



AGENDA

GOVERNANCE GROUP

August 20, 2021 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Zoom: [Meeting: 958 6151 5098](#) -

[Passcode: 070192](#)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Facilitator</u>
2:00	Welcome, Introductions	Michael Brown
2:03	Consent Agenda <i>Objectives:</i> review and approve the August 20, 2021 agenda and notes from July 18, 2021 Meeting	Michael Brown
2:03 – 2:15	Grounding & Equity Moment <i>Objectives:</i> connection through sharing of our experiences in the ardent journey toward equity.	Marguerite Ro
2:15 – 2:30	Celebrate & Update: Best Starts Levy <i>Objectives:</i> appreciation; clarity with confidence on next steps with Implementation Plan, Governance Update Reports.	Andrea Akita
2:35 – 3:15	Strategic Priorities <i>Objectives:</i> sharing ideas in small groups, large group on priorities for Governance Group in their role as strategic advisors and agents for COO.	Andrea, Michael
3:15 – 3:45	<i>*unstructured, non-directed time for Governance Group discussion*</i>	All
3:45 – 3:55	Updates, Announcements <i>Objective:</i> share pertinent information across the group	All
4:00	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 GROUNDING

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

July 16, 2021, 2-4pm
via Zoom

Attendees

Governance Group Members: Lydia Assefa-Dawson, Deanna Dawson, Tony To, Sili Savusa, Vazaskia Crockrell, Jenn Ramirez Robson, Michael Brown, Ubax Gardheere, Yordanos Teferi

Guests: Melissa Lafayette and Chuck Depew, NDC and Darren Medina, consultant; Haregu Kidane, Rainier Valley Partnership; Kris Hermanns, Seattle Foundation.

Staff: Andrea Akita, Dan Bernard, Kalayaan (Kai) Domingo, Cristina Gonzalez, Blishda Lacet, Notetaker: Whitney Johnson

Welcome and Introductions

Consent Agenda

Review and approval of the July 16, 2021 agenda and notes from June 23, 2021 Meeting. Motion from Vazaskia Crockrell, second from Sili Savusa, passes unanimously.

News Article

The Governance Group held brief conversational space on the Seattle Times Best Starts for Kids article. Members discussed thoughts on the challenge initiatives like Best Starts and COO face in shifting narratives; reactions when there are changes to the ways that we are trying to make resources available to under-funded community-based organizations; the values, work, and priority messages we have; and outputs and outcomes.

Commercial Affordability Pilot Program

The Group welcomed Melissa LaFayette, Chuck Depew, and Darren Media, members of the NDC Commercial Affordability pilot team. Melissa provided an overview of the program with this [slide presentation](#).

- Goal(s) of the pilot are identifying and developing models, tools and services that will increase community stability and equitable development opportunities by supporting small businesses' anti-displacement.
- Timeline. The pilot project design began right before the pandemic. NDC brought together community members in a technical advisory group (TAG) to develop pilot process, pilot business outreach, deployment of Capital & Technical Assistance to selected projects, Learning Sessions (with business owners, TAG, and project advisors & stakeholders) and final case studies.

- NDC has provided combinations of real estate development funding, capital loan guarantees, and technical assistance to three projects: the SeaTac International Mall, Catfish Corner, and Spice Bridge (see slides project details). In addition, the pilot is providing technical assistance to Project Feast (Kent) and Salvadorian Bakery (White Center), two projects whose needs for financing extended beyond the COO contract term.

There is approximately \$330k remaining in Real Estate Development Fund --- NDC is determining which remaining projects may be ready for pilot program capital funding.

- Additional funding from King County (federal ARPA) has also been approved by Council.
 - NDC is looking at ways to sharing the story of the pilot – of the value and learnings of the capital funding deployment and TA provided.
- Basic Theory of Change from the beginning of the project is still there – using grant capital is useful alongside other capital – the challenge is coming in early/at the right time and groups need specific expertise early that can save time and money for the business.

Discussion:

- How were these initial projects identified?
Information was distributed to economic development and small business networks in King County. NDC received applications from 14 small businesses that were interested; reviewed projects based on a set of criteria developed by the TAG.
- In addition to needing more money/capital, there also seems to be some systemic issues at play. From a policy perspective or systems change view, what upstream issues could COO investigate and play a role in (versus investing in 10 more projects). How do we determine the approaches COO could take be in addressing something bigger and broader?

Melissa explained that they are figuring out where barriers exist and documenting what has been addressed within the pilot and what wasn't as part of the pilot. There are lessons from providing access to capital more equitably and making changes to the debt side. The cost of development is so high, folks need a lot of capital. There has been a clear, strong benefit from consistent and early TA.

Chuck said that if we stay in pilot mode can't be proactive to respond to systems issues – we have got to find ways to scale. For example, in the development world, there's not been a lot of love for ground floor commercial spaces -- because it's difficult. If our expertise is in this area, can we be a link in finding development partners?

Also, collective ownership, as opposed to individual businesses owning their own properties may be a better strategy to build wealth that is not tied to debt. Also reached out to the Port of Cincinnati (a redevelopment partner to their low-income communities and a beneficiary of capital from Kresge) -- they're coming at it from the capital/real estate side and we're coming in from the business side. It has to be a long-term capital strategy.

Tony added that the TAG has also spent a lot of time thinking through this. There are learnings and he agreed a collective property ownership model can stabilize occupancy/tenant costs. He wondered if reaching out to housing tax provider folks (e.g., Catfish Corner with long term lease) where they can be more flexible could be a model, as well as philanthropy with capital that can be leveraged.

Yordanos noted that she hears from small businesses that they believe ownership is a priority. They have shared that owning is the only way they can guarantee stability for themselves, given the high rates of displacement and risk of being displaced. And Chuck explained that is why the pilot is focused on control with flexibility of ownership and being clear around benefits going to the businesses, showing alternatives like collective ownership models to do include businesses.

- Can you share more about the sharia compliant loan structure and the long-term viability of such beyond the pilot, to the extent that is clear now.
A number of King County CDFI's are working on these issues now. At the time, there wasn't an off-the-shelf loan product that would be ready in time. NDC was able to use COO funding to eliminate the interest on the loan, in effect to make it interest-free. There's still a need for more, long-term sharia compliant loan products, which are being worked on outside of the pilot.
- King County council members Upthegrove and Zahilay became interested in the Commercial Affordability program and initiated an action approved by Council to include \$800,000 from the county's federal ARPA funding to expand the pilot.

COO Partner Highlights

Blishda shared highlights from COO place-based and cultural community partnership projects, with [these slides](#). She noted that the examples don't encapsulate everything happening across all these partners, nor all that is happening within a specific partnership's work. After her presentation, she invited others to share some of the recent successes and stories of impact that they are seeing and hearing, as well.

Discussion:

- One of the learnings from CREST is how it acted as the glue for a number of groups, initially by bringing people together, building buy-in and developing a shared

strategy for continued organizing and advocacy. From these relationships, members of CREST helped to highlight the need for funding for a King County Equitable Development Initiative.

- Yordanos shared that CREST members are moving forward with the King County EDI campaign. Members have met with the King County Executive, six of the King County council members, and BSK staff. All have been very receptive to the idea, so the group is hopeful.
- FEEST is hosting a [Food is Power Virtual Summer Series](#) this month, with sessions on Traditional Foods, Food Sovereignty + Growing our own Food; and Food Systems Change Organizing Movements.
- COO partners, Puget Sound Sage, MCC, and RBAC developed a [Disaster Gentrification policy brief](#) and published the report with recommendations this Spring.

Equity Moments/Updates

- Sound Cities Association (SCA) has launched an Equity Cabinet. Lydia is a member of the Cabinet. They are planning to release a report with an inventory of its member organizations' policies/activities on equity. SCA hosted a racial equity webinar series – all on the website.
- PSRC's Economic Development District Board is doing a joint racial equity training; Tony is participating in the training.
- Professional updates: Jen is starting a new role at the NW Center! NW Center is starting to look at racial equity from the lens of disability.
- Reminder to sign the e-card for Aaron Robertson.
- Seattle Foundation is hiring new staff, including a Program Officer who'll be supporting COO.

Meeting Adjourns at 3:41pm

3_Staff Report to COO Governance Group, August 20, 2021

I. Renewal of the Best Starts for Kids Levy

The unofficial [results](#) of the August 3, 2021 Special Election, show Proposition No. 1, the renewal and expansion of the Best Starts for Kids levy, passing with slightly more than 62% of voters approving the measure.

The King County Council will now consider two Best Starts documents:

- Implementation Plan. King County [Executive Constantine transmitted](#) the [Implementation Plan and ordinance](#) to Council that, if enacted, would adopt the plan to govern strategies, programs, and expenditures for the levy over the next six years. The plan will be considered by both the [Regional Policy Committee](#) and the [Community, Health and Housing Services Committee](#) of the King County Council between now and November.
- Governance Update Report. The Executive will transmit a Best Starts Governance Update report to Council by October 1st. The report will explain necessary and recommended changes to sections of the King County Code and application ordinances that describe the composition and duties of the King County Children and Youth Advisory Board and the COO Best Starts levy Advisory Board (known commonly as the Governance Group). The Governance Group approved [recommended changes](#) to include in the Report and accompanying ordinance.

II. Save the date: September 22nd Event - *Meeting the Moment*

Communities of Opportunity is hosting a virtual gathering on Wednesday, September 22, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, *Meeting the Moment: Community Conversations on Healing, Organizing, and Building the Future We Want*. We will elevate work happening in communities across King County to build critical connections and spaces for healing, relationship, and innovation that support the systemic changes needed to create greater equity in health, housing, and economic well-being. Meeting the Moment features three tracks: Connection & Healing, Organizing & Advocacy, and Future Visions. There will be an opening keynote and grounding from [Autumn Brown](#).

An advisory group made up of COO partners from across all our strategy areas provided input into the design for the event. opportunities for continued connection and capacity building, storytelling, and organizing with COO partners. [Registration is open](#), session details to come. Special thanks to our Learning Community planning and production team, Sama Praxis LLC, and Cascadia Consulting.

III. Introducing Seattle Foundation COO Team Members

As Seattle Foundation says goodbye to Aaron Robertson, Communities of Opportunity is pleased to welcome Vanesa Gutierrez into COO systems and policy grantmaking and Sally Gillis who will represent the foundation in COO strategy meetings and support Kris Hermanns and Michael Brown.

Sally Gillis, Managing Director of Strategy and Partnerships oversees Seattle Foundation's programs and community partnerships in advancing the [Blueprint for Impact](#) and greater racial and economic equity.



As a senior leader within the foundation, Sally oversees the program officers who manage various programs and works across the foundations teams to support cohesive culture. In addition, Sally leads the Foundation's work around education and climate justice. She has been with Seattle Foundation for five years and in the social sector for over a decade with a focus on partnerships and social justice. Previously, Sally served as the Director of Collective Action at Social Venture Partners (SVP) where she guided the organization's collective impact and funder collaborative work. Her background includes working in government as well as at the nonprofit level in the fields of homelessness and youth development. Sally grew up in

the Seattle area and has a masters in macro-level social work from Boston University and graduated from Lafayette College.

When she's not working, Sally enjoys road trips and going for a hike or kayaking as well as traveling abroad. Sally can be contacted at s.gillis@seattlefoundation.org

Vanessa Gutierrez, Program Officer, joined the Seattle Foundation team in early August 2021. She has a varied professional background from working on television to leadership roles in international non-profits, community-based organizations, and local government. Since 2014, Vanessa has served the Pacific Northwest community in the City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Mayor's Office, King and Snohomish County Executive Offices.



With a background in law, Vanessa interned at a non-profit that supports the work of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and UN Women. She has previously contributed efforts to the Youth Olympic Games Committee to bring the games to her hometown, Medellin, Colombia. She is a former Commissioner for the City of Seattle Immigrant and Refugee Commission and currently serves as a board member of several local organizations.

In her free time, Vanessa enjoys learning new languages, solo hiking and traveling locally and abroad.

Vanessa will lead the implementation of COO systems and policy change grantmaking. She will represent the foundation in COO all staff and project manager meetings. Vanessa can be contacted at v.gutierrez@seattlefoundation.org