

**Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**AUGUST 4, 2020**

**Commissioners Present:** Cat Beltmann, Keith Allen, Monica Bolinger, Etienne Djevi, Richard James, Kathryn Macomber, and Lauren Peterson

**Youth Commissioners:** Beverly Yiling Xie

**Commissioners Absent:** Ahmed Hassan, Grace Lee (excused)

**Staff Present:** Rebecca Olson, Assistant City Manager

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

The Human Rights, Inclusion, and Engagement Commission (HRIEC) meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Approve Agenda**

Chair Beltmann requested removal of the Approval of Minutes and Youth Commissioner Report from the Agenda.

Commissioner Allen asked if the Youth Commissioner had anything to report before approving the Agenda.

Youth Commissioner Xie noted she did have something to report.

Chair Beltmann amended her request to keep the Youth Commissioner Report in the Agenda.

Commissioner Peterson moved and Commissioner Macomber seconded a motion to approve the Agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment on Items Not on Agenda**

**Approve Minutes**

**Youth Commissioner Report**

Youth Commissioner Xie reported she had a Zoom call with Kathy, Co-Founder of Do Good Roseville, and talked about some things. She indicated she and Do Good Roseville want more outreach to Asian Americans and are thinking about putting together a little contact list with Asian American community members and make a video about what it is like being Asian. She indicated there also needs to be a proclamation for Asian people to recognize that Asian people have been affected by violence and bias and macro/micro aggression due to the Pandemic. For outreach the community would like to suggest and Instagram account for the city and its

Commissions because there is not one right now and a lot of people are using Instagram now. There has also been discussion about having a video made regarding names with people that have rare names such as herself and Etienne and what that is like and to recognize people affected by racist incidence with a balloon release or kite flying event that has people's names affected by racist incidence on them and would be a photo opportunity. She heard from Kathy and she wants to make changes to the Native American Proclamation because it does not mention groups of Native American's that lived here.

Chair Beltmann thanked Xie for the information and thought this was something to include in the recommendations to city Council.

### **New Business**

#### **a. Refine and Clarify Recommendation to City Council for the August 10, 2020 Meeting**

Chair Beltmann provided a recap of the last HRIEC meeting and thought the Commission should start discussion around the recommendation of the Diversity and Inclusion Consultant. She thought what the Commission was hoping for with this conversation is to have a better outline of what the Commission is recommending this person do, both in scope of work and potential types of projects.

Chair Beltmann indicated the Commission needs to recommend why the consultant should be hired, the purpose and scope of work the consultant should be doing. She asked what the Commission's thoughts were on this.

Commissioner Allen indicated he thought it would be a great process to have someone come in and look at this first ring suburb that has a lot of traffic come through but also a community that is growing when it comes to younger and older and also people of color. If someone could come in or a team could come in and look at diversity, equity and inclusion and see where this organization and city should be in the next couple of years and what are the tools that are needed to get there. He would hope the consultant would leave staff with a script and outline for how the departments can be there and also each Commission and how it ties into it. Also recommendations of what the work of those Commissions should be to get to that ideal place. He would like the consultant to not focus on the term "it is going to take a long time to get there", the consultant should look for what immediate actions and long term actions that will put the city in the position to get there from how the organization looks, feels and honestly smells and where staff and the Commissions want it to be. Not knowing the details of that work, because he is not a consultant, that is what he would hope a consultant would leave for the Commission and staff to work on, as employees and volunteers and as residents.

Commissioner Bolinger indicated her initial thoughts when looking at a consultant is that she thought the city has done a great job with the G.A.R.E. team and getting that process started. What she could see the consultant doing is working with the

G.A.R.E. team and getting the rest of the city staff, elected officials and maybe even Commissions up to speed on that whole process. Making it a lot faster process. She thought time is really of the essence now and a consultant could really fast track that. She also thought the consultant could also work with the Commission's Best Practices and the toolkit to help get acclimated to that process as well.

Chair Beltmann explained a few different scope of work came to mind for her. One is that whoever is hired to have that person do a deep dive and review of city policies and processes. Identify areas where those policies and processes can be better in terms of diversity and inclusion, whether it be hiring processes or process of how the city recruits and onboards along with running the Commissions. She thought there is a whole wealth of work that can happen in the policy and process review. She also thought the consultant could work with them on how the Commissioners can make this Commission as effective as possible because she thought many of the Commissioners can agree that this Commission is just not a functioning Commission right now but there is a lot of work to do and value that the Commission can bring to the city. Having the consultant work with the Commission, staff, and the Council to figure out exactly what the scope of work should be and the Commission's focus.

Chair Beltmann thought the other piece is really around the G.A.R.E. work and Best Practice document. She thought the Commission has the Best Practice document as close to done as it can be for what the Commission is able to do but she thought when the city is bringing in an expert in this area she thought the consultant could look at it and refine it and work with staff to turn it into a useable document and develop whatever the training might be based on that. She thought the other piece was to look at the city to see if there are additional things outside of policy and process and Commission structure that the city needs to look at in terms of diversity and inclusion.

Commissioner Macomber also agreed it would be interesting to have someone who is highly trained and experience in this area to look at what the Commission has already created to make sure there are not any big gaps. She was also interested in having someone help the Commission with baseline and metrics.

Commissioner James agreed with what everyone has said as far as the consultant is concerned. He asked if the Commission is looking at a consultant coming in, doing a job and then that is it or would a consultant be coming in to help prepare for a permanent position that would help the Commission and the city to move forward. Somehow in this process he thought the Commission needed to look beyond the idea of just having a consultant and maybe asking the consultant to pave the way or show how and why it would be important to have a permanent staff position that is working with Diversity and Equity in the city. He also thought what the Commission is looking for is tools to help them to be better and more effective and the city, itself, to be more proactive in looking at inclusion, human rights, and engagement.

Commissioner Djevi thought if the city is getting someone to come in as experts in the field, that person will bring some specificity to the work the Commission, as a group, does not have. He agreed with Commissioner James that having somebody to come in one time and done would not be a good idea because the work will be ongoing so having somebody come in and do the initial work and then finding a replacement that is more permanent maybe the way to go because the work is not going to stop. The question he has is the work in engaging the community is not going to be a one person job so he still believed that this Commission has a role to play in the sense that the Commission should still be able to reach out to the community and help this new person do their job in a more effective way. If the Commission can make the case for hiring somebody to get the work going, having a plan for the long term and what the Commission can do as a group can continue to do in terms of engaging the community is the way he sees this going.

Chair Beltmann agreed that the Commission work does not stop just because there is a consultant or staff member doing this. She thought the Commission still has a role to play in terms of outreach and community engagement.

Commissioner James indicated with the Coronavirus, reaching out to the community becomes even more difficult and having a consultant to help them to figure out ways and navigate ways of doing that which can be effective is a really important thing.

Chair Beltmann indicated the Commission might want to be careful with its recommendations, having come from the consulting work, the Commission wants to be focused on what it is asking for and not just ask for everything because that is setting someone up to not be successful. She thought the outreach and engagement piece is hugely important and key that the city is moving in that direction and doing it better, but it also might not be something that the Commission will get. The Commission might get recommendations like with the Best Practice guide. The Commission is not going to get too much from what might be a short-term contract with a consultant.

Ms. Keely Vandre explained regarding a consultant, as a community member, she thought issues of equity, anti-racism and ant-colonialism does not seem to be things that are going to be resolved with a brief consulting phase. It seems like more than ever over the last few months in the community that they really need to understand that this is a long entrenched issue that everyone will need to be confronting for a long time and should have a recognized position, if not multiple positions, managing that on behalf of the city. She indicated it has been nice to see that other similar communities, like St. Louis Park, have also noticed that after having worked with G.A.R.E. programs. Two years ago St. Louis Park did make the commitment to hire a full-time racial equity coordinator. She thought looking to some similar communities that are noticing the same shift in population and wanting to be leaders, should be a good model to turn to. She encouraged the Commission to take a look at their model and what pushed them to hire somebody in that capacity and take that to

the city Council as the Commission considers how that person would not only help the Commission but also provide insight for all of the ways the city does their business. Honestly, she did not see how that could be only one person's job, but she thought having a person hired fulltime would open up the possibility that more of that work would be seen as essential.

Ms. Olson explained the city has looked at several different models for positions ongoing, in addition to Ms. Vandre's point, it is not just a very simple one position can handle all of this work. This is something staff has been trying to imbed in the organization for many years now and after the Commission is done having its conversation, she wanted to share an update regarding the City Manager's recommended budget.

Ms. Jennifer Wadel explained in listening to the Commission talk over the last two to three meetings there are some things she is hearing the Commission is wanting from a consultant. She thought the Commission might want to break the work up into different areas to present to the city Council. There is also community outreach training available and would be something to put on the Commission's radar for staff and other Commissions to be trained in. She explained the type of consultant the Commission is talking about is not the kind of person that can help the Commission to be more effective to the Council. Just because the city hires a consultant, does not mean there is not still work that the Commission wants the Council to do and that the community wants the Council to do while that consultant is going through its process.

Chair Beltmann summarized what the Commission has discussed. She noted the two things that have not been discussed yet is the "why" and the purpose. She thought it is going to be important to explain to the city Council why the Commission felt the city was at the point of investing in a consultant.

Ms. Olson explained why staff felt this is a very good step. She noted staff is working daily to implement and imbed this into their everyday work but staff is realizing that there is much more that staff can and should be doing and staff probably does not have the capacity to add to workloads and in addition staff does not have the expertise or authenticity to be able to make some of those recommendations. From a staff perspective, that is where she sees the purpose behind this, based on everything the Commission has said but she did not know if the Commission has other views on the purpose behind it.

Chair Beltmann thought that summarized well what she was thinking.

Commissioner Allen indicated it sounds like from what is being heard from staff is in order to take this to the next level, there needs to be an evaluation from an outside party to help develop this roadmap to the next level. He noted he was glad to see staff feel the same way.

Commissioner Bolinger thought in regard to the “why”, one issue is the current situation, it is not just the community, it is the Country and World. She also thought it was important for the city Council to show how important diversity inclusion is. Not only for the Commission to better engage in the community because without some trust between the community and city Council, there is not a lot of chance for them to engage. She thought it is an opportunity for the Council to show how important it is and to help also with some parts in the community that have been under served. There is a healing portion to it, there is a respect portion to it and that is what is needed today. She noted the environment is calling for it.

Chair Beltmann agreed and thought it was a statement to the investment the city is willing to make in elevating and showing that this is a value in something that is important.

Commissioner James thought the “why” is the difference between checking a box and actually helping to get the work done.

Commissioner Macomber explained the Commission’s function is to evaluate, advise and engage and she thought this would be a huge piece in helping frame up for them in a better way so both the Commission and city know how to evaluate what is being looked at.

Ms. Olson explained regarding the scope of work, she did not think it needed to be fully refined because if the Council decides the recommendation is something to consider and move forward with then the Commission could further refine the scope because the Commission would need to do some sort of RFP.

Commissioner Peterson asked if the Commission could also include that staff is also recommending this, that would be great and would make the request a little bit stronger as well.

Ms. Olson indicated she would do that. She updated the Commission on staff’s recommendation and budget recommendation for a consultant as well.

Chair Beltmann felt this is something the Commission wants the city to move quickly on. She indicated after the Commission makes the recommendation to the Council this should go to staff and staff should work to move it forward as quickly as possible and consult with the Commission as needed.

Ms. Olson explained one of the things she would include in her recommendation is staff could work on the scope and put together an RFP but typically the way that works is there are interviews after people submit their request for proposals. When staff interviews people it would be recommendation that someone from the Commission and/or someone from the community also sit in on those interviews. There would be an opportunity for additional input at that point.

Chair Beltmann explained she liked that suggestion and gives staff the ability to move quickly and still enables community input in terms of the selection process.

Commissioner Allen indicated he liked that approach and felt there also needed to be some sort of leadership team to support the consultant through this work and recommended that maybe someone from this Commission be a part of that as well.

Commissioner James asked if the Commission is moving forward with the Best Practices Guide to get it done. He also wondered what the Commissioner's seen as their role and function moving forward if the consultant is hired.

Chair Beltmann indicated the Best Practices document will be on the next meeting agenda to work on. The goal is, with the consultant, the Best Practices document is at the point where it is as good as it will get from a volunteer lay person perspective and she would like that document to go to staff and the consultant for refinement and implementation. She thought the Commission's role and work with a consultant is also an agenda item for the next meeting.

Chair Beltmann explained the Commission discussed at the last meeting bringing forward to the city Council a recommendation allowing Youth Commissioners the right to vote. She still thought this is something the Commission should recommend and ask the Council to have staff look into. She would like to know why when the Youth Commission seat was established why the ability and right to vote was not included.

Ms. Olson explained she received some information regarding that exact point. She indicated there were a couple considerations made when the Youth Commissioners were added to Commissions. She reviewed the history of the role with the Commission.

Chair Beltmann thought the Commission should recommend that some due diligence be done before making the change. Even if the Commission does not change the Code to allow Youth Commissioners to vote then she thought, in terms of best practices, the Commission hear and allow the Youth Commissioner to weigh in on agenda items.

Commissioner Xie thought if she voted on an important decision, it is just one vote and she also heard from Kathy at Do Good Roseville that there needs to be fifty percent or more vote in favor in order for something to move forward. She also felt she did not get called for votes and having Ms. Olson indicate the reason why she cannot vote is uncomfortable and awkward to her. She explained for the liability part, she is already a part of the Commission and having any job comes with risk and if she has liability, that is part of the job.

Commissioner James thought due diligence and the legality part be pursued by the City Attorney to make sure there is not any State Law that would prohibit this from happening. He thought it was a little disingenuous to have a Youth Commissioner participating in all aspect of the Commission meeting and then not being able to vote on it.

Commissioner Djevi agreed with Commissioner James. He thought this was a good recommendation that needed to be presented to the Council.

Commissioner Peterson indicated she would support bringing it forward to the Council and getting their opinion and seeing what the Council would like to do. She thought it is important to have the legality pieces looked at to be on the safe side.

Commissioner Allen agreed with moving this forward as well.

Commissioner Xie explained if there is a legal part to this that indicates she is not supposed to vote then she will most likely back out but would support this moving forward to the Council.

Chair Beltmann thought the Commission should bring this recommendation forward to the city Council. She thought the Commission and Council wanted to make sure there is an understanding of what it means to allow, if there is a legal obligation that goes along with the vote.

**b. Review Additional Action Items for Recommendation**

Chair Beltmann indicated there was a desire to make changes and bring recommendations to the Council. She reviewed the list discussed at the last meeting with the Commission. She indicated she would like to make the recommendation that the city Council formally adopt the Racial Equity Statement that staff has developed. She noted this is already being used in different areas on the city website. She thought this was a strong statement and the city Council formally adopting will make an additional strong statement that the Council is behind it as well. She thought the only other thing, as departments are starting to think about the work to be done for 2021, having Council give staff the charge to make sure to review work plans and finding opportunities to incorporate as many culturally relevant programming opportunities as possible.

Commissioner Peterson indicated she would feel comfortable bringing those recommendations forward to the city Council and would support that.

Commissioner James indicated he would also support those items.

Commissioner Xie suggesting presenting the city having an Instagram account for the Commissions because that is how people network these days. More young people could be reached that way as well.

Commissioner Allen indicated he is not on Instagram but if that is a way of engaging youth then he would be in favor of it. He wondered why the city was not using Instagram.

Commissioner Macomber indicated she would not put this on the list of items being brought forward to the city Council. She thought is more appropriate for the larger discussion that will be had that includes all of the items on the list.

Commissioner James agreed with Commissioner Macomber but should not discount this idea.

Commissioner Djevi liked the idea of having the city get an Instagram account but then the question is what kind of information will go into it. He agreed with what Commissioner's James and Macomber said. What is the city looking to accomplish by just having an account. What engagement activities and tools would go in there. An account can be created in a night but needs to be discussed further. He would like to table that item to discuss later.

Chair Beltmann agreed with the Commissioners because she thought there was more to dig into. She reviewed the items Commissioner Xie mentioned previously and indicated she would love to see them added to the list in the packet, attachment A, in order to have a more full discussion about them but she agreed the Commission should keep the conversation with the city Council more focused.

Ms. Kathy Ramundt, when looking at the proclamation for Indigenous people, it is very generic and does not recognize any of them that were in Roseville. She thought putting some meat behind that would be very important. She also thought proclamations needed to be more centered on the community in Roseville including events related to the proclamation or recognizing community groups. She also thought the essays were really important to read into and pull insecurities and issues from to discuss and try to make change and create programming opportunities.

Ms. Jennifer Wadel asked if the HRIEC get on the Council's agenda every time it meets if the Commission wants to and if that is true, could this Commission consider lining up recommendations for future Council meetings because there are some low lying fruit ideas to engage the community and make the public statement of Roseville rejects racism. She thought some of the things that stood out to her were a version Youth Commissioner Xie suggested such as a balloon release or kite flying. There was also the idea of a banner. Another idea that jumped out to her was a list of businesses owned by people or color and women or whatever the definition of that is to support them.

Chair Beltmann indicated this is not the last time the Commission will be in front of the city Council and will likely be in front of the Council more frequently.

Chair Beltmann moved and Commissioner Macomber seconded a motion to recommend to the city Council to formally adopting the Racial Equity statement and requesting departments as preparing their documents for 2021 the need to prioritize identifying and incorporating culturally relevant programming and utilizing best practices around community engagement. Motion passed unanimously. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Beltmann reviewed the joint meeting with the city Council process.

Ms. Olson reviewed with the Commission the process with the city Council. She indicated she will register all Commissioners as panelists in order for each to join the meeting if needed.

### **Other New Business or Reports**

#### **Announcements**

#### **Future Agenda Items**

#### **Adjournment**

Chair Beltmann adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Osbeck

*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*