



African American Resources Advisory Commission

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 3, 2018

The African American Resources Advisory Commission convened in a meeting on Tuesday, July 3, 2018 in the Executive Session conference room at Austin City Hall, 301 West 2nd Street, in Austin, Texas. The meeting was called to order at 5:39 by Chair Kenneth Thompson.

African American Resources Advisory Commissioners:

Present: Chair Kenneth Thompson, Vice Chair Chiquita Eugene, LaTisha Anderson, Jessica Faith Carter, Miriam Conner, Aaron Demerson, Clifford Gillard, Tam Hawkins, Daryl Horton, Marissa Jones, Nelson Linder, Ruthie Redmond, and Elaine Fowler

Absent: Greg Smith

City Staff in Attendance: Economic Development Department (EDD) Acting Deputy Director Sylnovia Holt-Rabb, Assistant City Manager Mark Washington, Chief Equity Officer Brion Oaks, and EDD Development Services Administrator and Liaison Linda Hayes.

1. Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the June 5 regular meeting were approved unanimously as corrected following a motion by Commissioner Demerson, seconded by Commissioner Anderson.

2. Chair's Report:

Chair Thompson reported that he spoke with City Manager Cronk about safety and has a meeting scheduled with Security Manager David Lothery about security at Commission meetings. Chair Thompson also spoke with City Manager Cronk about the Carver Complex and about staffing at City Hall. Chair Thompson has invited City Manager Cronk present at a commission meeting.

3. Citizen Communication:

- a. **Farah Muscadin, Police Monitor** thanked the Commission for mentoring and encouraging her as she began her role as the City of Austin Police Monitor. She would like to return in August or September to talk about the oversight structure of the division.
- b. **Michael Lee, former AARAC Commissioner for District 10**, talked about his show, called Right Talk with Mike Lee and invited Commissioners to appear on the show.
- c. **Ms. Fatima Mann** spoke about the information Domain published about their ideal shopper, which excludes black and brown people. She said that Domain gets subsidies from the City of Austin under their Chapter 380 agreement and she would like this commission and other commissions to address how this does not correlate with Austin values. Ms. Mann also spoke about Lawrence Parish, who was shot and severely injured by the Austin Police Department. He currently has a \$500,000 bond even though APD said he did not fire at them. Finally Ms. Mann addressed healing and mindfulness regarding public service workers. She said these workers need time and resources to deal with trauma, which usually impacts communities of color. EDD Acting Deputy Director Holt-Rabb clarified that Domain Northside, which published the offensive flyer, did not receive subsidies from the City of Austin, although part of The Domain, which is the section closer to Braker, did receive Chapter 380 incentives.
- d. **Jamie Castillo, Arts Commission Chair** invited commissioners interested in arts and culture issues to speak with him and spoke in support of the Arts Commission.
- e. **District 1 Council Member Ms. Ora Houston** spoke about the Public Transit Authority and Capital Metro re-map. The service changes that went into effect in June have a



African American Resources Advisory Commission

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 3, 2018

disproportionate effect on people of color and poor people. She rode the Route 6 bus and heard people complaining about not knowing how to get to places they are used to going, hours long delays due to transfers now required, and insufficient service. No bus goes east of 183 after 7:54 p.m., so no one can get east of 183 unless they walk. Capital Metro isn't paying attention to routes affecting people who need to ride the bus; they seem preoccupied with north-south routes that affect people who can choose whether to ride the bus. Ms. Houston also spoke about the lack of quality education in District 1 Title 1 schools. The billion-dollar bond passed last year was not for education, it was for facilities, mostly west of IH-35. They're going to start closing some District 1 schools; because of the gentrification, the parents will not take their children to District 1 schools, even the exceptional schools; instead they get transfers out of district. Neighborhood students have to get permits to use libraries in magnet schools. District 1 schools do not have bilingual education, even though some AISD schools teach Spanish, Chinese and Arabic. Racism is not being addressed by AISD or its Board. Finally talk with the Friends of the Carver and talk with your district Council members. District 1 has only 29% of Austin's Black population.

- f. **Mr. Richard Franklin** operates the Youth Unlimited program in Del Valle, which has the lowest income children in all of Travis County. The program, which provides mentoring to traumatized children, operated last year with limited funding, but still impacted over 120 children. He asked for funding for the program to reach more of the students who need help.

4. Presentations:

- a. **Austin Police Department Update: Police Chief Brian Manley** gave an update on the direction of the department, including priorities that were in place previously and that have come up through the town hall process. Focus on safety to make sure Austin is one of the safest cities in America and that resources are provided in parts of the city where they are needed so that all of Austin is as safe as possible. Also focusing on reducing the crime rate and deterring criminal activity. APD supports efforts to determine the best DNA lab capabilities in Austin and Travis County. City and Travis County officials are working together to determine the appropriate structure of the DNA lab. APD is focused on community policing and transparency through improved data collection and reporting on racial profiling and disparities in cite and release. They are working to increase community policing training in the academy, specifically diversity. Efforts are underway to increase police oversight and officer accountability oversight within and outside of the meet and confer agreement. APD is working with the Police Monitor to determine the best police oversight system. APD is also working to enhance staffing diversity at all levels. An equity assessment in will identify any policies or procedures that have inequitable impact. The Homeless Outreach Street Team is working to align people with services that can help them. APD values guest and immigrant rights, and looks forward to the opening of the sobriety center. All commanders and chiefs will be required to undergo Undoing Racism training by the end of 2018. APD is also enhancing its de-escalation training and having department wide communication regarding expectations for officer conduct, including de-escalation and guardian versus warrior perspective.
- b. **Intergovernmental Relations Office's Preparations for the 86th Texas Legislative Session in 2019 – Brie Franco, Intergovernmental Relations Officer**, spoke about the 85th legislative session because the 86th session will be a repeat. She gave the schedule and deadlines for Texas legislative sessions and provided an overview of bills



African American Resources Advisory Commission

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 3, 2018

filed and passed over the last ten sessions. The rate of City-related bills, bills that preempt laws created by cities, has increased significantly in recent years, even though the state's primary responsibilities are public and higher education, and health and human services. Priorities of the governor and lieutenant governor in the last session were convention of the states, voter id, property tax caps, revenue caps on property taxes collected by cities, school choice, the bathroom bill, sanctuary cities.

- c. **What is Adulthood of Black Girls Costing Us? – Jacqueline Miller, CEO of Healthy Actions Intervening Responsibly (H.A.I.R.)** spoke about being a survivor of domestic violence and sexual abuse and using that experience to further explore areas of disempowerment. 60% of American children are exposed to violence in their homes, schools and communities. Her work is to better understand who grows up quickly and why, and how assumptions of responsibilities and expectations contribute to a shorter life span. Black boys in one study were perceived to be older and more likely to be guilty than their white peers. Seasoned officers consistently over-estimated the ages of black adolescent felony suspects by four to five years. In a study of 325 adults, black girls were perceived as more adult and as needing less protection and less nurturing than white girls, and as knowing more about sex and adult topics than their white peers. Subjective age refers to the age one feels compared to others of the same chronological age. Those who face life-threatening risks in childhood report feeling older than their peers. Poverty and economic hardship foster older age identities and impact children adversely; they often function at a more mature stage. Adulthood robs children of innocence and opportunities to be treated as children. Instead children are treated more harshly.
- d. **Economic Development Cultural Arts Funding Process — Economic Development Assistant Director Sylvania Holt-Rabb, Division Manager Megan Wells, and Grant Coordinator Jesus Pantel** gave a presentation about the cultural funding program, which is funded by hotel occupancy taxes and provides professional services contracts to arts organizations who provide community benefit. City Council sets policy for the programs and program budget and appoints members of the Arts Commission. The Arts Commission develops funding guidelines for each program, review requests for funding, and connect the community with the programs. All applications are run through a peer panel who scores applications, then a funding matrix is used to assign funding in a blind process. Cultural Arts Funding Programs are the Core Funding Program, Community Initiatives Program, Cultural Heritage Funding program, and the Capacity Building Program, which is the only program that is not funded with hotel occupancy taxes. Other programs funded through the hotel occupancy tax include TEMPO and Now Playing Austin. Mr. Pantel spoke about the cultural funding process and the structure of the peer panels, which is intentionally diverse. Cultural contracts have an ALANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab and Native American) breakdown and an ALANA modifier is used to enhance funding. These programs are funded through hotel occupancy taxes, which depend on tourism. Encourage artists to contact the Cultural Funding office. Since equity is a priority, EDD is assisting with an FTE who will work in the City's Equity Office.

5. Special Presentation: African American Community Alliance Community Update

- a. The Austin Revitalization Authority – Greg Smith, President - Absent
- b. The Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce – Tam Hawkins, President and CEO – Yesterday the Chamber put out a statement regarding Domain Northside encouraging shopping with black businesses and has been in discussions with Endeavor Real Estate Group who owns Domain Northside. Chamber has a program coming on with the MECA



African American Resources Advisory Commission

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 3, 2018

Chambers called Future Fashion, and there is an event on July 31st at Still Austin from 5:30 to 7:30. Check the Chamber's website. The Chamber is also promoting the Soul Food Truck Festival on October 27th. The Black Elected Officials event will be held in January.

- c. The Baptist Minister Union – Rev. Daryl Horton, President – No update
- d. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – Nelson Linder, President – Regarding the Domain Northside, the City of Austin has an anti-discrimination ordinance which prohibits discrimination. Yesterday in District Court 419 NAACP, along with attorneys, were in Civil Court against CodeNext and made a compelling case that CodeNext has a disparate impact on Black people and increases gentrification. There is currently a federal lawsuit by NAACP investigating AISD for school closures and funding inequities east of IH-35. Mr. Linder made a presentation to Capital Metro about remapping addressing the impact on black and poor people. AISD has a new initiative on Customer Service and will be speaking at the Millennium on Saturday at 1:30. Mr. Linder will be on Fox 7 tonight addressing the latest absurdities by Donald Trump, blaming President Obama's administration for affirmative action. Midterm elections are coming up. This is a very important election. Please vote. NAACP's national convention will be in San Antonio; please try to attend.
- e. The Austin Area Urban League – Quincy Dunlap, President and CEO – Upcoming AAUL events include the Annual Gala on September 29th, a Jazz Event hosted by the Guild on October 14th, and the Golf Tournament on November 1st. AAUL's platform Our Vote Matters will occur in conjunction with Get out the Vote. AAUL is developing a youth development education social development model focusing on post-secondary success. AAUL is on track to achieve all their goals in the workforce space - their program is overenrolled at 200% for job readiness and occupational training. Mr. Dunlap provided an update on AAUL's Emergency Housing Repair programs. AAUL is working with Reverend Horton on the Project Ready Model which will be rolled out in Austin.
- f. Cultural Arts – Clifford Gillard – No update

6. Working Groups:

- a. Photograph Selection for Mural: Chair Thompson said we have legends in the community that go unrecognized and should be recognized while they are still here. The community needs to be reminded that nominations are taken every month.
- b. Health and Mental Health: No update
- c. Public Safety: Focus is on the police contract and police oversight.
- d. Expansion of the Carver Complex: Commissioners met with council members about the Carver and will continue to watch progress.
- e. Solar and Economic: Commissioners are invited to attend a solar energy documentary at the Alamo Draft House on July 21st.
- f. Youth and Education: No update
- g. Urban Music/Other Cultural Activities: No update
- h. Affordable Housing and Equitable Planning Group: No update



African American Resources Advisory Commission

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 3, 2018

7. Discussion and Possible Action

- a. Youth and Education Proposed Plan– Jessica Faith Carter and LaTisha Anderson – have been working with AISD around their African American Achievement Plan to create a plan of action for education with AISD and other partners. Focus so far has been on special education, discipline disproportionality, overall academic achievement, employment for African Americans, business partnerships and contracts, as well as school closures. Commissioner Anderson will be on the AISD ballot in November, running for District 1 Trustee.
- b. Joint Inclusion Alternate – Commissioner Carter

8. Future Agenda Items:

- a. Monthly updates from the Austin Revitalization Authority, Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce, Baptist Ministers Union, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Austin Area Urban League
- b. Meeting with the New City Manager:
- c. Carver Complex – Quarterly Update
- d. African-American Cultural & Heritage Facility Annual Report – Economic Development Department, Cultural Arts Division Program Manager TJ Owens
- e. Jump On It: Commissioners Anderson, Conner and Gillard
- f. Chapter 380 Economic Development Policy and Program: Commissioners Redmond and Thompson
- g. Budget: Commissioners Thompson and Carter

9. Announcements:

- a. Mt. Sinai moved into a new facility this week at 8500 Cameron Road.
- b. African American Book Fair was held at Carver Library.
- c. Judge Harriet Murphy held a book signing.
- d. The AISD bond package will provide opportunities for contractors; AISD is currently advertising on radio.

10. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned following a motion by Commissioner Horton seconded by Commissioner Demerson.