NC BoS CoC Racial Equity Subcommittee meeting

February 21, 2024

11:30am

Attendance: Dr. Deniece Cole, Tonya Gray, Lori Watts, Kisha Darden, Mary Erwin, Amber Story, Kenett Melgar, Tradell Adkins, Gretta Worley, Pamela Hinton, Andrea Carey (staff), Laurel Benfield (staff)

Celebrations: Subcommittee members shared recent personal and professional celebrations, including getting married, finishing a home renovation after storm damage, housing clients, and birthdays.

Racial Equity Survey: Laurel presented the results of the racial equity survey distributed to the NC BoS CoC, and discussed findings. Subcommittee members reflected on the results, and noted particular astonishment at comments noting “the past should stay in the past” and “color blind” policies as an ideal.

Subcommittee goals/impact for 2024: The subcommittee discussed various directions they would like to take action. Ezra Fry shared a desire to impact hiring practices at the agency level, and would like to see a workgroup formed to increase equitable hiring practices. Dr. Denise Cole noted improvement in the tangible effects of racism within the BoS CoC, but noted a desire for less talking and more legislative action and enforcement of the laws that already exist. Tradell Adkins noted that today is the 59th anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X and that we are still discussing many of the same issues, noting that it’s only organized groups demanding change that create change. Other subcommittee members expressed a desire to increase the leverage that the CoC has on implementing equitable policies, particularly through the use of funding. Additional discussion was had on the need for education. Education and impacting funding sources were identified as goals for impact in 2024. Laurel and NCCEH staff will work to present some options for how to move forward and report back to the subcommittee.