



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

VEL R PHILLIPS TRAILBLAZER AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE

Ald. Milele Coggs - CHAIR

Jasmine Johnson, Peggy Rozga, Michael Phillips, Keith

Bailey, Mildred Coby, Cree Ellzey

Staff Assistant: Joana Polanco (414-286-2366,

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Friday, March 17, 2023

12:00 PM

VIRTUAL

1. Call to order.

Meeting convened: 12:06 P.M.

2. Roll Call.

Members present: Ald. Milele Coggs, Keith Bailey, Peggy Rozga and Mildred Coby

3. Interview Finalist by members.

Dora Clayton-Jones -- considers herself first as a servant in everything that she does. She is an assistant professor at Marquette in the College of Nursing as a teacher/scholar and she teaches freshmen in their first semester. She teaches her students about health equity and social justice as part of her curriculum. She reaches her students to become advocates for health equity and social justice. She is also conducts research on sickle cell anemia and she includes young people in her research to identify and prioritize solutions. She is a board member on a sickle cell anemia organization and she will be hosting the third boot camp for nurses this fall. She wants to ensure that this population isn't marginalized.

Her first inspiration was being a candy striper at a community hospital. Volunteering in the pediatric unit is what inspired her to work with young people and improve their lives. Two of her brothers had sickle cell traits. Sickle cell trait affected both their kidneys.

It would make her and her ancestors proud to be recognized by the community. Her grandmother enforced service and she would dedicate this award to her. This would be a continuation of her social justice work in Chicago. Ms. Clayton-Jones feels she has some shoes to fill carrying on her legacy.

She believes it's important to hear the voices of those who live in the community, especially the young people. She brought young people to speak before the County Board of Supervisors and she could not have made a stronger impact than they did. She aspires to be a team lead to connect young people with policy makers in local and federal government relating to sickle cell issues. She wants to ensure that people are aware if they have sickle cell trait and how to mitigate its toll. People with chronic issues need to learn to advocate for themselves and she would like to educate young people on how to navigate health insurance once they begin employment.

DeShanda Clark -- works with youth at Pathfinders who have unstable housing. She got a degree in social work and she appreciates the autonomy to meet youth where

they are. The work is hard and sad, but the youth she works with have guided her along the way. She has been at Pathfinders for about a decade and she can see the changes in the lives of youth. Getting this award would mean that she is leaving a legacy and meeting her mission to serve. Ms. Phillips motivates her and she surrounds her whole life in how she serves the community. She loves the City of Milwaukee and she feels more pressure to represent what service looks like as others who could serve leave the city. We need to ask what we can do to make things better for people. She worked with young people and worked on bringing in professionals for them to meet. Many young men wanted therapists who would be available as needed, as well who look like them. She wants to create solutions that people are really looking for. You've got to listen to the generation that is coming up, as well as those who have wisdom to share. This is her life's work and she wants to continue to elevate people. She might do even more as she feels Ms. Phillips motivates her.

4. Selection of the 2023 nominations.

Ms. Coby said Ms. Clayton-Jones is offering a unique service and granting her this award will give her more of a voice and may open more doors to her. Mr. Bailey thinks she is working their career path and he is very thankful she participated. Ms. Rozga was impressed on her teaching both first-semester freshmen, as well as graduate students, as well as great empathy for those who are suffering. She was also impressed with her strategic thinking and involving young people in the whole process. Ald. Coggs agrees with all these comments, but also likes that she incorporated social justice in her education programs.

Ms. Coby, for Ms. Clark, mentioned that Ms. Phillips was a servant who got into the trenches, which Ms. Clark is. Mr. Bailey found Ms. Clark very impressive in connecting the community to underserved people, her energy is good and she is blazing a trail already. Ms. Razga loved her enthusiasm and commitment and her work is impressive, as well as her longevity in that work. Ald. Coggs liked her and is familiar with Pathfinders, but not Ms. Clark personally. She was impressed by her commitment to the work.

Ms. Coby votes for Ms. Clayton-Jones, but would also like to recognize Ms. Clark in some manner, such as honorable mention.

Mr. Bailey votes for Ms. Clark.

Ms. Rozga thinks Ms. Clark would have an impact on the girls.

Ald. Coggs said there might be an opportunity for a keynote speaker at Girl's Day.

Ms. Rozga votes for Ms. Clayton-Jones and would like to make a significant donation to Pathfinders in Ms. Clark's name.

Ald. Coggs liked both of them for different reasons. Ald. Coggs votes for Ms. Clayton-Jones as her work extends beyond Milwaukee and can have a national impact.

Ms. Coby moved, seconded by Mr. Bailey, that Ms. Clayton-Jones be nominated to receive the 2023 award. There were no objections.

Ald. Coggs may ask Ms. Clark to speak in the morning and an announcement made at that time that a donation to Pathfinders will be made in her name.

5. Adjournment.

*Meeting adjourned: 1:26 P.M.
Linda M. Elmer*

Staff Assistant