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## **COOK COUNTY COMMISSION ON SOCIAL INNOVATION**

**February 15, 2018, 4 P.M.  
118 N. Clark, Rm. 569  
MINUTES**

### **1. Call to Order**

The Cook County Commission on Social Innovation convened via an in-person meeting to discuss committee updates and hear from a guest speaker. The meeting was chaired by Vice Chair Marc J. Lane. The meeting was open to the public and took place from 4:10 p.m. to 5:50 p.m.

#### **Commission Members Present:**

1. Marc Lane
2. Wendy Raymer
3. Pamela Rodriguez
4. Emile Cambry
5. Matthew Erickson
6. Morgan Malone
7. Ana Guajardo
8. John Yonan
9. Commissioner Males - requested new list of all members
10. Marc Loveless (on his way)
11. Commissioner Kristin Henson
12. Comm. Jasso
13. Victor Dickson

#### **Commission Staff Present:**

1. Lilian Jimenez
2. Victoria Moreno

#### **Meeting Notes and Decisions Made:**

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

- No quorum (12 Commissioners)

### **3. Committee Updates**

- Introduction of Ana Guajardo as new Commissioner who spoke about her background and experience in community organizing work, including co-founding of Centro de Trabajadores Unidos which in recent years starting incubating worker-owned co-ops
- Good Food Purchasing Policy pending in Hospital Committee, anticipating a vote on 3/14 to be approved by Committee and Board on same day. Comm. Garcia staff to meet with Procurement and Rodger Cooley. Upcoming Training

- Social Enterprise Ordinance first of its kind in the country, Marc has been meeting with Procurement

#### **4. Guest Speakers – Dr. Stacey Sutton & Renee Hatcher, Worker Cooperatives in Cook County**

- Workers cooperatives are located across the country and have enormous reach, employing over 2 million people nationwide
- Dr. Sutton is studying “cooperative cities” and how they are promoted and made to be feasible. Many cities have passed resolutions on this matter.
- Some cities are facilitating the process by providing tax incentives and creating incubators for cooperatives to grow
- 4 main components: 1) Skills & education around co-op model; 2) Financing; 3) Technical Assistance; 4) Cooperative developers. Public engagement needs to be done to explore the culture behind this.
- Legal structure is ill-fitted for co-ops in Illinois and hinders access to capital. Micro-lenders not supporting them because they don’t understand the model.
- They have limited access to TA and other institutional support
- In other cities like Austin, co-ops have educated city staff and other institutional stakeholders in educating them on the benefits of worker cooperatives
- Co-ops serve the same aim as private firms. Important to raise their legitimacy.
- Doing business with cooperatives as a city and county could be a strategy

#### **Post-Presentation Discussion**

- VC Lane – this was previously attempted at state level, but was not successful. He saw how limiting state law was to co-ops. His company uses the LLC and L3C to support this. Points out that Comm. Dickson handles the ownership conversion program for manufacturing
- Comm. Rodriguez - what can the County do re: the state legislation? County might be able to support changes to it
- Comm. Guajardo – talking w/ Guzzardi to update co-op law, their language not included in what was passed. Now talking w/ Sadlowski Garza and Rosa. Production co-ops that can hire workers opens door to abuse. VC Lane - we need models and public support for this, looking forward to working together on this
- Comm. Malone – question on impact co-ops have had on communities of color. Dr. Sutton gave example of a co-op in NY of homecare workers where workers make more money. Renee Hatcher, while network is not as robust in Cook County, there are several organizations doing strong work
- Comm. Raymer – a particular sector/product/service that has more impact and scalability? Dr. Sutton responds that it is across industries and is a structure. More than half of co-ops that exist have been around since 2000, many of these comprised of people left out of other opportunities. Mostly women of color.
- Comm. Loveless – NY – Nat’l Summit for Enterprise Alliance
- Comm. Malone – what has been the response from financial institutions? Dr. Sutton – it has to be a partnership. City and county orgs not doing this type of lending. ACCION considering it. Chicago Community Loan Fund may be another potential.
- Comm. Henson – if this is a tool in underserved communities, what needs to be in place co-ops to be effective? Dr. Sutton – gave examples of several cities where this starts either from the community or government is providing the option for it to take place
- Comm. Malone – thoughts on cryptocurrency in co-ops? Dr. Sutton - it’s interesting but may not recommend it

- Renee Hatcher suggested wanting to come back to present on findings of white paper
- VC Lane suggested committees present come together to address topic raised

## **5. Committee Updates**

- Intellectual Capital – Comm. Males, Comm. Erickson, and Comm. Cambry talking about how to integrate work of GovLab into Social Innovation work.
- Financial Committee – South Suburban economic development plan to develop Southland Regional Planning Authority – will consider inviting stakeholders to present. Comm. Jasso – looking at econ dev’t plan in Southland, how to build capacity in an authority that can cross political authorities and be more effective

## **6. Other Business**

- Comm. Raymer wants a meeting of all the committee chairs
- Comm. Raymer expresses condolences to shooting victims, Chicago Commander and Florida
- Comm. Loveless – civic engagement excites him with this work. CPD Commander was really good at this and any acknowledgement to address his grassroots work would be very important

## **7. Public Comment**

- Theodore – importance of providing resources equitably throughout the city
- Martin Unzueta – company asked for TIF loan and got \$5m and relocated. Workes with co-ops. If you want to start a business in Chicago, can get a loan of \$10,000, after a year, loan of \$20,000. No assistance for co-ops. Work Cook County ordinance, wants to cooperate to include workers rights. Wants workers to have opportunity to organize
- Armando Robles – New Era Windows Cooperative – in 2008, Republic Windows closed doors w/out notice. If you are over 100 workers, have to give notice. They occupied factory for 6 days and won demands. Signed new contract w new owner and same thing happened. Maybe there can be a benefit to support workers to create own jobs if unemployment. VC Lane – entrepreneurship as path to economic stability.
- General question of what committees are: public capital, social capital, human capital, financial, and intellectual

## **8. Adjourn**

- Comm. Loveless moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Comm. Rodriguez. Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.