

Equity Considerations and Recommendations Regarding the FY23 Budget Initiative: Stipend Program to Diversify Membership of City of Hyattsville Advisory Committees, Boards, Commissions and Task Forces.

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The Government Alliance on Racial Equity’s (GARE) [Racial Equity Tool-Kit](#) is a simple set of questions which consider equity in the implementation of programs in local government. The REO will use this tool to consider the FY23 Budget Initiative: *Stipend Program to Diversify Membership of City of Hyattsville Advisory Committees, Boards, Commissions and Task Forces.*

Step #1

Proposal: What is the policy, program, practice, or budget decision under consideration? What are the desired results and outcomes?

The Legislative Details [document](#) states that it is critical for the city to find ways to ensure that our Advisory Committees, Boards, Commissions and Task Forces represent the racial, ethnic, economic, gender and age diversity of our community (p.1). The document also states that the city struggles to recruit and retain advisory body membership that proportionally represents the community (p1.) .To solve for this, Councilmember Waszczak sponsored the FY23 Budget Initiative: *Stipend Program to Diversify Membership of City of Hyattsville Advisory Committees, Boards, Commissions and Task Forces.*

Step #2

Data: What’s the data? What does it tell us? Are there any gaps?

The Legislative Details [document](#) shows that Hyattsville has approximately 80 members across 10+ Advisory Committees, Boards, Commissions and Task Forces. Below is the breakdown of committee membership by ward of residence as of January 2022 (p.3) .

| WARD | TOTAL MEMBERS | % |
|---------------------|---------------|-----|
| 1 | 25 | 33% |
| 2 | 27 | 36% |
| 3 | 11 | 14% |
| 4 | 7 | 9% |
| 5 | 5 | 7% |
| Not a City Resident | 1 | 1% |

This data shows that there is overrepresentation of committee membership of Ward 1 and Ward 2 residents.

The City Administrator highlights a gap in data and comments ‘the city does not currently collect demographic data on committee members. This can be done if the Council finds it critical to their decision making.’ (p.2)

The REO is supportive of this and recommends collecting additional demographic data as a means of advancing diversity and equity in advisory board membership. This would also be useful in measuring outcomes for this program. Key demographic data might include race, ethnicity, gender, age, household income, disability status, language status and residency type (homeowner occupied, rental, etc.)

Step #3:

Community engagement: How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?

Community Engagement:

- Open discussion on policy at Council meetings

Opportunities for Expansion of Engagement:

- Targeted recruitment
 - Enrichment of the Committees and Advisory boards’ semi-annual recruitment campaign with targeted outreach to underrepresented groups
- Diminishing barriers to information sharing
 - Social media engagement
 - Mobile in-person ‘pop-up shops’ in communities of interest
 - Continued prioritization of the development of multi-lingual promotional literature
Simplified language in promotional literature and trainings ([Federal Plain Language Guidelines](#))
- Mentorship programs pairing existing members with new members or other residents who may be interested in committee membership

Step #4:

Analysis and strategies: Who will benefit from or be burdened by your proposal? What are your strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?

The stipend program would make it more attractive, accessible, and affordable for residents to join and participate actively in the City’s Advisory Bodies.

Below are recommendations of strategies for advancing racial equity and mitigating possible unintended consequences of this policy:

- ‘Youth Member Considerations’ state that *Individuals under the age of eighteen (18) serving on a City committee may opt to earn Student Service Learning (SSL) Hours instead of a paid stipend (p.2)* . This provision could potentially burden lower-income youth who might be disincentivized from choosing the SSL option because a financial need for the stipend.
 - REO recommendation: The city may consider expanding eligibility of students to receive both the stipend and SSL credit.
- The Legislative Details document states *the Treasurer does not recommend pre-paid cards. Committee members will be required to complete a W-9 form and be issued a 1099 form annually(p.2)* .

- REO recommends the city consider whether the requirement of a W9 is a potential barrier to residents without access to traditional banking institutions; as well as a barrier to access for non- citizens and undocumented immigrants. This could be relevant considering HVL’s status as a sanctuary city and its status as a municipality where non-citizens can vote in local elections.
- One solution could be in special circumstances to allow stipend payments to be made through alternative sources, like nonprofit community partners. The REO recognizes that financial liabilities and tax limitations of allowing alternative forms of payment may outweigh the potential benefits. The REO defers to the guidance and recommendation of the Treasurer on this matter.

Step #5:

Implementation: What is your plan for implementation?

Anticipated staff resources needed to implement this program:

- The City Clerk’s Office team would need to process program enrollment paperwork, while the Finance team processes payroll paperwork for each committee and task force member
 - The City Clerk team would need to update the manual for committee and task force members to reflect information and policies regarding the stipend.
 - The Staff Liaison would need to take attendance at each committee/task force meeting. The payroll team would need to process a check for each member on a semi-annual basis.
- REO Recommendation: Many of the recommended actions and considerations may be implemented during the Clerk team’s update to the committee manual.

Step #6:

Accountability and communication: How will you ensure accountability, communicate, and evaluate results

An annual program evaluation will occur during the City’s budgeting process.

- REO Recommendation: This evaluation of the program’s effectiveness is an important equity consideration. REO recommends an annual evaluation of this program, and potentially others, on race-equity considerations. This evaluation would ideally be in advance of budget evaluations.
- Communicating the success of this program to residents once it is implemented can also be a key step to furthering the goals of this program.