urgency of anti-Blackness which is central to our work and building with our partners a shared culture of relationship building, we want to be part of something bigger.

Keynote speaker, [Autumn Brown](#), set the tone for the event, grounding participants in her experience and research in Black Feminism, solidarity work, uprooting oppression, and horizontal violence. Autumn drew parallels through larger connections to equity work which are not just dynamic in King County.

Throughout the event, we integrated the Community Learning team and consultants. Each played key roles, moderating panels and sometimes as panelists. We held one session in Spanish, with panelists presenting their perspectives in their native language -- with English interpretation available for non-Spanish speakers. One Spanish speaking panelist commented that it was important for them to tell their stories in Spanish. We also offered in close captioning.

Kai and Whitney shared feedback from participants [in their slides](#). Although the team faced typical challenges of on-line, virtual conferences, people were generally very engaged, with more than 180 people at the peak and 257 throughout the day – a successful event with 93% turn out rate and most people staying for almost 4 hours.

Governance Group members were invited to reflect on the event.

- Vazaskia felt the event was put together well with Autumn Brown setting the standard of being a keynote speaker through highlighting key issues that were important. Sessions like *Abundance of Grace*, Sean and Leonie were important in the gathering's theme, centering anti-blackness. She enjoyed the depth of speakers and knowledge. The experiences and storytelling set the tone for the event. It was not bureaucratic or sterile. It was an honor to be there.
- For Sili, it was a day for the soul. She did a lot of reflecting on the collective work of COO and how much we learn when partners define outcomes and are able to do their thing. Autumn Brown was very moving, her keynote, the workshops were great, the speakers seemed to be very comfortable, it was a great line up and flow. There is a lot of anti-Blackness; the sessions helped to shows where more work is needed. Because Governance Group members don't get to the work like staff do, so for me, it was an opportunity for community to define the narrative for policy development.
- Jenn agreed with Sili and Vazaskia. Autumn Brown was excellent and her talk set the tone for the rest of the day. *The Abundance of Grace* session taught her that you can't apply grace selectively or you're missing the point. How do we apply the grace to people who have different values? She reflected on holding space graciously and setting boundaries. She shared she had many conversations about the ideas from the session since then.

Governance Group shared kudos to the work of the staff who put the event together.

Recap and Update on Plans for 2022. Andréa provided status updates on Best Starts Implementation Plan and funding for the next year. She briefed Governance Group on plans for information sessions and conversations with funded partners that will take place over the next two months.

COO has scheduled two drop-in, virtual information sessions on Tuesday, October 25th and Friday, November 5th. The sessions will be recorded. Invitations were sent to COO funded partners and stakeholders.

Staff is moving forward with plans shaped by conversations and recommendations by the Governance Group; these recommendations were included in the Executive's proposal and are subject to King County Council consideration and adoption of the Best Starts Implementation Plan. Because the renewed Levy starts up in the middle of a biennial budget, allocation of funding is tied to an omnibus budget for 2022. We are moving forward as staff with the best information we have and closely following meeting discussions at Council.

Her overview highlighted the following points:

- In 2022, funding would be made available to existing, eligible contractors/grantees in specific COO programs only: Original Place-base Partnerships, Place-based and Culturally based Community Partnerships, Systems and Policy Change 2020-2021 multi-year awards, and Systems and Policy Change by Black-led Organizations.
- Funding to eligible organizations and partnerships is available for calendar 2022. Contracts would begin January 2022.
- There is no guarantee for future funding beyond 2022.
- There will be an open Request for Proposal process for funding – contracts and grants beginning 2023. The RFP will be released in 2022.

In 2022, COO estimates there will be \$6 million available for contracts and grants. The total amount of funding for COO from Best Starts remains constant in the renewed levy. However, because COO had (1) administered the first six-year levy over five years, and (2) ramped up funding over the past five years, the annual expenditures for COO will drop in 2022 from current levels of expenditure. Impacts across programs and strategies will differ and may range from five percent to 45%.

Questions/Discussion:

Andrea clarified that the Systems and Policy Change COVID 19 Resiliency grants would not be extended. They were a one-time award. A point was made that COVID19 impacts continue to impact communities and a question was posed if conversations within the County about making resources available for organizations? Andrea agreed that the impacts will continue for some time; she shared that we are seeing resources – federal and other funds – that are focused on *recovery*. Our hope is that COO's funds to the organizations helped to put issues and organizations in a better position to communicate needs for resources, policy and systems change within the on-going recovery efforts.

Strategic Priorities & Succession/Governance 2.0: Objectives. *Michael facilitated a discussion on COO's strategic priorities and future governance group members*

Michael recapped discussion points from the last meeting where Governance Group was asked to consider *ways that we could anchor this work, beyond the Governance Group and through the leadership of the members of the group*. Themes emerged related to how the environment has changed, the ground has shifted with community responding to multiple crises; how to build power and inclusion. In changing systems and changing policy, COO has done a lot of good work, *how do you authentically share power and bringing others along?* Given priorities and themes, thinking of current Governance Group configuration, *who are some of the people from community who can play a role in COO's future, who can help the team with achieving priorities and help COO achieve longer team goal?*

Andrea noted that COO through the Executive has proposed changes to the Governance Group's composition, expanding the number of minimum number of members from 14 to 20, with a maximum of 24 members.

Discussion:

- The desire for leadership from community members with perspectives and experience from policy, systems and environment change work by Black-led and by Native-led communities was repeated.
- A suggestion from member that candidates who could leverage connection to their networks, member(s) from private sector, thinking about sectors – like health could be provide perspectives to COO's work.
- Discussion on ways to engage youth and young adults as members, as well as setting up appropriate tools and structures so that emerging leaders and others can be brought on-board and supported in board leadership, feel valued and be fully engaged. Member noted that it can be intimidating with representation of Council members or Executive staff and shared experience of having built caucuses and building different ways for leadership and participation.
- Maintaining knowledge of the history for the COO and providing continuity in transition was encouraged. And a member emphasized that it was crucial to ensure that majority of the members are representative of community/community folks.

Governance Group members were asked to suggest names or groups for follow-up and outreach. to Michael or Andrea by next Friday.

Open Discussion. *Governance Group members set time on the agenda for open discussion for emerging issues and topics of interest.*

- AJ McClure recognized the on-going support to Sea Tac and Tukwila and to Spice Bridge and appreciated seeing folks from COO at Spice Bridge's anniversary celebration. There were 350 people who came by to celebrate the businesses and farmers in the plaza. Thirteen businesses that FIN helped get started have continued, during COVID; one opened a bakery, another is offering Nigerian spices through Amazon, and two businesses are operating at Pike Place, and they are in conversations with other potential partner entities. Businesses are bracing for the winter months, trying to move forward and navigate through pandemic.
- Sili spoke about the need for investment for White Center, citing the challenges business are facing after several fires in White Center. Businesses and community are [calling upon elected official to invest in the community](#). She noted there was a recent [article in the South Seattle Emerald](#) and described impacts of four fires in the last five months – half of which are BIPOC owned and struggling the most. White Center had a call with our some of the electeds and had hard conversations with the businesses - who were phenomenal. Community came up with a list of demands for King County. Unincorporated communities in the county as underfunded and must always be organizing for resources. The City of Seattle reached out to White Center. Sili lifted up Helen Shor-Wong and the work she's done in support of small businesses, during this difficult time for the businesses and for her.
- Members expressed hopes for gathering in the near future without the constraints of virtual

Meeting Adjourns at 3:45 pm

I. Best Starts Implementation Plan Adopted by Council

King County Council adopted the Best Starts for Kids Implementation Plan with amendments. The adopted plan can be viewed [here](#).

II. Governance Group Sunset and New Appointments

The King County Executive transmitted the [Best Starts Governance Update Report](#) to the County Council on September 24th. The report describes necessary and recommended changes to sections of the King County Code and proposed changes to the composition and duties of the King County Children and Youth Advisory Board and the COO Best Starts Levy Advisory Board (also known as the COO Governance Group).

The current COO Best Starts Advisory Board will sunset at the end of the year and a new Advisory Board will be established. A Nominations Committee is being formed to assist staff in outreach, guide processes for selection of new members, and to make recommendations to King County Executive for appointments to the next board.

Plans for the nominations and recommendations on appointments will be discussed at the Governance Group meeting on Friday, November 19th.

III. 2021 Speaker Series Concludes on November 18th

COO is so grateful for the knowledge, wisdom, and learnings shared with generosity by community leaders, healers, and builders throughout the 2021 [Cultivating Community Speaker Series](#), and the myriad ways in which community partners are creating new paths and returning to practices that bring us together for mutual well-being.

[Join us for our final event on November 18 at 12 pm as we look to the future and share what is next in community-driven transformation.](#) How do we see community continuing to transform? What transformations are necessary so our communities can thrive? How are we working on transformation for the future? In this final event, [Cultivating Community Possibilities](#), we'll be joined by Colleen Echohawk, Joseph Seia, and Ubox Gardheere. The event will be moderated by Kamau Chege. **Learn more about the amazing lineup of speakers and register [here](#)!**

IV. Upcoming Learning Community Activities:

COVID-19 COMMUNITY STORIES COHORT SHOWCASE, December 16th 4-6:30pm

The COVID-19 Community Stories Cohort will hold its final showcase in December. Throughout the cohort, community partners collected and analyze data and developed communications materials to share these stories with broader audiences. These stories illustrate how different policies and

systems can work to dismantle the structural barriers and systemic harms that lead to inequities in health and well-being.

I'm inviting you to join us on [December 16, from 4-6:30pm](#) for a virtual evening showcase highlighting the work of five groups uplifting the experiences of communities most impacted by COVID-19 and the culmination of their community-led data collection and storytelling projects conducted over the past 12 months. Together we will learn from communities whose experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic are shaped by systemic racism and marginalization, and structural barriers to health and well-being, as well as celebrate the accomplishments, resilience, and wisdom of the following community partners.

- **Centro Cultural Mexicano** will share about their process and culminating video on the direct and estimated long-term effects of COVID-19 on low-income Latino children in King County, including housing stability, education, food security, physical health, and social-emotional well-being.
- **Collectivo de Pueblos Originarios** will share how they've engaged with South King County youth and adults who are from indigenous communities of the P'urhepecha, Ñuu Savi and Kichwa Otavalo.
- **King County Equity Now (KCEN)** will share what they've heard are solutions to improve the on-the-ground, lived experiences of Black communities in King County experiencing the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 health and economic crisis.
- **Tesfa Program** will uplift experiences of Amharic-speaking Ethiopian community members throughout King County and the tools that developed out of their community engagement work.
- **Washington Dream Coalition** will share their work exploring research questions relevant to undocumented community needs and experiences of resilience and systemic changes needed for long-term health and well-being.

We hope that you will join us ([RSVP here please!](#)) alongside other COO partners and community leaders in hearing how these projects combat systemic barriers to health, housing and employment experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as ideas and recommendations that came out of these community-led projects.

Moving in Solidarity: Youth Summit 2021, December 18th 1-4:30 pm

COO and the Best Starts Healthy Safe Environments (HSE) team are supporting a youth focused event on December 18th "Moving in Solidarity: Youth Summit 2021", a platform for youth projects doing upstream work to learn from each other, build relationships and dream of a future where we all belong.

