



Equity and Empowerment Commission Meeting

Thursday, April 15, 2021

6:30 p.m.

Zoom Virtual Meeting

Minutes

Present: Chair Jane Grover, Vice Chair Alejandra Ibáñez, Commissioner Delores Holmes, Ald. Melissa Wynne, Commissioner Kathy Lyons, Commissioner Karla Thomas, Commissioner Kymberly Walton and Commissioner Max Weinberg

Staff Present: Kimberly Richardson, Interim Assistant City Manager, Shenicka Hohenkirk, ICMA Management Fellow, [Paulina Martínez](#), Assistant to the City Manager

1. Called to order/Declaration of Quorum:

Chair Jane Grover called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and declared a quorum.

2. Elect New Chair and Vice Chair

Commissioner Ibanez was voted in unanimously as Chair.

Commissioner Thomas was voted in unanimously as Vice Chair.

3. Approval of the March 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Grover moved and Commissioner Walton seconded, the approval of the March 18, 2021 meeting minutes; Commissioner Walton seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

4. Public Comment

No Public Comment

5. For Discussion

A. DuPage Federation on Language Access Presentation

Kristin Hartsaw, Program Director for Training & Technical Assistance and Eva Rafas, Program Director for Language Access Resource Center gave a presentation on “Why plan for Language Access?”

Ms. Richardson explained the City's creation of the Language Access Guidelines and the four phase process used to create it. The process took about twenty-four months to complete due to active community engagement with city staff and community members.

Chair Ibanez brought up the idea for the Commission members to think through who are other community members that need to be a part of the language access conversation.

Paulina Martinez, Assistant to the City Manager, identified that the Arabic speaking population is a community group she has not made direct engagement with. Also, she plans to have a conversation with the Mandarin speaking population to involve their community in language access. Also, she stated that training for City staff on the Language Access Guidelines will occur soon.

Commissioner Kathy Lyons posed a question around DuPage's Language Access services being accessible for people with disabilities. There are sign language interpreters who are able to assist with those who are of the deaf community. Currently, there is no further special needs assistance provided.

The outreach work that the DuPage Federation does training on public benefit eligibility and Immigrant benefits. Partnering with organizations that provide those direct services to those who are immigrants needs those benefits and assistance.

Chair Alejandra Ibanez suggested the Commission look into the City of Evanston's community engagement policies and how the Commission connects with the historic marginalized communities.

B. Goal Setting in the City Council Realignment

Vice Chair Thomas, provided an update on the brainstorming assignment for how the Commission can realign the work with City Council. She wants to create a path to receive feedback from the community and have a discussion with the City Council to gain their support on equity projects, initiatives, programs, etc. Commission members were asked if they can add their ideas, goals and suggestions for some equity initiatives, projects, communications, etc to the group Google Document.

6. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.