



Mayor's Initiative on Equity and Equality

Tuesday, November 2, 2021

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Councilman Denny Whayne Conference Room • Busch Municipal Building 4th floor
840 N. Boonville

Members Present: Saehee Duran, Co-Chair; Rita Baron**, Barbara Block**, Christian Lewis, Christa Moss*, John Oke-Thomas, Mike Powers, Francine Pratt**, Robin Robeson, Jeanne Skahan, Carol Taylor, and Jeff Schrag***.

Members Absent: Doug Neff, Co-Chair; Justin Clark, Bob Roberts, and Shurita Thomas-Tate.

City Council: None.

Staff: Anita Cotter, City Clerk; Cora Scott, Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement; Taj Suleyman, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Britni Fletcher, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Intern.

Others: None.

Clerk's Note: * Christa Moss arrived at approximately 5:53 PM

** Indicates participation via Zoom

***Indicates participation via phone conference

Welcome

Saehee Duran, Co-Chair, welcomed everyone to tonight's meeting, which began at approximately 5:35 p.m.

Roll call was conducted. Present: Saehee Duran, Co-Chair; Rita Baron, Barbara Block, Christian Lewis, John Oke-Thomas, Mike Powers, Francine Pratt, Robin Robeson, Jeanne Skahan, Carol Taylor, and Jeff Schrag. Absent: Doug Neff, Co-Chair; Justin Clark, Christa Moss, Bob Roberts, and Shurita Thomas-Tate.

Approval of September 21, 2021 and October 5, 2021 Minutes

The Mayor's Initiative for Equity and Equality (MIEE) members reviewed the draft minutes of the September 21, 2021 and October 5, 2021 minutes.

Co-Chair Duran noted there was a lack of quorum at the time for the approval of minutes at the October 5, 2021 meeting. Therefore, both the September 21, 2021 and October 5, 2021 minutes are before members for approval today.

Jeanne Skahan moved to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2021 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mike Powers and approved by the following vote. Ayes: Baron, Block, Lewis, Oke-Thomas, Powers, Pratt, Robeson, Skahan, Taylor, and Duran. Nays: None. Absent: Clark, Moss, Roberts, Schrag, Thomas-Tate, and Neff. Abstain: None.



Jeanne Skahan moved to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2021 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mike Powers and contained by the following vote. Ayes: Baron, Powers, Pratt, Robeson, and Duran. Nays: None. Absent: Clark, Moss, Roberts, Schrag, Thomas-Tate, and Neff. Abstain: Block, Lewis, Oke-Thomas, Skahan, and Taylor.

Anita Cotter, City Clerk noted the minutes of the October 5, 2021 meeting were not approved based on the motion failing. She further noted members have the choice to approve the minutes despite not attending the previous meeting.

John Oke-Thomas noted he has read the minutes and asked if he could amend his vote. Ms. Cotter noted the Committee would need to make a motion to vote on the minutes again.

Jeanne Skahan moved to reconsider approve of the minutes of the October 5, 2021 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mike Powers and approved by the following vote. Ayes: Baron, Block, Lewis, Oke-Thomas, Powers, Pratt, Robeson, Skahan, Taylor, and Duran. Nays: None. Absent: Clark, Moss, Roberts, Schrag, Thomas-Tate, and Neff. Abstain: None.

Update on Equity & Prosperity Commission work

Co-Chair Duran noted a primary partner with MIEE is the Equity & Prosperity Commission led by Francine Pratt. She further noted Ms. Pratt will be providing an update on what is happening in our community so MIEE is better prepared to make recommendations.

Francine Pratt expressed her pride to report all the draft recommendations for education, health, housing, jobs, public safety, and transportation have been completed and forwarded to the Equity & Prosperity members. They have also been forwarded to individuals and organizations that may have been listed with the recommendations, to get their input. She noted her expectation is to receive feedback by November 15, 2021. Ms. Pratt will then compile all the recommendations into a single document. She also provided brief examples of the forthcoming recommendations.

Co-Chair Duran thanked Ms. Pratt for her overview of the forthcoming recommendations from the Equity & Prosperity Commission. She expressed her opinion having these recommendations help MIEE have details on where Springfield is as a community.

Report out from members of suggested additional recommendations

Co-Chair Duran provided a recap of the five pillars: Dialogue and Understanding, Cultural Consciousness, Advocacy and Partnerships, Structural and Systemic Barriers, and Personal and Organizational Accountability.

Francine Pratt asked how success will be measured for each of the five pillars. Co-Chair Duran expressed her opinion it would be difficult to contextualize.

John Oke-Thomas expressed his opinion there should be data points for measuring what success looks like. He further expressed there must be an acknowledgement that if the City does not move from one benchmark to another, then success will not be met.



Barbara Block reiterated the MIEE’s charge to develop guiding principles. She asked who would have responsibility for evaluating the guiding principles. She expressed her belief that the responsibility does not reside with the MIEE, except to say there needs to be a method of measurement and accountability.

Carol Taylor expressed her belief it would be helpful to discuss what constitutes a guiding principle. She further expressed the information gathered thus far appear to be objectives rather than guiding principles. She further expressed her opinion a guiding principle should help inform the policies that follow, enabling objectives to be made and met.

Francine Pratt echoed Mr. Oke-Thomas’ and Ms. Taylors’ sentiments.

Christian Lewis encouraged the group to consider who will be implementing these guiding principles once established, as well as which groups or entities the principles will affect. He further encouraged the group to consider who their audience will be when creating the guiding principles.

Carol Taylor expressed her belief the MIEE is not developing guiding principles for every type of organization. She noted a way to test a principle is to think about being in a particular sector, and would they be able to relate to the established principal.

Co-Chair Duran encouraged the group to take the next several minutes vocalizing potential value statements, using the phrase “We are committed to...”. Committee members took turns expressing various value statements concerning each pillar, with Co-Chair Duran taking notes.

Closing Remarks

Co-Chair Duran thanked MIEE members for their participation in today’s exercise and expressed her belief the group has a strong rough draft. She noted work will be done to clean up the notes and they will be emailed to members before the next meeting.

Adjourn

With no further business coming before the Mayor’s Initiative on Equity and Equality, Robin Robeson moved to Adjourn. Christian Lewis seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote. Ayes: Block, Lewis, Moss, Oke-Thomas, Pratt, Schrag, Powers, Robeson, Skahan, Taylor. Nays: None. Absent: Neff, Co-Chair; Clark, Roberts, and Thomas-Tate. Abstain: None.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:24 p.m.

Completed by Johnathan Saunders
Approved on December 7, 2021