

**Grand River Voices
Stakeholder Advisory Board (SAB) Meeting
June 9, 2022
LINC Up Board Room (5-7pm)
Meeting Minutes**

Attendees (live): Angelica Velasquez, Attah Obande, Eric Haslinger, Jason Quigno, Keli Christopher, Lynee Wells, Stacy Stout, Synia Gant-Jordon, Teresa Branson, Tiawanna Ezell, Jessica Ledesma, plus support staffing by Daniel Tellalian (Angel City Advisors), Ciarra Adkins (City of GR OEE), Andy Guy (DGRI)

Attendees (video): Emily Aleman-McAlpine, Julieta Tablante-Blanco, plus support staffing by Imani Nicole (Angel City Advisors), Candy Isabel (Khamai Strategies), Cynthia Guzman and Leah Hubbard (Estolano Advisors)

Not Attending: Elaine Isley, Julio Cano

Meeting Discussion & Actions

1. The meeting was called to order, and introductions were made by all present.
2. Ground rules for meeting protocol and behavior were agreed upon
3. A presentation was made reviewing the multi-stage process for selecting the Stakeholder Advisory Board (SAB), and the purpose and specific roles related to the Advisory Board members. The intended scope of work is intended to last approximately six meetings with some outside time for preparation and follow-up.

SAB members asked how the equity framework document would be used, and who would use it. How would the rubber hit the road? SAB members asked how an equity framework document would connect to other key documents like the updated Master Plan.

4. The SAB discussed the need for a Board Chair and decided that no Chair was necessary at this time. If the SAB is asked to comment or respond specifically to external audiences, the SAB may select an appropriate individual to do so at that time. The SAM maintained the option to select a Chair at a future time.
5. The SAB discussed the need to provide compensation to themselves and considered a recommendation from the consulting team. It was decided that a \$500 stipend would be provided to those members who, in their own opinion, met the following criteria:
 - a. Members are presumed to be paid;
 - b. Members must materially participate in the SAB activities;
 - c. Members are not paid if their organization already compensates them for engaging with community, engaging with the river project, or regional equity matters, such that the SAB is part of their broader scope of duties;
 - d. Members are not paid if their current wealth or income makes the stipend unnecessary.

Members will self-determine eligibility and be paid by Angel City Advisors. Any funds not paid to SAB members will join a pot of funds to be used to pay community members who participate in community workshops.

6. The SAB discussed meeting cadence and availability. It was agreed that meetings would take place roughly once a month for two hours from 5-7pm. Staff will circulate a proposed calendar. The meetings will be a hybrid of live meetings in the Grand Rapids area combined with a virtual video conferencing option.
7. Estolano Advisors facilitated an initial discussion about Equity and River Equity definitions as part of a Vision and Values exercise. Sample definitions of equity were shared including that from the City of Grand Rapids Strategic Plan and River Improvement Equity Statement from the River for All Collaborative.

The SAB discussed the relevance and resonance of those statements and shared impressions and potential phrases or adjustments. Discussion included statements around:

- The ability of marginalized populations to become aware of opportunity, and to be prepared to capture opportunity – not just to have access to, or seek it
 - The value of generic equity definitions vs specific ones
 - The distinction between “inviting” people to spaces (access) versus “welcoming” people (inclusion)
 - The rhetorical need to connect the river to the city (i.e. a shared fate) and not limit the river’s impact to the water and banks.
 - Consider the river’s sphere of influence (city, county, watershed, etc.)
8. Estolano Advisors opened a Google Jamboard to facilitate a visual engagement, but time and technology constraints prevented a live facilitation. The Jamboard link was shared with SAB members subsequent to the meeting and filled out for the administrative record.
 9. Angel City presented a summary of the community engagement model involving a multi-channel, multi-audience feedback loop that can exist over time. Comments were solicited on how to improve the process to become more authentic and inclusive. SAB Members shared a number of suggestions including:
 - Intention on reaching Spanish-speaking communities early in the process, including in periodical *El Vocero*
 - Connecting with the EPA hosting at Plaster Creek
 - Connect with the GR Public Museum summer river programs
 - Consider some in-language outreach to African refugee populations (Swahili)
 - Connect to the Anishinaabe Circle of the Grand River Bands
 - Find ways to connect with LatinX Youth as an entry to Spanish-speaking families
 - Participating in a number of stated public festivals in the City
 - Connecting with Outdoor engagement groups such as Outdoor Afro, Latino Outdoors, African Collaborative Network, and Gear Library
 - Highlighting accomplishments as part of a long-term process
 10. The meeting was adjourned.