

## **Immigrant Voting Rights Taskforce**

**June 3, 5:00-6:30 PM**

**City Hall, Room 370**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Sharon Maeda, Arsalan Bukhari, Many Uch, Alex Miller, Tania Santiago,

**Members Absent:** Luis Fraga, Diane Butler, Trang Tu, Rich Stolz, Dorothy Wong, Heather Villanueva, Laura Flores Cantrell

**OIRA Staff Present:** Aaliyah Gupta, Sahar Fathi

**Call to Order:** 4:45 pm

#### **Welcome (Sharon)**

Sharon opened the meeting and framed the conversation – the purpose of the meeting was to take the draft recommendations and vet them.

#### **Drafting Report (Sharon)**

Outreach and engagement – the group agreed that civic engagement in the High Schools is a school district issue. There was some discussion around using State law requirements as a platform of encouraging Seattle schools to go further. In addition there was a lot of discussion around funding community advocates and natural leaders in the community to mobilize the community and increase engagement. There was discussion around a possible “Seattle Votes” campaign, assigning a designated person in the Mayor’s Office who goes to every department and finds way to help get the vote out, kiosks in every park, etc.

Outreach and education – there was discussion around building multilingual outreach into the voter education process. Of note was the possibility of including the DON POEL model for voter education.

Statewide policy recommendations – the group felt that the Mayor has the ability to advocate for things that are working in Seattle – to be pushed out to the State level. There was talk about other mechanisms for impact at the State level – such as the Association of Cities.

Drop boxes and vans – there was discussion around the cost differential between vans and boxes, and how the city pays into those costs. There were suggestions of more visible locations like libraries, post offices, and even voter registration stands in every Starbucks.

Noncitizen voting – the group agreed that it was something that should be tried. They discussed the various possibilities – focusing on DACA youth, legal permanent residents, etc. They felt if Seattle wanted to be a leader, then there should be some talk about “universal suffrage.”

Voting and Technology – the group discussed promoting free cable/cable assistance for constituents, and whether this was a good place to leverage the technology matching fund. They were supportive of King County elections creating a mobile phone application.

Expansion of Naturalization – the group questioned whether the county should also financially contribute to these services, and there was a note that if housing authority is engaged then HUD should be authorizing a match in dollars as well. There was some discussion around ways to be more creative to expand funding, and wanted to include microloan programs into the fold.

Language Access – There was discussion around immigrant access to internet and the large focus on mobile use. There was agreement that a lot of translators without context are just translating verbatim, and that this led to poor materials. There was also agreement that there need to be plain language throughout the text.

Translation – OIRA mentioned recent work they have been doing around community based organizations for translation. There was discussion around the core pieces that needed better translation, and how the city could help get easier access to more languages. Language Access was pulled out separately and Trang/Alex were assigned to work on a second draft.

Other ideas – the group mentioned other ideas throughout the meeting including – a farmers market table at all times on voter registration, seattle channel stories about new voters, having all city commissioners receive training, and incorporating voter education into city training.

### **Wrap-Up (Sharon)**

First draft was assigned to the group to be done by the next week.

### **Adjournment**

6:35 pm.