

Charlottesville Area Association of REALTORS®
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee
Wed., Apr. 17, 2024, 10 – 11 a.m.
Hybrid Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance: Ben Reeves (Chair), Rives Bailey, Rachel Burns, Kelly Faillace, S. Lisa Herndon (Board Liaison), Julie Holbrook, Colleen Marshall (remote), Petrina Tyree (remote), John (Rich) Walker (remote), Kat Whindleton (remote).

Excused: Erica May.

Unexcused: Maggie Gunnels Fornecker.

Guest: Rachel Burns (remote).

Staff: Ali DiGuardo (remote).

Call to Order: Chair Reeves called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. The Antitrust Statement was acknowledged.

Approval of Minutes from March 2024 Meeting – The March 2024 minutes were approved as submitted.

Budget – Staff reviewed the budget and the various placeholders for income and expenses. Those members who are attending a multi-cultural real estate organization conference can pay in advance and be reimbursed or CAAR can pay up front.

Events – Members who participated in past job/career fairs shared their experience and feedback. The representatives of the Greene County Career Expo felt it was the most organized event. The group recommended having a spin game that would draw the attention of students, as well as having a sheet of common REALTORS® terms. Chair Reeves shared that the City of Charlottesville has paid summer internships during the summer as another way for students to gain experience with REALTORS® and the real estate industry.

Rachel Burns offered to help with the Spring Senior Day at JPJ.

Board Herndon recommended the committee have clear goals and ties to the Strategic Plan when it comes to the November DEI event (e.g., fair housing, etc.). Kelly Faillace and Rachel Burns offered to help with speaker recommendations. Julie Holbrook offered to research for a local safe LGBTQ+ housing non-profit, which will benefit from the registration fees collected from that event.

Petrina Tyree shared feedback from the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) Realtist Chapter of Richmond (RCR) Community Wealth Building Day. Petrina shared she wished there was more participation – approximately 40-50 people attended, which included attendees, vendors, and sponsors. NAREB handled the registration versus RIC, which may have caused confusion and a lower participation rate. Two aspects that the attendees really enjoyed were Operation HOPE – Accelerating Financial Opportunity for All and meeting with attorneys one-on-one. Petrina shared appreciation for CAAR supporting the event through the Virginia REALTORS® Community Engagement Grant and being present at the event as a sponsor. Staff will work with Petrina directly to complete the VAR Community Engagement Grant Evaluation Form.

Old Business – Staff is working on the request for proposal (RFP) for a handyman to assist in the possible removal and installment of the draft gender-neutral bathroom signage for the Hillsdale Conference Center and CAAR office. Once the price quotes are collected, then the committee will make a formal recommendation for the Board of Directors to consider.

Kelly Faillace, Rich Walker, and staff shared feedback on the meeting with Leslie Frazier, Senior Vice President of Community and Industry Relations of Virginia REALTORS®, to discuss collecting local member demographics. Staff will follow up by sharing the questionnaire that VAR requests to complete as part of the volunteer registration process. Staff will work with Kelly and Rich to determine the next steps and what type of information is to be collected and how (survey or through the member contact record). The recommendation will be shared with the committee as it becomes available.

New Business – Staff share the National Association of REALTORS® Ignite Program, which is a financial literacy program that is tailored to high school students, is winding down. CAAR would like to continue the momentum of the program, build its united front, and grow its outreach in high schools and communities. Several members have expressed interest in teaching and staff is ensuring they have completed the NAR training to teach and obtain the curriculum. Another meeting will be organized to discuss the curriculum, determine if an affiliate (lender) should help teach, etc. Once all parties are on the same page, staff will start to reach out to schools with this offering. Rives Bailey expressed interest in participating as an Ignite instructor.

Board Update – S. Lisa Herndon shared that attorney Michael Lafayette came to CAAR to discuss the proposed NAR settlement. Various members shared their disappointment that he said this settlement does not pertain or impact fair housing. Board Liaison Herndon recommended the association write a letter to local delegates explaining the impacts coming to the real estate industry, based on the upcoming changes. She also recommended utilizing REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) dollars or voice to help in the effort.

Staff Update – Staff reminded the committee about the various meetings happening in April and May. Committee members were strongly encouraged to participate in the upcoming Leadership Town Hall Meeting.

Future Meeting

The next meeting is Wed., May 15th, 10 – 11 a.m.

The June meeting will be cancelled so staff and members can concentrate on making the June 12th DEI event a success.

The November meeting will be moved from the 20th to the 13th to prepare for the November 15th event.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ali DiGuardo, Staff Liaison