



Commission for Diversity & Inclusion

ACTION LETTER

Thursday, June 3, 2021

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Gray called the June 3, 2021 Commission for Diversity and Inclusion meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Members Present

Commissioner Courtney
Chairperson Gray
Commissioner Grogan
Commissioner Harrison
Commissioner Henson
Commissioner Holland
Commissioner Mahmood
Commissioner Martin
Commissioner Presley
Commissioner Schuler
Vice-Chairperson Wilson

Staff

Stephen Arbo
Stacy Lombardo

Members Absent

Commissioner Beasley
Commissioner Harding
Commissioner Ivy
Commissioner Meyer

3. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Commissioner Martin, seconded by Commissioner Mahmood, to approve the agenda as published. The motion carried by a unanimous 11-0 vote (Commissioners Beasley, Harding, Ivy and Meyer “Absent”).

4. Approval of the Action Letter dated April 15, 2021

A motion was made by Commissioner Martin, seconded by Commissioner Henson, to approve the Action Letter dated April 15, 2021. The motion carried by a unanimous 11-0 vote (Commissioners Beasley, Harding, Ivy and Meyer “Absent”).

5. Public Comments

There were no Public Comments

6. Recommendation to amend Resolution 21-01

A motion was made by Commissioner Grogan, seconded by Commissioner Holland, to recommend to City Council for approval of an amendment to Resolution 21-01 to adjust the time-frames to begin on June 3, 2021 instead of the date the Resolution was adopted. The motion carried by a unanimous 11-0 vote (Commissioners Beasley, Harding, Ivy and Meyer “Absent”).

7. Trust Building Exercises

Ms. Dana Cutler, Cutler Cultural Constant Inc., asked Commissioners to write down what they fear about serving on this Commission. She collected the responses in the “Fear Hat” and had each Commissioner draw someone else’s response and read it aloud. There was a brief discussion on each fear shared.

8. Common Language and Definitions

Ms. Cutler discussed diversity, equity, inclusion, micro aggressions, micro insults, invalidation, micro affirmations, overt bias, symbolic bias, aversive bias, etc. She also discussed critical race theory and cancel culture.

9. Review of Proposed Commission Work Plan

Mr. Steve Arbo, City Manager, presented a Draft Work Plan for the Commission’s review (attached). Upon completion, the plan will be a working document and include the following elements:

- a) Committee Work Assignments (discussed further below)
- b) Progress on Community Needs Assessment and Issue Identification process
- c) Other critical working elements assigned to the

He then discussed the Community Needs Assessment and Issue Identification required by Resolution 21-01. The study will be focused on the City Organization to find deficiencies and opportunities for growth and there will be a broader community snap shot as well that will include stakeholder groups. The Request for Proposal (RFP) and Scope of Work will be developed in the next 30 days.

10. Discussion of Working Committees or Task Forces

Vice-Chair Wilson suggested the following committees:

- focus on the City of Lee's Summit organization
- focus on the Business Community
- focus on Culture and Arts
- work on Vision Statement and Guiding Principles
- Needs Assessment and Issue Identification

She asked Commissioners to submit their interest forms and asked for discussion regarding the proposed committees.

A suggestion was made to add a committee to focus on youth, children, education and the school district. Mr. Arbo reported there are five school districts in the City of Lee's Summit. There was general agreement to focus on youth, teens, children and education but not necessarily any one school district. This approach would provide alignment with the language of Resolution 21-01; *"The Commission shall engage community stakeholders including citizens, businesses, representatives of the education community, City Administration, and other entities"*

Vice-Chair Wilson asked Commissioners to send further input on committees to herself, Chairperson Gray, Mr. Arbo and Stacy Lombardo.

A question was asked if the Commission should consider using citizens groups and other committees to help with their work. Chairperson Gray stated he would like to make sure the proper processes are followed. Other suggestions included focus groups, listening sessions, open session focused meetings on a certain subject such as business, youth, etc. so they can actively recruit people to share their thoughts. If done right, it would build allies, champions and buy-in along the way. A concern was shared that the Commission be careful to not be bias in who they invite to those meetings. A suggestion was made to focus on family units when discussing youth, teens and children because it is the parents that drive them around.

11. Meeting Schedule and Meeting Attendance

Vice-Chair Wilson asked if everyone is still agreeable to having meetings on the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm. Hearing no opposition, she then stated, as committees are formed, there may be a slightly different format of having every other month for just committee work.

Mr. Arbo stated zoom will continue to be provided and he is appreciative of those that attend these meetings even while out of town. He then discussed alternate meeting rooms and upgrades to technology.

Chairperson Gray stated that if Commissioners miss 2-3 meetings they will not be kicked off the Commission but they do need everyone's participation, it is important.

12. Open Meeting and Records reminder

Mr. Arbo reminded everyone to follow the open records laws as they form committees and begin communicating. It might be convenient and efficient to e-mail other committee members but that is not what is meant by transparency. He asked Commissioners to keep Chairperson Gray, Vice-Chair Wilson and Stacy Lombardo copied in on all communication, even if it is something as small as setting up a meeting with one other person. Chairperson Gray also cautioned everyone to avoid long e-mail chains as that may get into a grey area as far as open meeting laws; if a majority of the commission is copied in at any point, it could be construed as a meeting that wasn't posted or made available to anyone wanting to follow the conversations.

13. Roundtable

Chairperson Gray stated future Commission meetings will most likely be 90 minutes to 2 hours.

Commissioner Holland shared a resource that he has found helpful when beginning discussions about race. Chairperson Gray stated he would like to see a page on the City's website where the Commission can share resources with the community so they learn and read along with the Commission.

Commissioner Martin said he had begun researching other cities that are going through the same process. There were remarkably few that had finished anything but he would be happy to share those results.

Commissioner Harrison suggested press releases on social media sites with the city to let people know this work is being done. Trying to get people involved and just pushing information out to get it in the DNA of the city. Vice-Chair Wilson agreed that a communication plan will be very helpful.

Commissioner Grogan expressed appreciation for the trust building exercise.

Mr. Arbo introduced Cheryl Nash, Creative Services Manager, and stated the city has a very good web presence and social media activity that the Commission will take advantage of. He then informed the Commission the City Council is heavily vested in the Commission, they spent a lot of time discussing what the Commission would look like, what it was going to do and who would serve on the Commission. The Commission has the full support of the Mayor and entire City Council.

14. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairperson Gray called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Commissioner Martin, seconded by Commissioner Presley, to adjourn the June 3, 2021 Commission for Diversity and Inclusion meeting at 8:37 pm. The motion carried by a unanimous 11-0 vote (Commissioners Beasley, Harding, Ivy and Meyer "Absent").