

Observer Report**Reparations****May 5, 2022****Observer:** Carol Mullins**Meeting began:** 9:10 am**Meeting adjourned:** 10:15 am**In Attendance:** Peter, Claire, Carlis, Bonnie, Robin; Devon Reid arrived 9:30 am, Burns absent.

Minutes approved.

Public comment was next:

There were two Public comments: one from Vanessa McCoy, a realtor, thanking the committee and announcing a home buyers' seminar at Faith Temple with Liberty Bank on home ownership and helping potential owners get going on mortgage application.

The second from Bennett Johnson: this is yet another recitation of making Reparations an investment business, which includes health care. The money would be invested in equities. Robin Simmons thanked him, saying he is being heard. He started out by saying he has lived in Evanston since 1931, that means that he is 90 or 91 years old and still fighting the good fight.

Claire talked about the wonderful dinner, held at Civic Center for the reparations recipients, where there were tables for recipients and their families. Recipients received their distributions. The Committee has received much positive feedback.

The Financial Donation report was given by Corporation Counsel? \$69, 253 , it was voted to place this report on file.

There was no update on home repair.

The big discussion was on the Housing Program Budget Amendment. Staff is recommending that the committee provide direction to increase the program budget by \$2.6 million dollars, so that the remaining 106 ancestors have access to the \$25,000 grant. The Evanston CFO says that the City would have to use General Obligation bonds or find a bank that would provide a no interest loan. Repayment would be from cannabis sales. There was a brisk discussion. This loan would have to meet federal guidelines, according to corporation counsel, who tried hard to educate the committee. Devon Reid wants the CFO to attend the next reparations meeting. Devon Reid said that we don't need bonds, can transfer the funds from general fund since there was surplus, which is not kosher, according to Corporation Counsel because it doesn't meet guidelines.

Peter suggested asking staff to look at a variety of legal means that meet federal guidelines: graduated income tax as vehicle, real estate transfer tax (only collected on houses over 1 million dollars), GO bonds. There is a real commitment by this committee to find a way to fund. Robin Simmons has a plethora of knowledge about how this is handled in other communities that have reparations programs. Peter announced he has asked Health Department rep to speak at the June meeting.

There were about 15? people in the audience.

There will be a June meeting on the first Thursday of the month.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 AM.