

ERIE COUNTY DIVERSE ERIE COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

St. Benedict Education Center, 330 East 10 Street Erie, PA 16503
at 8:30 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83353784118?pwd=OXZ5MHBneS9EOXJzaGZXQVkrWWlv
UT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83353784118?pwd=OXZ5MHBneS9EOXJzaGZXQVkrWWlvUT09)

Meeting ID: 833 5378 4118

Passcode: 809673

Commissioners: Gerald Blanks; Adrienne Dixon, Ph.D.; Matthew Harris, Sr.; Tiffany LaVette; Gwendolyn White; Sarah Carter, M.D

Attendees: Tyrone Clark and Marissa Thomas of 3i Networking

1. Call to Order/Roll Call 8:39A.M.

Gerald L. Blanks-not present
Matt Harris-not present
Brandy Cortes-not present

Administration: Gary Lee

Solicitor: Tim Wachter, Esq.

2. Approval of Agenda:

3. Hearing of the Public

Art Leopold congratulated Diverse Erie Commission on the work done for the Generational Impact Grant Initiative and the progress the team is making getting the ARP funds to the community. Mr. Leopold asked the commission about the status of the second allocation of funds from Erie County Council.

Mr. Lee thanked Mr. Leopold for his ongoing support and positive comments to the public and responded to Mr. Leopold's question, stating the commission anticipates receiving the funds. There has been no information relayed to us, verbally or in written changing what County Council has promised from what has been approved back in December of 2021.

Mr. Lee mentioned that on October 11th at 4:45PM, there will be a county council budget meeting where Mr. Lee will be speaking to council regarding future plans and goals of Diverse Erie.

4. Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meetings

Motion was made by Gwendolyn White and seconded by Dr. Adrienne Dixon to approve September 7, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. All commissioners present voted in favor.

Motion was made by Gwendolyn White and seconded by Dr. Adrienne Dixon to approve September 21, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes as presented. All commissioners present voted in favor.

5. Presentations

None

6. Report on Chief Administrative Officer – Gary Lee

(a) Operational Matters:

(I) Personnel

No Report

(II) Budget

The current overall projected budget is in good financial shape and is operating within our financial parameters. On October 11th at 4:45 to 5:05PM, the commission budget will be presented to council.

(III) Media and Presentations

On September 15th, the Generational Impact Initiative's press conference was outstanding and well attended by 60 to 70 persons. Mr. Lee expressed appreciation for the excellent job done by Commissioners Tiffany LaVette, Dr. Adrienne Dixon, Gwendolyn White and the team at 3i Networking.

Mr. Lee mentioned that he spoke at an event hosted by Opened-Eyes an organization that deals with awareness and acceptance around the region and broadcasted via Facebook.

Mr. Lee will be going attending the National Black MBA Association 44th Annual Conference and Expo in Atlanta, Georgia next Tuesday, September 27 through Saturday, October 1, 2022. National Black MBA Association® seeks to align itself with outstanding corporate partners that share our commitment to creating educational opportunities and economic growth for African Americans and diverse business professionals. We work to foster mutually beneficial relationships that create a pipeline of diverse talent for our partners, offer new and exciting

resources and opportunities for our members, while increasing the reach and impact of the NMBAA®.

Mr. Lee has been a part of this organization on and off for the last 25 years and is excited to learn and hopefully given an opportunity to share information regarding what we are doing here at Erie County's DEI Commission.

(IV) Grants Development

The grant committee continues to work with 3i Networking to identify ways that will improve Diverse Erie grant initiatives. Ms. LaVette will provide an update to commissioners at a future meeting.

Diverse Erie's Grant Committee are discussing a future small grant initiative from \$1000 to \$3000 or more that would benefit the community from a small business aspect. Mr. Lee is collaborating with Attorney Wachter on the guidelines and hope to have them completed within the next 30 days.

In reference to the home ownership and educational initiatives, Mr. Lee had a meeting with the leadership team at Erie Bank regarding their homeownership initiative, and the potential of a partnership that could create a great opportunity to add value to Diverse Erie's homeownership initiative from aspect of closing cost incentives, down payment, and financial literacy. Mr. Lee also mentioned that he will continue to stay informed of the City of Erie's efforts to allocate \$15 million of funding for homeownership and will update the commission if there is an opportunity to collaborate.

Working with Erie County Redevelopment Authority, the grants committee along with the team from 3i Networking have scheduled to meet with representatives September 21, 2022, to continue reviewing the Small Business fund.

(V) Website Development and Branding

The branding and strategic planning process continues to be a working progress, Chairman Blanks and Mr. Lee continue to meet weekly with the team at Parker Philips regarding the strategic plan, branding and website. The website is doing great. It is consistent always current and, the best source of information.

Motion was made by Dr. Adrienne Dixon and seconded by Dr. Sara Carter to approve the report of the Chief Administrative Officer as presented. All commissioners present voted in favor.

7. Reports of Commission Officers

(a) Gerald Blanks – Chair

Not Present

(b) Tiffany LaVette – Vice Chair

(c) Matt Harris – Secretary

Not Present

(d) Sarah Carter, M.D. – Treasurer

8. Reports of Committee Chairpersons

(a) Finance Committee – Sarah Carter, M.D.

Good financial standing.

(b) Personnel Committee – Matt Harris

Not Present

(c) Executive Committee – Gerald Blanks

Not Present

(d) Grants Committee – Tiffany LaVette

Working with 3i Networking on improvements to the application process for Diverse Erie initiatives. Ms. LaVette will provide an update at our next meeting.

9. Unfinished business

No unfinished business

10. New business

Recommended by-laws were distributed to commission board members to review and discuss. The by-laws will be voted on at the next board meeting.

11. Adjournment

Motion was made by Gwendolyn White and seconded by Dr. Adrienne Dixon, to adjourn the meeting at 9:00AM.