

Youth Budget Commission Meeting

Friday October 15th, 2021 1:30 – 2:30pm Minutes

1. Welcome, Co-Chair Shaver

Eric Mayo welcomed the Commissioners to the meeting. He stated that Co-Chair Shaver would be late to this meeting so Curt Clemons-Mosby will be conducting the formalities for the meeting. Clemons-Mosby reiterated that he will take a vote to allow a voice vote for the remainder of the call rather than a roll call vote.

Clemons-Mosby turned it over to Mayo to conduct the roll call of Commissioners present at the meeting. Mayo asked that all Commissioners state they could see, hear, and consented to doing a voice vote for the meeting. Commissioners Kazmi, Montorio-Archer, Cates, Villa, Krauss, and Huelsmann were present for the meeting. All Commissioners stated they could see, hear, and consented to doing a voice vote for the remainder of the meeting. There was not a quorum, so all voting agenda items were pushed back until a quorum was present.

2. Approval of the Minutes (August and September), Co-Chair Shaver

Since there wasn't a quorum during the meeting, the minutes were not voted on for approval.

3. Recap of Youth Presentation, Co-Chair Shaver

Mayo provided an overview of the youth presentation that Commissioners Krauss and Cates lead at the previous meeting and thanked everyone, including John Gordon and Kelly Sparks, for their work on it. He stated that the discussion was very powerful for Commissioners to hear what youth felt they needed from the government and from policy makers to thrive in their every day lives. Mayo displayed the word cloud that Commissioner Krauss made of the youth responses on what they needed. Mayo asked if anyone had thoughts, comments, or insights from the previous meeting. Commissioner Villa said it was refreshing to hear from the youth because oftentimes they aren't included at the table. She stated that the young people who participated in the meeting had a lot to say about what is important to them. Commissioner Villa thanked everyone for their work to include them.

Commissioner Krauss reiterated Commissioner Villa's thoughts and said it was an example of the Commission living out their values. He asked if Commission staff had additional thoughts on how to include youth in the discussion regularly. Mayo said they had a few ideas, one of which, was to consider moving the Commission meeting time to accommodate more youth. He stated that doing a meeting outside of school hours would do a lot to ensure youth participation.

Commissioner Cates said it was great to see youth with diverse experiences from all over the state participating in the meeting. She said they weren't shy about sharing their thoughts and stated that their input would be invaluable if they were engaged on a regular basis.

Commissioner Montorio-Archer said he was disappointed to have missed the previous meeting but that he will watch the recorded video. He stated he was excited to hear the ideas and input from youth in the state.

4. Recap of Presentation to Students, Eric Mayo

Mayo then moved on to give an overview of his presentation at Oak Park & River Forest High School to present the fiscal scan and some of the Youth Budget Commission's work. He stated it was a similar presentation to the one the Commission gave youth during the previous meeting. Mayo showed the word cloud of responses from students during that presentation on what they thought was needed. He stated that he heard a lot of students expressing the need for more mental health resources for young people. Mayo said the students expressed that returning to school after more than a year of learning from home has been difficult and they need more support. Mayo stated that students were interested in some of the work they were doing, especially initiatives about investing in communities. However, he learned that they didn't know how to get involved. Mayo stated they took a lot of time to discuss how state government can do better in engaging youth in advocacy and include them in the space in a welcoming manner. Mayo stated that he believes we shouldn't wait for larger government structures to include youth but that the Youth Budget Commission should work to set an example by meaningfully engaging youth in the Commission.

Commissioner Cates wondered how many students have not returned to school, are struggling in school, etc. She shared a story about her own kids and the difficulties they are dealing with that are different than if they had been in school for the last year plus. She shared stories of increased fights, violence, depression, suicidal ideations in schools that haven't been seen at this level before. Commissioner Cates said that these are all important things to consider moving forward and make sure that entities are tracking the many impacts of the pandemic. Mayo agreed that these are significant struggles youth are dealing with happening in real time and they need to be tracked.

John Gordon stated that it was important as part of the Commission's working groups to consider how the pandemic has changed our society. Gordon stated the Commission needs to look at the data and make policy recommendations with this lens, otherwise, they will be short on what is needed.

5. Overview of Working Group Discussions, John Gordon, Co-Chair Shaver

Co-Chair Shaver joined the meeting and clarified that they were going to move into a review of the working group discussions. He apologized for being late due to a conflict. He stated he would love to take these discussions and possible recommendations to the Governor's office and ensure the Commission partners with agencies who may be involved in any action on these recommendations. Co-Chair Shaver shared his hopes that the November and December Commission meetings be used to tackle some of these recommendations while working with the Governor's office and other agencies to work out the details to move forward. He asked Commissioners to think through what kind of questions they might have for state agencies regarding these recommendations. Co-Chair Shaver asked if anyone had questions before they moved on. He thanked the Commissioners and Commission staff for their time spent in the working groups on the draft recommendations.

Commissioner Krauss asked if using the next few meetings to dive deeper into the recommendations with agencies would impact the timeline of deadlines to submit the recommendations to the Governor's office and allow lawmakers to use them for the budget. Co-Chair Shaver responded that he thinks pushing back the recommendations by one month will strengthen the recommendations and they can still be used to guide policymaking during the budget processes. He reiterated that the Commission doesn't have any hard deadlines on when the recommendations need to be presented to the Governor's office and he would like to ensure that the recommendations are concrete and detailed. Co-Chair Shaver asked Commissioner Villa for insight into whether that timeline would still work for the process that

lawmakers use to pass the budget. Commissioner Villa agreed that the pushed back timeline would work and the recommendations could still be used for influence over policy changes.

Co-Chair Shaver introduced Gordon to do the overview of the draft recommendations from the working groups. Gordon went through the group of recommendations under the developmental goals of educated, employed, and connected. Those recommendations were: ensuring youth and young adults acquire the life skills needed to succeed independently in adulthood, supporting youth employment through state-led initiatives, and measuring the pandemic progress of Illinois youth affected by social disconnection and learning loss. Gordon reviewed that it is important to allow for diverse life paths for the youth in our state and provide the necessary life skills to be successful in all career paths. He also reviewed that the current funds going to employment for youth isn't enough. Gordon also reiterated that it is crucial to measure how youth specifically are being impacted by the pandemic so that lawmakers and service providers can respond in the ways that are most needed.

Gordon then went through the group of recommendations under the developmental goals of safe, stable, and healthy. Those recommendations were: distributing state resources equitably (both racially and geographically), creating long term workforce pipelines for the social service organizations serving youth, increasing youth voice in state government, ensuring coordination among the agencies that have programs serving youth and young adults. Gordon reviewed that the state's resources aren't distributed equitably across the state and this needs to be addressed. He also reiterated a point that Commissioner Cates made on creating workforce pipelines to hire youth with lived experiences within social service organizations that serve/d them. Gordon asked if anyone had any questions or thoughts regarding these draft recommendations.

Co-Chair Shaver agreed with Commissioner Krauss's point that these recommendations are cross-cutting in nature. He stated that many of these recommendations support each other. Co-Chair Shaver stated that the Commission has a unique opportunity to look backward and previous fiscal scans while also looking forward to potential recommendations. He stated it would be great to ask leaders from the agencies involved about their current programs and use those details to add depth to these recommendations.

Commissioner Villa shared that she hosted a superintendents and manufacturers roundtable for her district recently and they discussed the need for well-paying jobs in trade for youth right out of high school. She stated that many youth are reconsidering college and the debt that comes along with it and schools need to consider how to better prepare some students to enter the workforce after high school. Commissioner Villa said the manufacturers shared that required coursework during freshman/sophomore year discouraged kids from doing well in school and didn't allow enough time or consideration for learning trade skills. She stated this is an area the Commission could explore more. Co-Chair Shaver asked if there were themes that came up during that discussion. Commissioner Villa stated manufacturers wanted high schools to discuss more options for students like going into trade in stable, well-paying jobs. She shared there are a lot of interesting products being manufactured in Illinois and these are great opportunities for students. Co-Chair Shaver thanked Commissioner Villa for sharing that. He stated this underscores the need to get deeper into the details on these potential recommendations.

Commissioner Krauss mentioned a theme present throughout the working groups was many of the state's investments are responsive instead of proactive and preventative. He asked if there were any recommendations that included this theme. Gordon stated this theme is included in the draft recommendations that were sent to the Governor's office, but he didn't include them in the brief overview during this meeting. Commissioner Krauss stated it would be helpful to look at increasing investments in proactive and preventative investments in all future recommendations.

Co-Chair Shaver shared, while he was looking at the recommendations under "safe, stable, and healthy", that the Commission could look at adding Youth Commissioners to the group to involve more youth in state government. He said statute dictates who can be on the Commission, but they could make a recommendation to include Youth Commissioners in statute to be involved. Commissioner Huelsman stated he was a part of the working group that developed this recommendation and while they hadn't teased out the details on it, he thought including youth Commissioners could be explored. He reiterated the importance of youth voice and their need for a place to utilize their voice and have direct contact with entities who can take their input and spur action. Commissioner Huelsmann stated there was a youth cabinet in Illinois previously, but he wasn't sure what happened with it. He shared his thoughts on how important it is for there to be space for youth to engage.

6. New Business

Co-Chair Shaver asked Clemons-Mosby if he could help organize agencies to participate in the next Commission meeting to discuss further the details of the draft recommendations. Clemons-Mosby stated he could help do that. Co-Chair Shaver stated he would love to keep the discussion small, so it is substantive. He suggested to Commission staff that they structure the meetings in a way to allow the agencies to link together on the topic. Co-Chair Shaver confirmed that this meeting doesn't have a quorum so any voting items will be pushed to the next meeting.

7. Adjournment

Co-Chair Shaver thanked Commissioners and guests for participating and the meeting was adjourned at 2:29pm.