

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-007

**A COUNTY RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND
INCLUSION (JEDI) ADVISORY BOARD**

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 3 of the Montana Constitution guarantees the inalienable rights of all persons, including “the right to a clean and healthful environment and the rights of pursuing life’s basic necessities, enjoying and defending their lives and liberties, acquiring, possessing and protecting property, and seeking their safety, health and happiness in all lawful ways” and acknowledges that “in enjoying these rights, all persons recognize corresponding responsibilities;” and

WHEREAS, Missoula County recognizes its responsibility to all persons, including those of identities and communities more adversely impacted by structural and systemic inequities; and

WHEREAS, Missoula County’s mission is to “[p]rovide quality public service to protect and enhance the well-being of the people, communities and environment of Missoula County;” and

WHEREAS, oppressive rhetoric and legislation in the state and around the country have left many community members across Missoula County feeling more vulnerable; and

WHEREAS, these community members reflect diverse identities, including and not limited to racial and ethnic minorities, people of diverse religious and/or spiritual backgrounds, age, differently abled individuals, refugee status, LGBTQQIP2SAA, non-binary, those who identify as transgender, those living in rural communities, those experiencing houselessness, and other historically marginalized groups; and

WHEREAS, Missoula County acknowledges that the systemic inequity these identities and communities face include barriers that may consist of a lack of access to reliable broadband internet and other technology critical to information and education¹, fewer opportunities to access credit loans and other mechanisms necessary to build generational wealth², and other barriers that impact the ability for these community members to achieve their best life; and

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 4 of the Montana Constitution acknowledges that “the dignity of the human being is inviolable;” and

WHEREAS, Missoula County continues to pursue a more inclusive vision of justice to ensure that all people, especially those of identities and communities more adversely impacted by structural and systemic inequities, can enjoy their inviolable dignity; and

WHEREAS, Missoula County recognizes that to deconstruct these inequities successfully, it must include the individuals and groups most impacted by them in our efforts; and

WHEREAS, Missoula County residents have expressed and advocated for better representation of people of identities and/or communities more adversely impacted by systemic inequities; and

WHEREAS, deconstructing structural and systemic inequities also requires our local governments to develop and implement with intention more equitable structures and systems; and

WHEREAS, on September 2, 2021, Missoula County passed Resolution No. 2021-087 establishing its commitment to a Just, Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive County; and

WHEREAS, one of the outcomes identified in Resolution No. 2021-087 is a collaboration between the City of Missoula and Missoula County supporting the creation of a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Advisory Board; and

WHEREAS, the Missoula County Commissioners held a public meeting on January 5, 2023, to consider this resolution and take public comment; and

WHEREAS, the Missoula City Council is considering a similar resolution and take public comment at its public meeting scheduled for January 9, 2023; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners (Commissioners), in conjunction with the Missoula City Council (Council) should it pass a similar resolution, supports the establishment of the Missoula City-County JEDI Advisory Board (Board) to advise the local governments on issues, policies, programs, services and other opportunities to advance efforts regarding justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission, in conjunction with the Council should it pass a similar resolution, establish and appoint three members to the JEDI Advisory Board Bylaws Task Force (Task Force) tasked to do the following within twelve months of the date of this Resolution:

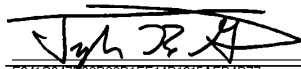
- Develop bylaws for the Board.
- Develop and assist the Commission and Council in implementing a formal recruitment and selection process for prospective Board members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commissioners, in conjunction with Council should it pass a similar resolution, shall provide the resources necessary including access to County employees to develop the bylaws and assign staff to support the Task Force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon appointment of the full board and thereafter, the Board will continue to be supported by County staff, and members will be appointed approximately equally (alternating +1 annually) by the local governments in accordance with the adopted bylaws.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 5TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2023

ATTEST:



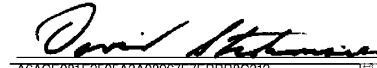
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Tyler Gernant, Clerk and Recorder



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MISSOULA COUNTY



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Josh Slotnick, Chair



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David Strohmaier Commissioner



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Juanita Vero, Commissioner

¹ Warner, L. C., (2022). Transforming Missoula: Centering BIPOC Solutions & Action Strategies – Research Project Report. *LEARN (Listening, Engaging, Action, Reflection Network)*. <https://pub-missoula.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=266944>

² Weitz, J. (2018, January 22). *Why Minorities Have So Much Trouble Accessing Small Business Loans*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesfinancecouncil/2018/01/22/why-minorities-have-so-much-trouble-accessing-small-business-loans/?sh=4bf6c58755c4>