

Committee Members:

Mike Kelly, Mayor - Absent	Stephanie Iser – Present
Ben Dickens, Council Representative – Present	Michael Rebne, Council Representative – Present
Kathleen Olvera – Absent	Kate Raglow – Vice Chair – Present
Michael Poppa – Present	Carrie Paulette – Present
Michael Ryan – Absent	Dennis Way - Present
Xavier Comeau – Present	Josey Shaw - Absent
Haile Sims – Chair – Present	Bambi Leseberg – Present
Staff: Jennifer Jones-Lacy	Curtis Herrera - Present

AGENDA ITEMS

A. Approval of Minutes from the 11/18 meeting –

- Bambi Leseberg asked that corrections be made in the minutes to include her recommendations on including the racial equity resolution as background for the survey as well as her volunteering to help write the survey questions.
- Michael Rebne made a motion to approve the minutes with that amendment, seconded by Kate Raglow, Motion passes

B. Racial Equity Survey Question Review from Sub-Committee – Stephanie, Haile, Carrie, Bambi and M. Rebne

- M. Rebne discussed writing the survey questions and how they worked with Kathryn Evans who provided some feedback on the draft questions.
- Several members suggested scaling down the questions to maybe five due to attention spans and wanting to get responsiveness.
- Jennifer Jones-Lacy mentioned that the City will conduct another Citizen Survey in 2021 and we could include some custom questions and that is an opportunity to get a statistically significant answer to some of these questions.
- Michael Rebne suggested that we do a preliminary survey prior to including some of these questions in the ETC survey.
- Xavier suggested the question “Do you think racism is a problem in Roeland Park” should be the first question we ask on a survey if you want minorities to respond. Should go straight to the point.
- Carrie will review the questions and try to pare them down to maybe 10 questions that we would ask via an online survey instrument. Stephanie suggested running the final list by Kathryn to get her feedback and that could help us determine the one-two questions we could add to the ETC survey. Need to focus on the goal and determine where we’re at with racial equity.
- Haile said he hopes to get this approved at the next meeting to send out.
- Ben Dickens suggested that having two surveys could be redundant asking the questions in one of our surveys then asking the same questions via ETC.
- Curtis said the questions seem as though they are written from a white person’s perspective. M. Poppa suggested the first question be “do you identify as Caucasian or non-Caucasian.” He said we need to determine what’s most valuable to learn from our community on these topics, what is most important. He wants to know the answers to all of the questions. Curtis would like to see more representation on this committee from persons of color.
- Some suggested that cutting the questions to a shorter list doesn’t make a lot of sense.
- Carrie will send out a draft of the survey questions for final feedback. Bambi offered to help with refining the survey questions.

C. Review of Committee Goals - to adopt or not to adopt, that is the question.

1. Develop economic and workforce opportunities for businesses and employees of color and identify any obstacles that may exist.
2. To establish that Roeland Park is an open and welcoming community to people of all races and backgrounds, where acting on racist beliefs is not tolerated.

3. Focus on developing racial bias and equity education and outreach for City staff, elected/appointed officials and residents.
4. Create more community engagement activities that involve our Police Department to facilitate building strong relationships with the community.
 - Haile said that these goals are fluid and can change when needed. M. Poppa made a motion to adopt the goals, seconded by Ben Dickens. All ayes, motion carried.
 - Stephanie voiced concern about adopting goals at this point as she thinks it's too early to have goals but she would go along with the group.
 - Some of the committee members reiterated that this is fluid but that goals shouldn't change too frequently.
 - These goals are more purposes for the committee and provide an overarching guidance for how to move forward.

D. Review of Neighboring Cities' Racial Equity Work – Jennifer, Curtis, Kate and Dennis

- Jennifer shared the work Prairie Village is doing and that they wanted to go to Council in January and request that the committee become permanent. From there, they intend to work on other goals as identified in an internal survey.
- Kate looked to see what Mission did but they are focusing more on work with their police force.
- Dennis reached out to Lenexa but said that they do not have anything formal.
- Curtis reached out to Black Excellence KC and the leader for this group educates white people on how to be allies to people of color. He would like to have her sit in on this committee to explain what she does. He will invite her to the next committee meeting on January 27th.
- Haile also discussed the possibility of making the Racial Equity Ad Hoc Committee a permanent committee of the City.

E. Short-Term Goals to Further Racial Equity in RP – Haile walked through the following different suggestions from committee members and asked everyone to vote and email those votes to Jennifer to determine what we focus on.

Policy

- Shawnee Mission North mascot change –
 - a. Would be a resolution passed by the City suggesting that change; could be a public statement to the Board. This might be something we just do.
- Legislation to curtail/punish those who make racial profiling 911 calls
 - a.
- Affirmative Action in city hiring
- Build Race Equity policy assessment for all major policies (infrastructure, social, departmental) for council to use in decision making
- Education/Commitment/Funding to affordable housing
- CROWN act: protection for Black people re: hair at work in the city or for city
- Decriminalize small amounts of marijuana possession.
 - a. This is being discussed at Police Policy Review Committee, 30% of violations are people of color and that is not reflective of population.
- Increase the minimum wage in RP.

Training/Education

- Training/Conversations for City Council and/or city staff:

- a. Driving Tour of History of Segregation of KC: <https://www.jocolibrary.org/our-stories/history-segregation-kansas-city> (We could have city council and/or staff do their own driving tour and facilitate conversations after)
- b. Film series and discussions
- c. Training by SURJ or other anti-racism organization and include indigenous history training
- Organizing trainings, esp. For white Roeland Parkers to understand our complicity with racism better
- Black Lives Matter in Roeland Park--ongoing series of speakers, trainings, discussions, actions, accountability
- Land acknowledgement: a more public acknowledgment that this is the land of Shawnee and Kanza people and their history- this could be through physical signs at the entrance of city buildings/parks, on the website (the history on the website is very white-focused) ~*opportunity to partner with the Historical Committee*
- Declare an official city honoring of Indigenous People's Day instead of Columbus Day
- (A larger project) Working with the Shawnee Indian Mission to acknowledge the hard truths of its past
- Educate community on racial equity policies we already have in place and what it means for residents and visitors
- Collaboration with Cedar Roe on trainings and book displays, book clubs, podcast list

Communication

- Outreach plan for safety ordinance – working with El Centro, AIRR and other partners
- Signage that remembers and educates about racial segregation in RP
- Black Lives Matter to RPPD promotional messaging
- Work with Wyandotte County to add new signage at the north entrance to the city on Roe to highlight the change in speed limit.

Other

- Support/Recruit BIPOC to run for office
- Organizing/listening to people living at BLVD apartments
- Black-led ongoing Neighbor Advocacy Group--or work with NBR (mostly white) to integrate that group
- Identify the process to remove “racial covenant” language from deeds.
- Celebrate Juneteenth as a city holiday.
- Review materials (written, media) that reflect differing viewpoints of the following terms, some of which are reflected in Resolution No. 682: white privilege, systemic/institutionalized racism and implicit/unconscious bias.
- Study the origins, goals and worldview of the organization, "Black Lives Matter".

M. Rebne is going to put forward a staff report to make the Racial Equity Committee a permanent committee – moved by M. Poppa, seconded M. Rebne

M. Rebne suggested having a group statement read at the January 11th Shawnee Mission Board of Education meeting from the Roeland Park Racial Equity Committee.

- Leseberg disagreed with changing the mascot and explained her position that
- M. Rebne motioned that they write a letter issuing support for changing the Shawnee Mission North mascot Dickens, seconded. Seven Ayes and two nays. Ben Dickens said he would take a stab at drafting the letter and we'll get the date and find a representative to speak on the committee's behalf.
- Michael Rebne said he would draft a resolution providing a land acknowledgement that we are on land stolen from Native Americans. B. Dickens said he would support that as did several of the Councilmembers indicate that they are supportive.

F. Other Matters

- Website update and continued feedback
 - a. Jennifer showed the Ad Hoc Racial Equity Committee page on the website

- Anti-racism book club
 - a. M. Rebne shared that the Johnson County Library pulled together a list of anti-racism books to share with the possibility of having a book club with the community to have continued dialogue and education on issues of racism. Also discussed the possibility of having a Little Free Library style operation with these books in them.

G. Adjourned the meeting at 8:51 p.m.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Date: Jan 27, 2021 Time: 7 p.m Location: Virtual