

Howard County Economic Opportunity and Prosperity Task Force

Public Hearing

Minutes (**Approved**)

April 9, 2018

C. Vernon Gray Room  
1st Floor, George Howard Building  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Members in attendance: Ali Abidi, Marianne Hyang Brackney, Anne Brinker, Paul Casey, Ana Cisneros, Kimberly Flowers, Maddy Halbach, Phyllis Madachy, Leonardo McClarty, Elizabeth Noble, Jaykant Parekh, and Lawrence Twele. Additionally, Peter O'Neil and Kathy Norton from subcommittees also attended.

Staff in attendance: Jeff Meyers, County Council office, and Jessie Keller, Council Member Weinstein's office.

The audio recording of the hearing is available on the Task Force website<sup>1</sup>.

Chairperson Madachy called the hearing to order at 5:38 p.m. She noted that in addition to addressing the Task Force at the hearing, the Task Force solicits testimony electronically via its web site.

Mr. McClarty gave an overview of the Task Force's purpose, goals, activities, timelines, organization, and membership. His presentation is available on the Task Force website.

The Task Force heard testimony from Jean Sedlacko, Chair, Board of Directors, Making Change. Her testimony is posted on the Task Force's website. Making Change provides financial literacy training and related services, mostly to adults, but it does have programs at HCC and in the school system.

Mr. McClarty invited Nat Alston, Chair of the Howard County Equal Business Opportunity Commission to address the Task Force. Mr. Alston had concerns about the way County purchasing deals with minority and women-owned businesses. He referred the Task Force to Council Resolution 181-2016<sup>2</sup>. He described the Commission's activities related to County purchasing and offered recommendations to improve outreach. Ms. Madachy noted the value of informal networks. Mr. Alston raised a concern related to workers whose needs are not met by public transportation.

Kari Staddon, Director of Development, United Way of Central Maryland, described the United Way's 2-1-1 call center and how it could benefit those in the County. She agreed to provide additional

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://cc.howardcountymd.gov/EOPTaskForce>

<sup>2</sup> <https://apps.howardcountymd.gov/olis/LegislationDetail.aspx?LegislationID=2703>

information to the Task Force showing the recurring issues in the County. Ms. Brackney raised concerns about cultural sensitivity and the ways that different ethnicities approach problems particularly in the issues relating to small business. Ms. Madachy described the value of a “navigator” at the nonprofit collaborative center in the County. But many people still do not know where to go to find appropriate assistance.

Danilsa Marciniak, a member of the County Executive’s Hispanic Roundtable, described some of the difficulties connecting those in need of services with the appropriate resources when there are language or cultural differences<sup>3</sup>.

Ms. Madachy recommended that those in attendance continue their discussions one-on-one after the hearing adjourned.

The hearing adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

---

<sup>3</sup> A follow up email from Ms. Marciniak recommended that the Task Force contact Veronica Cool, <http://www.coolassociatesllc.com/about-us/>, as a valued resource in the Latino community.