



**Minutes (Draft)  
Of the meeting of the  
NEVADA OFFICE OF MINORITY HEALTH AND EQUITY (NOMHE)  
Black Leadership Advisory Council (BLAC) Subcommittee Meeting  
Wednesday, July 12th, 2023**

*The Black Leadership Advisory Council (BLAC) Subcommittee held a public meeting on Wednesday, July 12th, 2023, beginning at 10:04 am at the location:*

*This meeting was held via Microsoft Teams*

- ***All participants joining virtually, please remain muted unless speaking***
- ***All Subcommittee members joining virtually, please ENGAGE CAMERAS for the duration of the meeting; raise your hand to be recognized by Chair to speak***
- ***All general public participants, please withhold remarks until Public Comment***
- ***For anyone commenting, state and spell your name with each comment***
- ***ASL interpretation and real-time closed captioning services will be provided***

***NOTE: Agenda items may be taken out of order, combined for consideration, and/or removed from the Agenda at the Chairperson's discretion.***

Tina Dortch welcomed everyone to the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity's (NOMHE) Black Leadership Advisory Council (BLAC) Subcommittee. She introduced herself as NOMHE's Program Manager. She was filling in for NOMHE's Public Health Resource Officer (Karina Fox), who was assigned to support any Subcommittee s to our full Advisory Committee. Karina Fox is currently on leave.

Tina Dortch stated that this is a committee that supports the main Subcommittee and asked for confirmation that the recording of the meeting had started.

Alexandra Neal confirmed recording had started.

Tina Dortch noted that the meeting was supported by closed captioning options to ensure accessibility for all attendees. She advised that as a matter of courtesy, everyone could ensure that their phones were silenced.

Tina Dortch advised individuals to state their names each time they spoke to aid in the accurate transcription of minutes. When not speaking, she requested that people mute their microphones. Subcommittee members joining virtually were asked to keep their cameras on throughout the meeting and remain engaged until its conclusion. Non-Subcommittee

members, including presenters or those providing remarks during the Public Comment session, were encouraged to activate their cameras only while speaking. Tina Dortch handed the agenda to Chair Samuel Hickson.

## **I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Welcome, and Opening Statement**

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson stated that the time was 10:04 a.m. on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and he called the meeting to order. He advised BLAC Subcommittee members to acknowledge their presence when they hear their names. Chair Hickson asked Tina Dortch to proceed with the roll call.

Subcommittee members present: Dr. Samuel Hickson, Alisa Howard, Adrienne Feemster Cobb, Will Rucker, Kamilah Bywaters, Derek Rimson, and Robert Bush.

Seven members were in attendance, the quorum was achieved.

Also present were the following NOMHE staff: Alexandra Neal, Tina Dortch, Evelyn S. Donis de Miranda, April Cruda, Carlos Ramirez Gomez, Amanda Ann

Members of the public present: Andrea Cerrillo, Leilani (ASL Interpreter), Asma Awan, Clarissa Cannon, Elizabeth Amaya-Fernandez, Gemelie Domingo, Godwin Nwando, Janet Serial, Jeffrey Jr. Pollock, Jewel Eldridge, Johanna Belyeu, Laurencia Bonsu, Lissette Montoya, Miklo Alcala, Maria Moore, Myia Thompson, Obioma Officer, Pearl Paulo, Priyambda Kumra, Sandy Severance, and Shannon Proctor.

Chair Hickson thanked Tina Dortch. He expressed excitement about having the seven members of the Subcommittee present. Also, Chair Hickson advised individuals present to drop their names in the chat with any of their affiliations.

Chair Hickson stated that this was a very, very special day, as there were some wonderful presentations on the agenda. He stated two of the categories addressed by the BLAC Subcommittee are Education and Youth, and public policy, law, and government, which references local implications. These categories are highlighted today due to the June 29<sup>th</sup> Supreme Court ruling overturning the recognition of affirmative action protocols by institutions of higher learning.

## **II. Public Comment**

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Public Comments will be taken during this agenda item. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this item until the matter is included on an agenda as an item on which action may be taken. The Chair of the Black Leadership Advisory Council Subcommittee will place a two (2) minute time limit on the time individuals may address the Committee. The Chair may elect to allow public comment on a specific agenda item when that item is being considered. To provide public comment telephonically, dial (775) 321 – 6111 any time after the Chair announces the period of public comment. When prompted to provide the Meeting ID, enter 508 009 465#.

Chair Hickson acknowledged that there was someone signing who required ASL interpretation.

Leilani (ASL Interpreter) acknowledged that she was able to see the participant requiring ASL interpretation. ASL interpreter provided the following interpretation for Obioma Officer. Obioma Officer stated her name. She expressed being glad about making this meeting accessible as possible for them with a sign language interpreter and captioning. She wanted to inform people in the meeting that she was curious and interested in joining the committee because she

represents the deaf community as a black advocate. She would love to be a BLAC Subcommittee representative. She indicated that she would contact someone regarding her interest. She indicated that she had done that in the past, but she will do it again. She thanked everyone for the opportunity.

Chair Hickson thanked Obioma Officer and stated that there would be some conversation about this topic towards the end of the meeting. Chair Hickson acknowledged Jewel Eldridge for public comment.

Leilani (ASL Interpreter) acknowledged that she was able to see the participant requiring ASL interpretation. ASL interpreter provided the following interpretation for Jewel Eldridge. Jewel Eldridge introduced herself as the former president of Black Deaf Advocates connected to Color Connect. She stated that this was her first time joining this meeting and that she would like to learn more about mental health resources for the Black community, especially for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. Jewel Eldridge has been doing this for a long time. She is also interested in participating in the committee as well as Obioma Officer.

Chair Hickson thanked Jewel Eldridge for her interest. He asked if there were any other individuals who would want to provide public comment. He asked Alexandra Neal and Tina Dortch for assistance in recognizing anyone whom he might have missed.

Alexandra Neal confirmed that there were no other individuals with their hands raised.

Chair Hickson stated that he would move to the next agenda item.

### **III. Approval of May 3, 2023, BLAC Meeting Minutes (For Possible Action):**

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson asked if there was a motion to approve those minutes.

**Adrienne Feemster made the motion** to approve the minutes for the BLAC Meeting on May 3, 2023. **Robert Bush seconded the motion.** Chair Hickson asked if all were in favor to approve the May 3, 2023, BLAC meeting minutes.

No one opposed it. Chair Hickson recognized the approval of May 3, 2023, BLAC meeting minutes on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 10:16 a.m.

### **IV. Discussion and Approval of Content for Inclusion in the Creation of Nevada's Black Community Profile (For Possible Action):**

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson stated that the BLAC Subcommittee wants to get an understanding of the issues that are impacting the community. He asked the Subcommittee members that participated in this discussion to hold their remarks until all speakers have presented. There were 4 Presentations. He stated that this part of the agenda was only for the BLAC Subcommittee members to join the discussion.

Chair Hickson stated that with the Pulse report, the final draft will be completed, tentatively during the October 11th BLAC meeting. He asked Subcommittee members to think about some actionable recommendations as they heard the presentations per category. He advised that the recommendations should be based on what they hear. Those recommendations would then be taken up at the community level and address these findings. This step will involve the BLAC members, in discussing options, methods, and resources needed to implement actions of recommendations.

Chair Hickson stated that the final draft of the Pulse report and implementation strategies of its recommendations will be shared with the NOMHE Advisory Committee at the November 14th meeting for approval and adoption. The NOMHE advisory committee will also offer their input on implementing recommendations as well.

Chair Hickson introduced Representative, Will Rucker as the first presenter.

Tina Dortch interjected Chair Hickson and asked committee members if they had any questions about the instructions.

Chair Hickson thanked Tina Dortch and asked committee members if they had any questions about what they had just heard. Chair Hickson asked Alexandra Neal and Tina Dortch if he had missed anyone.

Tina Dortch indicated that there were no questions.

Alexandra Neal also confirmed that there were no questions.

Chair Hickson ask Representative Will Rucker to proceed.

Tina Dortch confirmed that all the presenters' materials were provided to the board members or to the committee members in advance of this meeting.

Representative **Will Rucker** started his presentation on the **Health and Wellness category** and stated the following points based on the Gwen Center report on the impact of COVID-19 on communities of color in Nevada.

- The report highlights Nevada's struggle with the COVID-19 public health crisis, with particular emphasis on the Black communities.
- The pandemic has not only presented as a health crisis, but it is also highlighted and, in some instances, amplified the long-standing systemic inequities for Black Nevadans.
- These disparities have been starkly felt across many domains. To begin, demographic differences have contributed to the significantly higher infection hospitalization and mortality rates within the Black community.
- There is an intersection of factors such as preexisting health conditions, limited healthcare access, and the prevalence of Black Nevadans.
- Moreover, these communities encounter numerous obstacles in accessing quality healthcare. These barriers spanned from direct issues such as lack of health insurance or limited healthcare facilities to indirect challenges like transportation difficulties or biased experiences within the healthcare system itself. Such barriers inevitably lead to delay or lack of medical attention, intensifying the pandemic's impact these disparities extend to health insurance coverage, particularly when dealing with employer-sponsored health insurance, where we see a significantly lower coverage rate for Black Nevadans.
- This lack of insurance not only limits access to healthcare but can also lead to poorer health outcomes among these uninsured populations, a critical factor in this equation is having a dedicated healthcare provider. Having such a provider ensures necessary preventative care, lessens the need for emergency room visits, and reduces overall healthcare costs.
- However, in Nevada, a lower percentage of Black Nevadans have access to dedicated healthcare providers as compared to their white and Asian counterparts. This disparity, combined with a higher uninsured rate, puts Black communities at increased risk during any public health crisis.
- With COVID-19, the burden of the pandemic has not been limited to health vulnerabilities but has had a substantial direct economic impact as well with a higher proportion of Black Nevadans employed in essential industries where close contact is inevitable, the risk of virus exposure is amplified. Moreover, socioeconomic disparities exacerbate these challenges.

- With issues like housing instability and limited access to resources, which further compound the crisis, of particular concern is the precarious housing situation.
- The pandemic has layered a health crisis onto existing housing. One analyst voiced concerns that there would be a surge of evictions once benefit programs and rent moratorium end, intensifying health and economic challenges in these communities.
- Addressing these disparities is truly a monumental task.
- Culturally competent outreach and education expanded access to healthcare and direct financial support are all strategic measures that can be taken to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19.
- The report indicates several solutions and some of them include ensuring equitable vaccine distribution by making vaccines accessible within the most affected communities, potentially through mobile vaccination clinics or local Community Center partnerships, implementing culturally competent outreach and education strategies, by engaging trusted community leaders, including faith leaders, and using linguistically appropriate relatable materials for more effective communication.
- Healthcare access can be expanded by striving for universal healthcare insurance coverage, reducing geographical healthcare barriers, and addressing systemic healthcare issues that disproportionately affect Black communities.
- Financial support can be provided to those who were hit the hardest by the pandemic and we can do this through continued rental relief, unemployment benefits, and food assistance.
- Moreover, longer-term strategies should aim to improve access to stable income while paying for jobs and affordable housing.

Representative Will Rucker stated that there is an opportunity to not only address the immediate crisis, which is ongoing but to also work towards creating a more equitable health system for all by acknowledging and acting upon these systemic issues, health equity can be achieved.

Chair Hickson thanked Representative Will Rucker for the presentation. He introduced the next presenter, Representative Kamilah Bywater, and ask her to proceed.

**Kamilah Bywater** stated that her topic was in the **Education and Youth category**. She stated that she selected specific research-based articles and statistics because they give a glimpse of some of the challenges that Black youth are facing. Her sources came from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, the Children's Defense Fund, and the US Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. She stated the following information as part of her presentation:

- Child abuse and neglect rates in Nevada child welfare intervention practices and approaches and emerging trends and directions in child welfare.
- Child abuse and neglect in Nevada, 20% of Black children are disproportionately poorer than White children, and also the average median income for black families is \$47,400 a month.
- When talking about youth justice 588 children were in residential placement in 2017, and 40% of those children were Black.
- An article by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, talks about child abuse and neglect in Nevada. This article provides recommendations to help to support the social, economic, and health conditions of students of Black students.
- Another report from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, specifically talks about the Black Lives Matter movement and a road map from Nevada. This article provides recommendations that will support addressing some of the issues that Black children face in the educational environment.

- Another article, reports that Black students are 3.9 times more likely to be suspended than white students in the United States.
- Young Black individuals are experiencing struggles with their psychological well-being, and their physical health.

Kamilah Bywaters stated that these are some of the issues that Black youth face, such as housing, welfare, and hunger. They impact students' education.

Chair Hickson thanked Representative Kamilah Bywater and asked her if she had any other talking points.

Kamilah Bywater stated that her last thought was that there is information on higher education that she did not include but for the next conversation, she could talk more about higher education. She is also looking forward to maybe collaborating with the scholars who have presented this work specifically for the state of Nevada.

Chair Hickson thanked Representative Kamilah Bywaters again and asked Tina Dortch if there was another presenter, Representative Cobb.

**Adrienne Feemster Cobb** confirmed that indeed she would be presenting along with **Reverend Bush**. She stated that she would be providing a snapshot summary of the **Public Policy, Law, and Government category**, and how it applies to the political determinants affecting health and equity in Nevada. She stated the following talking points:

- This report was created to provide a recent snapshot into the intricate relationship between the political determinants influencing social drivers that impact the African American Community for health and equity.
- She indicated that she would be providing those sources after the meeting to any interested parties.
- The structural systemic processes, policies, and procedures, tie in between the determinants of health that involve systemic processing and structuring of relationships, distributing resources, administering power, and operating simultaneously in ways that reinforce or influence one another to shape opportunities that either advance HealthEquity or exacerbate health inequities.
- This information was drawn from Daniel E Dallas in 2020 on political determinants of health from John Hopkins University.
- She wanted to make note of gentrification displacement, growth, social disconnections, and Northern Nevada specifically.
- One research study showed that gentrification contributed to the dismantling of black property ownership curated over generations, increased financial burden, and threaten the place of security.
- Physical displacement restrains social networks and diminishes intergenerational neighborhoods. Cultural and physical displacement weaken the sense of social cohesion and belonging, and induced race-related stressful interactions with new residents.
- She also wanted to touch on housing and food security inflation or the cost of living and housing affordability with wage and racism trailing close behind. These are also listed at the top of concerns for Black Nevadans. This was noted in the recent survey by African American Research Collaborative, and that research was done for the Nevada Black Legislative Caucus during this legislative session.
- She wanted to add an additional note as an advocate that there's a growing concern in the Community about safety for seniors and youth on and off campus.
- When talking about gentrification, it is extremely important for the community members to have reliable, trustworthy sources that they can confide in for times of mental health as well as the dissemination of information.

Adrienne Feemster Cobb turned it over to Representative Bush.

Representative Robert Bush thanked Chair Hickson and Adrienne Feimster Cobb. He stated that social justice refers to the fair and equal distribution of resources, rights, and opportunities in society and in achieving Health Equity. He acknowledged that addressing the underlying structure and social detriments of health is important and therefore broke them down.

Representative Robert Bush stated that the social determinants of health and individuals with a higher income, for instance, and education, tend to have better access to healthcare services, healthier living, and healthier behaviors. Social support, if individuals don't have social support, a lack of strong social networks and supportive relationships can contribute to increased stress and poor health outcomes. On neighborhood and physical environment, living in areas and limited access to parks, limited access to clean air, and safe housing, directly affect individuals' health, employment, and working conditions. For example, this can affect individuals and increase unemployment and hazardous working conditions, which can impact both physical and mental health.

Furthermore, Representative Robert Bush stated that limited access to quality education can limit upper limit opportunities for health promotion and disease prevention. All of these are barriers to healthcare services, such as costs, lack of insurance, or inadequate healthcare infrastructure that lead to disparities and health, health outcomes. Addressing these social determinants of health is crucial for promoting health equity and improving the overall well-being of individuals.

Representative Adrienne Feemster Cobb thanked Representative Robert Bush and stated a closing argument. She restated Representative Robert Bush's argument that the relationship between the social determinants of health and health equity is crucial for African American communities. She stated that targeted interventions and implementations, policies, advocacies, and other strategies can be implemented to address the root cause of these issues.

Chair Hickson thanked both representatives for their wonderful presentation. Then, Chair Hickson introduced **NOMHE Program Manager Tina Dortch** for her presentation.

Tina Dortch continued with her presentation drawing upon content from the **2023 Nevada Minority Health Report** and stated that even though NOMHE doesn't have a position on the Subcommittee, as support she provided relevant information which will be beneficial to augment the presentations across the 8 categories of BLAC subcommittee focus. She thanked everyone for the opportunity. She advised Subcommittee members to write down their questions as there would be a conversation after her presentation. Tina Dortch stated the following:

- The Minority Health Report is produced every 2 years. The 2021 data came from multiple sources such as the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and the American Community Survey (ACS). Its content covers health-specific and health-determining categories. It aims to inform health professionals, community members, researchers, and policymakers of the existing disparities found among Nevada's communities.
- NOMHE partnered with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of Analytics to produce a highly stratified report. In addition to adding sections related to Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity indicators or filters related to health equity indexing and social vulnerabilities that disproportionately impact minorities across socioeconomic status, household composition & disability status, language status, and housing and transportation status.....the current version added new health indicators and statistics which include: access to health; maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity; COVID-19 related; drug poisonings; juvenile arrests and detentions; and colorectal cancer.

- As the BLAC Subcommittee works to develop a Pulse Report that reflects the status of Nevada’s Black residents across its 8 categories of focus, NOMHE shares this resource given its content which highlights current existing health disparities data stratified by race/ethnicity and region.

Tina Dortch stated that the Minority Health Report provides great information, and the BLAC Subcommittee members might find useful in the production of the Pulse Report the following:

- **Distribution Across Nevada’s Population:** In terms of the population distribution in Nevada in 2021, Black people make up 290,120 of the total 3,214,260-person population which is about 9.1% of the Nevadan population.
- Among Black-non-Hispanic Nevada residents in 2021, the top 7 leading causes of death were: diseases of the heart (24.2%), COVID-19 (14.9%), Malignant neoplasms or cancerous tumors (14.0%), non-transport accidents (6.4%), Cerebrovascular diseases (stroke) (5.1%), Assault (homicide) (3.3%), and Diabetes (3.2%).
- **Cardiovascular disease:** In the nation, Nevada is ranked as having the 9th highest death rate from heart disease. Black people had the highest mortality rates of heart disease (332.9 per 100,000) compared to all other races/ethnicity groups.
- **Cerebrovascular disease (stroke):** Blacks had higher death rates (74.0 per 100,000) in the Nevada population than any other race.
- **Colorectal Cancer:** Blacks had both a significantly higher incidence rate (41.2 of 35.3 of all race groups) and mortality rate (12.3 of 8.2 of all race groups) from Colorectal Cancer than all other races/ethnicities. In terms of prostate cancer mortality and female breast cancer mortality, Black people had a higher mortality rate (26.7 of 12.5 of all race groups) for prostate cancer and a higher mortality rate (22.1 of 13.2 of all race groups) for breast cancer.
- **Diabetes:** Blacks had higher death rates from diabetes than any other races/ethnicities. And in Clark County (at 14.3%) and Washoe County (at 17.8%), Black people had the highest rates of being told by a health professional that they have diabetes.
- **Black non-Hispanic population** had significantly higher infant mortality weights (at 10.8 per 1,000 live births) than White non-Hispanic (4.6 per 1,000 live births), Asian/Pacific Islander non-Hispanic Hispanic (3.4 per 1,000 live births) and Hispanic (5.3 per 1,000 live births) populations.
- Black people had a higher death rate from homicide each year from 2017 to 2021 than any other race. In Clark County, Black people had a higher mortality rate (29.2) compared to all other races which had single-digit rates.

Tina Dorch shared two examples of what a pulse report could look like, and what we envision as we start this discussion. She wanted to show you these two examples and potential formatting. Both of them utilize very effective infographic formatting, or one takes cultural and linguistic, and comprehension considerations into account. Tina Dortch stated that one of the examples relies on more pictorials that share large amounts of information compared to the other examples that incorporate more narrative in the information-sharing format. She hoped this was enough information.

Tina Dortch turned it over to Chair Hickson and members to discuss what they envision going into the pulse report.

Chair Hickson thanked Tina Dorch and asked BLAC Subcommittee members to put forward any thoughts that they might have about the four presentations that they have just heard.

Bishop Derek Rimson thought that the presentations were very profound, very informative, and provided a lot of information that will help create the pulse report. He asked what the BLAC Subcommittee would do to resolve these issues. Also, he stated that it appeared as if most of these, if not all, of these presentations had a common denominator or common denominators which is housing and education. All the inequities, issues, and challenges that exist in the Black community filter through health, education, social justice, and so forth.



Bishop Derek Rimson asked; is there any type of solution of partnerships that the BLAC Subcommittee can begin to move towards?

Furthermore, Bishop Derek Rimson stated that there are several professional athletes, and athletic teams that are now making Las Vegas their home, these are billion-dollar industries. There are also other state agencies. He asked again, what steps would the BLAC Subcommittee bring to resolve these issues because in his opinion people can continue to keep talking about the problem and bringing about facts but what steps can be taken to create solutions and partnerships that will fund some of these areas to help us to bring some resolution?

Chair Hickson thanked Bishop Derek Rimson for the excellent question. He stated that the ultimate purpose of this pulse report is to understand what the issues are. There are very common themes that went throughout the presentations.

Chair Hickson asked what the BLAC Subcommittee can do to realistically affect change within the areas mentioned. He thought that one of the biggest themes was food insecurities, especially since individuals live in the desert. This is a big issue that impacts many and promotes a lot of different health outcomes, not just maternal health, but across the board, including education as well.

Chair Hickson asked if there were any ideas of what the BLAC Subcommittee can do.

Chair Hickson acknowledged Representative Kamilah Bywaters as she raised her hand.

Kamilah Bywaters stated that it would be important to identify what resources are already available. For example, in the article that was provided by the University of Nevada Las Vegas, Doctor Leverett and her colleagues wrote an article that had recommendations specifically outlined. She feels that the BLAC Subcommittee could identify if there are organizations that are able to provide resources for people who are hungry, then it would be important to know who are those organizations, and how are they already impacting the space. The BLAC Subcommittee can determine how impactful those recommendations are or how the community can support the movement of the solutions that have already been proposed.

Kamilah Bywaters stated that her space is about education and youth.

Chair Hickson thanked Kamilah Bywaters. Chair Hickson emphasizes that it is a good idea to look into who is doing what and how because part of what the BLAC Subcommittee doesn't want to do is get caught up and reinvent a wheel that already exists. Perhaps the BLAC Subcommittee must improve the wheel in order to create a broader resolution to many of these issues that are impacting the state.

Chair Hickson acknowledges Adrienne Feemster Cobb and asked her to proceed.

Adrienne Feemster Cobb affirmed that she agreed with Representative Kamilah Bywaters. She sees the commonalities and the problems, and it's almost like a puzzle piece drawing that over to the resources. She wonders if these resources are available and many other things. For example, she asked if, does the community know about them? How to access them? Are there trusted sources in place to communicate and gain the trust of our community to use these resources? If the BLAC Subcommittee doesn't know, can they identify leadership that can take on these aspects?

Adrienne Feemster Cobb wanted to mention the financial support and how recovery funds are being used correctly.

Chair Hickson thanked Adrienne Feemster Cobb and agreed with her statements. He acknowledges Representative Alisa Howard as she had her hand raised. He also acknowledged Representative Bishop Derek Rimson and asked him to proceed.

Bishop Derek Rimson stated that he would like to make another suggestion and stated the following. Representative Rober Bush is someone who brings together partnerships within the national action networks that could meet many of these needs. The Shepherd's Breakfast takes place monthly. Southern Nevada continues to bring about cohesiveness and partnership as well as this is a form that also brings together community activists, community leaders, and political leaders within the community. If the BLAC Subcommittee could somehow tap into these platforms, these organizations, and somehow begin again to collaborate, would be important. Converse stations are important and creating partnerships is important because it's evident that the community financially does not have the equity and the financial wealth to resolve these issues. He saluted Dr. Bush and congratulated him on his honorary doctorate. Dr. Bush is doing a phenomenal job in conversations and creating partnerships as well as the shepherd's breakfast,

Chair Hickson thanked Representative Bishop Derek Rimson and acknowledged Representative Rober Bush.

Representative Robert Bush stated that if people want to start a movement anywhere in the country they should always start with the Black Church. He will do a health inequities or disparities tour through the Black Church where he will explain the things that are going on and the disparities and the differences in the communities. He stated that it's important to get the leadership of the communities involved, especially certain champions in the legislature. That would help promote the BLAC Subcommittee's cause and it would be very effective.

Chair Hickson thanked Representative Robert Bush and acknowledged that Representative Will Rucker had his hand up.

Representative Will Rucker has echoed what has already been shared, particularly around collaboration and the robust resources that are already within the Community and in play. He believes that there is an opportunity for the BLAC Subcommittee to help foster collaboration skills. It would be ideal to create a platform that can amplify the existing resources. He emphasized the Interfaith Council as a resource because it extends beyond a Christian Church into other faith communities. He wanted to highlight the Barber shops as well. Those are central meeting places for folks that may not be able to face the community.

Chair Hickson thanked Representative Will Rucker and acknowledged Representative Alisa Howard for comment.

Representative Alisa Howard stated that she wanted to make sure she has been listening to everything that everyone's been saying. She thought the reports were very informative and interesting. She feels that everyone knows what the problems are and people keep talking about them, but action is required.

Alisa Howard stated that she did a presentation on how to start into RFA, at the CDC level. An RFA needs to start at the state level; the state needs to make sure that equity is included in that. She has been in public health for 11 years and she feels like the issues are just going around. She feels that the BLAC Subcommittee should take the approach of looking at 8 dimensions of Wellness. Oftentimes, individuals focus on the social determinants of health. She wonders if people know what the 8 dimensions of health care since those are rarely talked about. Those eight dimensions include, emotional, physical, occupational, intellectual, financial, social, environmental, and spiritual. This is what makes a person whole. People know what the problems are now, but how can people hold this frustration with public health due to the lack of action? She is ready to see change and individuals need to act. It needs to happen at the federal level and then at the state level and then bring it down to the community level.

Alisa Howard stated that she has been blessed enough to see public health on all three levels. She has been able to get a different perspective than most people can't. The money only goes so far, they help the district level, which is local government, but it doesn't trickle down to the actual community. For instance, there is not a minority health HIV program anymore in the state of Nevada. No one is taking up that cost. Nevada is at the top of all states that have the

highest rates of HIV. She ran a program for HIV and lost funding, and no one ever went back to say they still need that program. There were 80 people in that program. These are the things that she saw, and she is ready to act.

Chair Hickson thanked Representative Alisa Howard, for that impassioned speech and the wonderful point she made about the idea of constantly talking about the same thing without limited action. He believes that the BLAC Subcommittee needs to broaden and expand its ability to advance the way people talk about social problems and health issues from a public health perspective.

Chair Hickson acknowledged Representative Bishop Rimson and asked him to proceed with his comments.

Representative Bishop Derek Rimson expressed his sentiments to Representative Alisa Howard. He extended his sympathy to her profession. He understands that it can be challenging and sometimes exhausting. He would like to suggest that if it is possible during the next session BLAC Subcommittee members could come up with possible recommendations. Perhaps, members can present maybe 4 or 5 suggestions in the areas of health of education, political action social justice, and hunger. It would be ideal if members could come up with potential recommendations to address those issues.

Chair Hickson thanked Representative Bishop Derek Rimson for this statement and expressed his agreement with what he said.

Chair Hickson stated that he would like to put the following for vote by the Subcommittee members. He wants to put forward the idea of allowing until July 24th for not only the remaining members to provide data and source reports so that the NOMHE team can incorporate them within the draft post report to be shared with the full advisory committee during our 15th meeting in August, but also to put forward recommendations as well for the issues that were identified.

Chair Hickson asked for a motion for the allowance of July 24th to be the cut-off date for which member can turn in their reports with recommendations to be incorporated into the draft Pulse report.

**Adrian Feemster Cobb made the motion** to allow until July 24th for the remaining members to provide their data and recommendations to be considered.

**Will Rucker seconded the motion.**

Chair Hickson asked all BLAC Subcommittee members if they were all in favor of allowing until July 24th for the remaining members to submit their data and reports, as well as possible recommendations.

No one opposed this decision. Chair Hickson, chair for the Black Subcommittee approved the allowance of July 24th for the remaining Subcommittee members to submit their data and reports to the NOMHE staff, as well as possible recommendations for actionable items on July 12th, 2023, at 11:17 AM.

Chair Hickson thanked all BLAC Subcommittee members for their contribution. Then, he stated that some possible community members were interested in joining the BLAC Subcommittee. He stated that representation is very, very important, especially on this Subcommittee. He noted that there are still 4 remaining categories and seats that are unfilled in the areas of business, economics, technology, and entrepreneurship, and one last category that includes, safety preparedness, communication, arts and culture, and the environment.

## **V. Discussion and Approval of Future Meeting Dates, Agenda Topics (For Possible Action):**

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson feels that in order to fully understand the issues that are facing Black Nevadans in Nevada, the BLAC Subcommittee needs to have a fully representative Pulse report that encompasses all 8 categories, so that not just the advisory committee, but the community members that attend these meetings can feel that their voices are being heard and that their thoughts are being heard and that they feel that action is taking place per the protocol outlined in the bylaws. Tina Dortch would be able to work with the Advisory Committee to develop a slate for an appointment on the August 15th meeting for the Advisory Committee. There is a process by which committee members must be approved. The new BLAC members would need to provide their pulse data as well by the end of August so that NOMHE staff can incorporate it into the draft before the October 11 Black final meeting.

Chair Hickson acknowledged Representative Alisa Howard for comment.

Alisa wanted to know what was the last category

Chair Hickson stated that it was the environment.

Tina Dortch indicated that the roster with the current vacancy categories was being shared on the screen.

Chair Hickson stated that he would like to put forward the NOMHE Advisory Committee annual meeting, which would be on August 15th at 10:30 is actually going to be occurring in the north in Reno and that would also be both in person as well as a virtual meeting.

Tina Dorch confirmed and stated that there would be a voting section for the BLAC Subcommittee open seats.

Chair Hickson stated that the next BLAC Subcommittee meeting would be happening on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

Tina Dorch confirmed.

Chair Hickson stated that following the full advisory committee meeting will meet again on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Any new appointments to the BLAC Subcommittee will need to turn in any data for the pulse report by the end of August so that the information is incorporated into the draft before October 11th.

Chair Hickson acknowledged that Tina Dortch had her hand raised.

Tina Dortch stated that during the first round of appointees, there were some individuals who were not present for some of the open categories during the NOMHE Advisory Committee meeting, so further engagement will be needed. She advised that those who were on the call can make recommendations that could be presented to the Advisory Committee on August 15<sup>th</sup>. The individuals who get recommended should represent the categories already discussed.

Chair Hickson advised people on the call to state their interests.

## **VI. Public Comment**

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Public Comment will be taken during this agenda item. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this item until the matter is included on an agenda as an item on which action may be taken. The Chair of the Black Leadership Advisory Council Subcommittee will place a two (2) minute time limit on the time individuals may address the Committee. The Chair may elect to allow public comment on a specific agenda item when that item is being considered. To provide public comment telephonically, dial (775) 321 – 6111 any time after the Chair announces the period of public comment. When prompted to provide the Meeting ID, enter 508 009 465#.

Tina Dortch indicated that she would like to say a comment from Miss Janet Cereal who had to leave early.

Chair Hickson allowed Tina Dortch to deliver the message.

Tina Dortch stated that Janet Cereal said: “She wholeheartedly agreed with everything that each of the Subcommittee representatives has said. Thank you, representative Elisa Howard, for calling out the need for action. And BLAC Subcommittee members should talk as black community activists, advocates, organizers, etcetera. It has been found that Black Nevadans are not exposed to and do not always receive information about available resources in the same manner with which, in the same vein as other disenfranchised marginalized communities. She fully supports the efforts of the BLAC Subcommittee to produce the pulse report that includes feasible recommendations with input from the black community both North and South. Janet Cereal Health Committee chair with the NAACP Reno-Sparks Branch number 11122”

Chair Hickson thanked Tina Dorch for delivering Janet Serial’s message. Chair asked if anybody else had public comment participants or anyone else that would like to share during public comment. He acknowledged that Jewel Eldridge had her hand up. He asked the ASL interpreter to proceed.

ASL Interpreter - Leilani Proceed to interpret the following comment from Jewel Eldridge.

Jewel Eldridge expressed her struggle with TEAMS as she is more familiar with Zoom. She expressed her enjoyment of the discussion that happened during the meeting. It was fascinating to share that she appreciated everyone for sharing. But one thing that she wanted to comment on is that Black deaf individuals are often marginalized or overlooked and not included in healthcare settings in healthcare programs. She has been trying to do her best to network and contact different individuals and get resources.

Jewel Eldridge has worked with Tina Dortch in the past who is familiar with the work that has happened with the Black deaf community as well. Jewel Eldridge tries to look for resources and does her best to work with and collaborate with different people. Black deaf individuals should have rights and access to health care and mental health as well. All the issues discussed in this meeting are applicable to the Black deaf community as well. Deaf individuals are more marginalized due to their condition. She is not just talking about Black people, but Black deaf people, especially the teenage and adult population. There is a need to do more research on that as well, which will indicate a higher incidence in the Black deaf community. She wanted to make sure that the BLAC Subcommittee includes Black deaf individuals as well because she has been trying to work and network with people like members of the BLAC Subcommittee. She feels like she is not alone. She has been doing her best to advocate for members of the Nevada Black deaf community and for programs, and nonprofit organizations for deaf people of color. It is difficult to find therapists and interpreters. People are not educated on how to ask for an interpreter. The Black deaf community really needs help as well.

Jewel Eldridge referenced Representative Will Rucker speaking about the struggles of the community with communication. It's important that the Black deaf community receives the same resources. That is all she wanted to discuss with the audience. She also wanted to talk about how critical it is to have the inclusion of the Black deaf

community, not just Black people. It's very tough and stressful for her to try to help everybody. There should be a category that focuses on Black deaf individuals. She is working with Obioma Officer as well. She asked the BLAC Subcommittee members not to forget about the Black deaf community.

Chair Hickson thanked Jewel Eldridge and acknowledged that there were no more comments.

## VII. Adjournment

Dr. Samuel Hickson, Chair

Chair Hickson made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Robert Bush made the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Bishop Derek Rimson seconded the motion.

No one opposed, Chair Hickson adjourned the meeting on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 11:33 a.m.

This meeting will be held virtually (via conference video & call). Notice of this meeting was faxed, e-mailed, or hand delivered for posting to the following locations:

- Washoe County Health District, 1001 E. Ninth St., Reno, NV 89512
- NV Dept of Public Safety – Capitol Police, 555 E. Washington Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89101
- State Capitol Building, 101 N. Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701
- Community Based Care, 1010 Ruby Vista Drive, Ste 104, Elko, NV 89801
- Division of Public and Behavioral Health, 4150 Technology Way, Carson City, NV 89706
- Aging Disability Services Division, 3320 W Sahara, Ste 100, LV, NV 89102
- Southern Nevada Health District, 280 S. Decatur Blvd. Las Vegas, NV 89107
- Dept of Health and Human Services, Director's Office, 400 King St, Suite 300, Carson City, NV 89703

Agenda and meeting materials may also be viewed on the internet at:

the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity's website:  
[NOMHE-AC-2023 \(nv.gov\)](https://nomhe-ac-2023.nv.gov)

and

the Department of Administration's website:  
<https://notice.nv.gov/>

*Written comments in excess of one typed page on any agenda items which requires a vote are respectfully requested to be submitted to the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity at [nomhe@dhhs.nv.gov](mailto:nomhe@dhhs.nv.gov) three (3) calendar days prior to the meeting to ensure that adequate consideration is given to the material. We are pleased to make reasonable accommodations for members of the public who have a disability and require special accommodations or assistance to attend/participate in the meeting. Also, copies of meeting materials can be made available. Requests for accommodations or meeting materials should be directed to the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity Program Manager by emailing [tdortch@dhhs.nv.gov](mailto:tdortch@dhhs.nv.gov) or by calling Tina Dortch at 702-486-2151 no later than three (3) working days prior to the meeting date.*

DRAFT