

Report on Equity and Empowerment

July 16, 2020

Attending: Commission Members: Jane Grover, Alejandra Ibanez, Max Weinberg, Timothy Eberhart, (this was to have been his last meeting but will return next month for the vote on the Environmental Justice Resolution), Melissa Wynne, Kathy Lyons, Kimberly Walton, (a new member who works for Blue Cross-Blue Shield and has a role there working on Equity issues. She also has a background in working with state governments' Medicaid programs. She has a 9th month old son who was also introduced.), Karla Thomas, (the other new member who is a business owner, has taught Equity and is about to be a student at Northwestern.) Both new members are women of color.

Staff: Kimberly Richardson and Shenicka Holenkirk.

Public Comment: Doreen praised the Environmental Document and urged the Commission to delay voting on it so there could be more review.

Consideration of the Environmental Justice Resolution: Eberhart and his group had made a number of grammatical corrections and other additions or changes. As the group went through the document line by line for over an hour they made a number of other changes. Max Weinberg felt strongly that it should be more explicitly about Black residents who had been harmed in the past. Then they talked about the original Native Americans who lived here. Finally it was decided that there would be further work on words and the new version go to the Environmental Board for approval at their meeting, then back to the Commission and lawyers and after approval to the Planning and Development Committee and on to the City Council.

Discussion of Public Engagement: Jane and staff developed a questionnaire on public engagement that went out to city staff. It was not clear how many employees it went to but Delores Holmes was very disappointed that there were

only 38 responses. Of those who did respond most were only somewhat satisfied, there were a number of ideas about how things could be improved, there was a evident need for more resources and those reaching out to residents tend to go to the same people.

Jane will redevelop that questionnaire and it will go out again through supervisors.

Communication: Kimberly Richardson is finalizing an equity plan for the staff. It will include forming an internal Equity and Empowerment Committee. She said, "We need to figure out how the Commission can hold staff accountable." And she suggested a Commission retreat for the fall.

Reparations: The subcommittee will meet again in July.

Truth Working Group: Has not met. Alejandra will contact Eileen at the YW.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55.