

From: [Bill Baird](#)
To: [CityCouncil](#)
Cc: [Stephen Arbo](#); [Brian Head](#)
Subject: Diversity and Inclusion Work Session
Date: Tuesday, November 24, 2020 1:00:49 PM

Council Members,

It was the request of council that we treat the topic of D and I as a work session. By work session, council members requested that no other business of the city be discussed during the work session. These work sessions are regular meetings conducted publicly, but simply do not have other city business (or as minimal as possible). We have had an extremely full agenda the last couple months, so there have been no opportunities to have a meeting with only one topic of business. We will not have that opportunity in future meetings this year, so we will need to add a meeting that is not currently scheduled.

With regard to the Diversity and Inclusion Commission discussions, we had numerous meetings in which we did not get very far, primarily because we did not have experts in the room to answer the questions and concerns of council members. Cities, organizations, and businesses across the nation have D and I strategic plans, managers, and more. As mayor, I have worked hard to educate myself on this topic the last few years, but I am nowhere near an expert on the topic. Our staff including legal have done a lot of work to provide a framework for discussion and even sought legal expertise to provide a resolution and scope. However, they were not able to facilitate the discussion any more than I could as mayor presiding over our council meetings. The best way to have a work session is to have an expert in Diversity and Inclusion and the legalities that come with appointing a commission. We are fortunate to already have a working relationship with such an expert in Dana Cutler with the Cutler Law Firm. Ms. Cutler, her husband Keith Cutler, and our staff attorney, Zach Cartwright, successfully defended the city in the Denise Kelly case this past year. Ms. Cutler's resume when it comes to D and I is phenomenal. I have instructed Mr. Arbo to use funds from the Mayor's Discretionary Fund to contract with Ms. Cutler to help facilitate and answer questions regarding a scope and resolution to appoint Diversity and Inclusion Commission. Her current scope of work and professional fee is \$5,700.

Finding a date for the work session has not been an easy task given the busy lives and other council member's committee commitments in the evenings. I scoured the dates later in November and all of December and I sincerely could not find an optimal date to have this work session. Dates I considered were the Tuesdays before Thanksgiving, November 24th, or Tuesday before Christmas, December 22nd. I also considered the week after Christmas, but these were all dates during the holidays, and I could not justify taking any family and holiday time away after such a difficult year. Therefore, I am proposing a Saturday morning work session on December 12th at 10:00 am.

Please let me know your availability and call me with any concerns.

Thank you,



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