



## Summary from OCDP “Listening Session with the Chair”

**Purpose of meeting:** The Chair of OCDP, Jody Job, heard the community's concerns and made a decision to host listening sessions where our OCDP community could voice their questions and concerns. To ensure these meetings are a safe and equitable space, we asked Stephanie Crider and Amy Mindell, OCDP volunteers, to assist with planning and moderating the listening sessions. (Rochelle Rubin filled in for Amy for the first session). This document serves as “*running notes*” so that all members of OCDP have access to the information that was discussed. The OCDP will be working on action items that we can present at the next listening session.

For any question and/or concerns you can always reach the OCDP at [staff@ocdp.org](mailto:staff@ocdp.org).

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### Listening Session Meeting Notes

**Date:** 11/6/21

**Time:** 12:00 - 2:00pm

**Location:** OCDP Office (Madison Heights, MI)

**Attendees:** There were 16 people present

#### **Norms:**

- No personal attacks
- One person speaks at a time
- Be respectful, no yelling
- Be generous and accept other views
- Step up and step back / Contribute and don't dominate the conversation
- Be an active listener
- Focus on issues re: the Black community
- Be honest
- Speak from the heart without fear
- Ask clarifying questions

## Concerns:

- Focus on the role of Black people
  - Discrimination occurs
  - Some people ran for office in the community and were told they were not wanted in leadership and not protected in the community
    - No protection means no money raised for them
    - Issues they run on aren't supported
    - There should be no tolerance for racists
- No communication
  - The three Black OCDP chairs should be asked for input, in particular for Black issues
- Democrats are in danger without Black support; If you don't repair relationships there will be no support for the Party
- The Party's focus is more on promoting candidates and not the issues
- No funding for Black candidates
  - Women in particular have difficulty climbing up the ladder in the Party
    - Hardest workers for the party
- Young Black people feel they don't have a voice and role in the Party
- Need to do a better job of educating Black voters on issues, especially at a younger age
- More Dem engagement in the Black community before elections
  - Candidates need to make personal appearances in the community besides just going churches
  - Have something like town halls
- Dems need to lead with the goal of dismantling systemic white supremacy and replace with a system of Black justice

## Next Steps:

- Have more listening sessions
- Schedule town hall meetings with Black communities
- Communicate with Black Democratic Party leaders, such as club chairs
  - Not just the ones selected by the candidates
  - Also organize as partners with community leaders
- Meet the needs of the community; meet them where they are
  - If someone from the Black community calls OCDP or elected officials there should be a date on the calendar (for a meeting) with a follow up
  - Don't come to my town unless you're willing to talk to me
- If a candidate is afraid to go where Black voters live, then they should not be running for the Democratic Party
- Candidate development is a two to three year process
  - If you are not known in the community, then do not run

- “Lead Black”
  - Lead on the issues that affect Black citizens
- Within the MDP and OCDP, some people should step aside and make room for Black leadership
- Decisions about redistricting help get White Dems elected but not necessarily Black candidates
- Develop a strategy to take action
  - This includes providing money

## **Suggestions:**

- Hybrid listening session
- List of who represents us in elected positions, including areas such as redistricting commissions
- Next session in Pontiac or Southfield

**Next Meeting: January 8th, 2022**

*Please stay tuned for a sign up link as the date gets closer.*