



African American Resources Advisory Commission

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

The African American Resources Advisory Commission convened in a meeting on Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at Street-Jones Building, Room 400 in Austin, Texas. The meeting was called to order at 5:45 by immediate past Chair Greg Smith since neither the Chair nor Vice Chair were in attendance at the time.

African American Resources Advisory Commissioners:

Present: LaTisha Anderson, Jessica Faith Carter, Vice Chair Chiquita Eugene, Clifford Gillard, Marissa Jones, Michael Lee, Nelson Linder, Kenneth Thompson, Aaron Whatley, and Greg Smith.

Absent: Tam Hawkins, Chair Daryl Horton, and Ruthie Redmond.

City Staff in Attendance: Economic Development Department (EDD) Assistant Director Sylvania Holt-Rabb, EDD Small Business Program Manager Vicky Valdez, Council Executive Secretary Andre Ewing, and EDD Development Services Administrator and Liaison Linda Hayes.

1. Approval of the Minutes:

- a. The minutes of the August 3, 2016 meeting were approved unanimously following a motion from Commissioner Kenneth Thompson which was seconded by Commissioner Michael Lee approved unanimously.
- b. Commissioner Clifford Gillard requested the minutes from the special called meeting on August 6th, 2016 at Huston Tillotson University (HTU).

2. Citizen Communication: No citizens were signed up to speak

3. Presentations:

- a. Austin Energy Utilities: Staff reported it has made many attempts to communicate with various Austin Energy staff with no response. Commissioner Greg Smith requests that Assistant City Manager Mark Washington make the request to Austin Energy for a presentation at next month's meeting.

4. Working Groups:

- a. Small Business/Parking Issues on E. 11th & E. 12th Streets: Commissioner Smith reported that a merchants' association is forming.
- b. Photograph Selection for Mural: No update, Dr. Eugene no presentation
- c. Health and Mental Health: Commissioner Smith reported that he and Chair Horton attended a Travis County Health and Human Services meeting. They



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were supportive of the Commission's budget requests as presented by Chair Horton.

- d. Public Safety: The City's DNA Lab backlog has been the primary topic of discussion.
- e. Expansion of Carver Library: No funds were budgeted for this item, but it is on concept menu.
- f. Solar and Economic: Commissioner Thompson met with Stan Pickney of Lighthouse Solar in San Antonio. According to Mr. Pickney, the price of solar is decreasing. Commissioners Thompson and Redmon met with Carol, an advocate for reducing cost of energy in Austin. Commissioner Thompson plans to ask Stan and Carol to present to the Commission.
- g. Youth and Education: Vice Chair Eugene asked Commissioner Anderson to consider inviting the AISD superintendent and the two at-large trustees to attend a Commission meeting to discuss the Commission's concerns with the district, and suggested that the Hispanic Quality of Life Commission be invited to attend the meeting.
- h. Urban Music/Other Cultural Activities: Commissioner Anderson reported that Council Member Houston is searching for a potential partnership with UT to sponsor the Urban Music Fest. The committee has discussed the possibility of requesting fee waivers; however this would require Urban Music Festival to partner with City.
- i. Changes to By-Laws and Commission Membership: Commissioner Lee stated that the by-laws need to be amended because (1) they were written by the City and not by the Commission and (2) the meeting day will change from Wednesday to Tuesday. Commissioner Lee will send staff a timeline for revising the by-laws, which staff will distribute to Commissioners. Commissioners suggested improvements to the bylaws including specifying duties for the officers, and holding one meeting per quarter at HTU on Saturday.

Commissioner Gillard requested that staff provide the attendance roster for the current fiscal year to date at the next meeting.

- j. Feasibility Commission:

Vicky Valdez reported, on behalf of Sylnovia Holt-Rabb that these items from the Concept menu were approved:

KAZI, for increased broadcasting of Council meetings \$32,970.00

MEELJ Justice Center \$250,000.00



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Youth Employment, to serve 200 youth	\$170,000.00
Urban Music Festival	\$26,000.00
<u>Youth Harvest Foundation</u>	<u>\$174,363.00</u>
Total	\$653,333.00

Sylnovia Holt-Rabb reported that this is one-time funding. Staff recommended that Budget committee meet with Council members to learn what the process will be next year. Vice Chair Eugene suggested that the Budget Committee start working now on the budget moving forward.

Commissioner Linder wants the record to reflect that he didn't appreciate the Council's comments about extra vetting, implying that the Commission did not vet its recommendations for the budget.

Commissioner Anderson spoke about the Commission's need to follow up on the Mayor's remark that Black Lives Matter. This topic will be added to the Commission's Feasibility and Budget working group.

5. Old Business:

- a. Debrief on the Special Call Meeting held August 6, 2016 at HTU will be discussed by the Feasibility committee, then brought to the full Commission.

6. Commission and Staff Update:

- a. Equity Officer update: Commission Linder reported that a decision has been made and will be announced, probably within a couple days. The applicants were; Dr. Kazique Prince, Veronica Lara, and Brion Oaks.

7. New Business, Future Agenda Items:

- a. State of the City and the African American Quality of Life Future – Marc Ott, City Manager
- b. Community Policing Plan Update – Chief Art Acevedo, Chief of Police
- c. Connection between Social and Criminal Justice – Rosemary Lehmberg, Travis County District Attorney
- d. Presentation by Wellness Center, which is a collaboration between UT and HTU to address specific quality of life issues identified by the Commission
- e. African Heritage Network, Candice Wade



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- f. Austin Area Urban League

8. Announcements:

- a. Central Texas Chapter of the National Forum Fort Black Public Administrators Leadership Summit 2016 will be held September 29-30, 2016. Dusty McCormick is president of the local chapter and official chair of the summit.
- b. Urban League Equal Opportunity Day Gala will be held Thursday, September 29, 2016. Keynote speaker is Dr. Steve Perry. Tickets are \$150.00 per person.
- c. Commissioner Lee has a show on Public Access TV called Right Talk with Mike on Monday.
- d. ARA is hosting first annual Doctor Charles Urdy Golf Tournament Saturday at Avery Ranch.
- e. City Manager Marc Ott's farewell party will be held October 11 at the Hilton Hotel. More information will be forthcoming.
- f. The next meeting will be Wednesday, October 5, 2016.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at by Vice Chair Eugene following Greg Smith's motion.