

Charlottesville Area Association of REALTORS®
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee
Wed., May 15, 2024, 10 – 11 a.m.
Hybrid Meeting Minutes

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

Excused: Julie Holbrook, Kat Whindleton.

Unexcused: Erica May.

Staff: Ali DiGuardo.

Call to Order: Chair Reeves called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. The Antitrust Statement was acknowledged.

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

Budget – Staff reviewed the budget and the various placeholders for income and expenses.

Rachel Burns attended the Alliance LGBTQ+ Symposium. She will provide slides and resources from the event to share with the committee. Those items will be added to the OneDrive folder.

Events – The committee was encouraged to promote the Matt Difanis “How Implicit Bias Affect Us All” class. A flyer, graphic, and promotional video are available and can be shared as the members deem necessary. Staff will follow up with the speaker if he is okay if CAAR invites its multi-cultural organizations and neighbor REALTOR® associations to the event. Staff will also follow up on permission to record the class and potentially post to the CAAR YouTube channel.

New Business – The committee reviewed the list of leadership town hall ideas in detail to determine what ideas already fit in the current scope of work, what can be done this year, and what should wait until next year.

Showing up for minority communities - Jordy Yager has expressed interest in partnering with CAAR again. As a reminder, Jordy presented two sessions to CAAR in 2022. Chair Reeves and staff have a meeting with Jordy to discuss opportunities. A recap will be shared at the next meeting.

New legislative to protect those we serve – The committee shared the importance of supporting organizations such as the CAAR Foundation and Habitat for Humanity. Additionally, they suggested setting up a meeting with Dave Norris, Executive Director of the CAAR Foundation, Neil Williamson, Public Affairs Committee Staff Liaison, and several DEI Committee members to see if there is an opportunity to leverage national or state grants to help protect and promote homeownership in our local communities.

Veterans Affairs admin must deal with compensation – Staff shared the formal letter written from the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) to the Veterans Benefits Administration. At this time, the committee will wait for further movement.

Lead major change at the local level – voice in community; tell our own story – The committee would like to see an increase of messages and marketing, such as social media posts and videos about the myth of set commissions and information about the NAR settlement and changes to buyers and sellers, the value of a REALTOR®, and client testimonials (using the pre-paid 2023 budget for video series).

More outreach on home buying process - Support the CAAR Foundation regarding their homeownership resource with Cville Tomorrow, possibly hold townhalls for the community (Zoom and in-person); leverage the NAR Ignite financial literacy program to present in schools and community locations; obtain a NAR Housing Opportunity Grant to hold full-day event for the community such as the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) Richmond Chapter of Richmond.

REALTOR® town hall to educate public on the home buying process – Ensure members are communicating correct information on the home buying process, especially as it is related to the changes under the NAR settlement. Hold townhalls for the membership (Zoom and in-person).

What current changes mean and how anyone can afford to purchase a home – Leverage NAR material and share on CAAR member and community communication channels.

The committee shared how beneficial Marki Lemons Ryhal, REALTOR® and speaker, is to the industry, especially during the transition period under the NAR settlement. The committee shared interest in having her be a speaker in 2025 and utilizing national and state grants to make that happen.

Board Update – S. Lisa Herndon provided a recap of the NAR Legislative Meetings. Mrs. Herndon shared the importance of celebrating Juneteenth as well as having diverse CAAR representation in the media and community.

Staff Update – Staff shared that Grace Porter joined the CAAR staff team as the Hillsdale Conference Center Client and Event Concierge.

Future Meeting

The next meeting is Wed., July 17, 10 – 11 a.m.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ali DiGuardo, Staff Liaison