

# Grow Together

Seeding Employee Success



## EMPLOYEE ADVISORY GROUP - MEETING MINUTES

**Meeting Date:** December 17, 2019  
**Attendees:** Kate Abrams, Mark Anthony, Maria Carrasco, Luis Garcia, Lucy Gardner, Jasmine Haynes, , Ira Machowsky, Amy Peck, Jonathan Patrizio, Paula Unger, Camilla Wilson  
**Not in Attendance:** Daniel Clay, Milagros Kennebrew, April Miller  
**Minutes Prepared By:** Ira Machowsky, Senior HR Consultant

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### Group members discussed the following issues and action items:

#### I. HOUSEKEEPING & GROUP NORMS

- a. **Meeting Minutes** - The group reviewed the November 19, 2019 Meeting Minutes. There were no changes.
- b. **Paylocity System** - Ira highlighted the plans for the Paylocity roll-out and “go-live” date scheduled for December 29, 2019. Much of this was covered at the All staff meeting which preceded this meeting. Ira thanked the group for their previous input much of which was included in planning the roll-out and hand-outs distributed to staff. It was noted that following the roll-out of the payroll and time and attendance features, the remaining HR modules (e.g. benefits, recruitment, onboarding, learning etc.) will be rolled out during the period January through March and plans for this will be an on-going discussion item with the EAG.
- c. **New Employee Onboarding Program** – Ira distributed a handout outlining the final draft of the Onboarding Program that was developed for new hires which will be implemented in late January/early February. This draft included a diagram outlining general steps of the onboarding program in addition to an orientation schedule which included previous input from the EAG about the structure and length of the program. The orientation program will include presentations by various department heads and informal group engagement activities to enable new hires to meet colleagues and form new work friendships. The group made one additional suggestion about including a representative from “Events” to the orientation schedule.
- d. **Follow-up from Previous Meeting: Working Relationship between the Alliance and NYC Parks.** Ira reported that he will be meeting with Sue Donoghue and the Senior Staff to inform them of the HR/Worklife issue discussed at the November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting and would report back to the group at the January meeting on recommendations and next steps to address this issue.

#### ACTION/FOLLOW UP:

1. Distribute November 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes to all Prospect Park Staff
2. The “Events” Department will be added to the new hire orientation schedule
3. Ira to meet with Sue Donoghue and Senior Staff and report back to the EAG at January meeting on recommendations for addressing issues raised by the EAG concerning the working relationship between the Alliance and NYC Parks.

## II. “GROW TOGETHER” HR INITIATIVES

This segment of the meeting included an introduction to Dr. Richard Orbes-Austin, Principal of Dynamic Transitions, the DE&I Consultant engaged by the Alliance to help develop a DE&I Program and a series of staff engagement activities/workshops over the coming months. Members of the EAG introduced themselves and Dr. Austin led the group in a discussion to solicit their input and perspectives about DE&I, work and organization culture issues at the Alliance. A hand-out providing an overview of DE&I definitions and concepts was distributed and Dr. Austin also discussed plans to establish a DE&I Council comprised of a cross-section of Prospect Park staff to help shape and inform the planning of the DE&I program and activities which will evolve in the coming months. The group agreed that forming a DEI Council seemed like a good idea and that this would help ensure that DE&I efforts would be sustained long-term and become integral to the organization culture after the initial DE&I program is rolled-out and implemented.

### ACTION/FOLLOW UP:

1. At next EAG meeting discuss plans to form DE&I Council and encourage staff participation.

## III. HR/WORK LIFE ISSUE

Lucy facilitated the group’s discussion of “Environment & Climate /Issues: The Role of the Alliance & Staff Engagement”. The following were the core issues/concerns discussed and identified by the group:

- Lack of a current and clearly articulated organization policy around the Alliance’s position with regard to climate change and sustainability of natural/environmental resources etc.
- Concerns about how resources are allocated in general to environmental work in the Park. Limited resources and staff reductions in LMO that were never restored were highlighted as an example
- Lack of clarity and resources about the Alliance’s practices and commitment to re-cycling waste in the Park (e.g. the roles of NYC Parks and the Alliance)
- Organization and HR policy issues related to staff’s interest in participating in advocacy and other public events related to climate change and the environment

Ira commented that these were all extremely important and relevant concerns and given the broader organizational and impact and policy implications that this would likely require further discussion and input at the senior executive level with Sue Donoghue. The group discussed the best way to advance these issues and it was concluded that the next step would be for Ira to meet with Sue to share with her the issues discussed by the EAG members and develop action steps to be followed up. Maria and Lucy, Co-facilitators will be part of the discussion with Sue as well.

### ACTION/FOLLOW UP:

1. Ira to arrange meeting with Sue Donoghue and report back to the group at the January EAG meeting about next steps with regard to addressing the issues raised.

## IV. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. There was a brief discussion about the size of the EAG group and that given scheduling conflicts which are sometimes unavoidable it would be prudent to consider adding 3-4 additional members to the group to assure that there are at least 12 attendees at every meeting. All agreed, and it was suggested that the additional members be volunteers and that there be a clear communication articulated to the staff to solicit interest and that it be consistent as well with the Charter outlining staff composition of the group.
- b. Group members were encouraged to share HR/Work life issues that they like to address at future meetings.

### ACTION/FOLLOW UP:

1. Email to be distributed to all Prospect Park staff encouraging 3-4 volunteers to join the EAG.