

# AMERICA 250

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America 250 | CT Commission  
Governance Subcommittee Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 13, 2024  
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Virtual via Zoom

Attendees:

Commission Representatives

Arienne Orozco (Chair)  
Denise Merrill  
Megan Baker

Staff

Cyndi Tolosa  
Rachel Gonzalez  
Sheldyn Oliver

The meeting began at **3:07**

1. Minutes Approval
  - a. [February 5, 2024](#)
    - i. \*Not enough voting members who attended 2/5/24 meeting - moved to next meeting.
2. IDEA Progress
  - a. Review feedback from IDEA subcommittee, if available
    - i. Have not received feedback as yet - moved to next meeting.
3. IDEA Goals: Subcommittee Diversity and Representation  
Demographic data needs to be collected for the Secretary of State's Office. Discussion of what data is needed and how to collect it as follows:
  - a. Sample email requesting information
    - i. Discussion of appropriate tone: Ms. Orozco suggested tone is friendly/information gathering is strongly requested, stressing that info is gathered anonymously & ensure that there is not any identifying information on it.
    - ii. Discussion of anonymity/whether this is optional or not: Ms. Merrill believes it is not optional per the state, but no way to track who has completed it so language in the messaging needs to stress that and make it clear that we need the information.
    - iii. Development of email: Ms. Orozco/Ms. Tolosa agreed to use language sent by the Secretary of State's office and adapt to the Commission's needs. There will need to be two versions of this email - one to the Commission asking them to complete themselves, and one to Subcommittee chairs asking them to distribute to their subcommittee

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members. Ms. Orozco will draft these emails and forward to the subcommittee for review/comments.

### b. Online form

- i. Discussion of information that must be collected:
  1. Ms. Orozco shared an email from the Secretary of State's office with details - email links out to a "Self-Reporting" worksheet for demographic information, which asks for Sex/Gender and Race/Ethnicity data. Also on this page is a link to a form that can be used for compiling data for the whole commission.
  2. Ms. Tolosa posed the question to be forwarded to the IDEA subcommittee - would we like to collect any additional information on this form (i.e., disability data, etc)
    - a. If this is done, it must be clear that the 2 questions that are required by the state must be answered, and additional questions are optional - on the state form, "Prefer not to say" is an option on both questions, so this should be preserved on the Commission form.
    - b. CT Humanities is currently developing a similar survey for their own staff & board - Ms. Tolosa requested that Ms. Oliver share the draft of the CTH survey for reference. From this review, the group identified some potential questions to add - LGBTQ+ community, disability, age. Ms. Tolosa will rework questions for consistent phrasing.
- ii. Development/hosting:
  1. CT Humanities staff will create and host the form, ensuring no personally identifying data is collected.
- iii. Form access & reporting:
  1. Ms. Tolosa noted that there is a page on America 250 | CT website called "Reports." This is where the annual report is stored. She made the recommendation that the Commission could link to data from this site. Ms. Orozco agreed, and noted that this would call attention to assessing and reflecting upon diversity as a priority for the commission.
- iv. Task Completion
  1. Ms. Tolosa noted that there are two options - either bring the survey to the July meeting and ask commissioners to respond on site, or gather data prior to the meeting so it can be reported out on. Ms. Tolosa & Ms. Orozco agreed that they would prefer to report on the data at the Commission meeting.
  2. Timeline: Have form and email finalized by June 1 & send out to commission early the following week with 2 week deadline for commissioners/subcommittee members to complete.

### 4. Other Business

- a. IDEA self-assessment

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- i. Ms. Tolosa updated the group on the conversation from the Community & Organizational Engagement subcommittee last week regarding self-assessment and ensuring organizations are aware of requirements (for example, ADA compliance). To supplement the documents that are in development, Ms. Orozoco suggested considering creating short videos as resources for organizations vs having everything in writing, noting that it may be unrealistic for community organizations to review long documents. Ms. Tolosa agreed, but also noted that the longer documents that already exist from the state are helpful, as they include step-by-step directions for organizations to think through ADA compliance.
- b. Final discussion:
  - i. Ms. Orozoco asked whether there are any other items that the Governance subcommittee should be working on at this time. Ms. Tolosa noted that staff is thinking about selection of an alternate location for the next commission meeting, keeping the conversation from the last Governance meeting in mind. As noted, the Old State House has challenges, including accessibility. A rubric for assessing a new location is needed, particularly as the location should ideally be rotated throughout the state. Considerations include:
    1. Logistics - number of people that can be accommodated, A/V capability, ADA compliance
    2. Engagement of additional communities
    3. Ms. Tolosa noted that staff would plan to confirm the location at least 1 month prior to the July commission meeting to ensure commissioners who work in Hartford can appropriately plan.

The meeting ended at **3:57 p.m.**

Next Meeting

**Monday, August 12, 2024 - 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**Virtual via Zoom**