

Reparations Committee
Thursday, October 7th, 2021
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, G300 9:00 AM

Minutes

Present: Councilmember Peter Braithwaite, Councilmember Bobby Burns, Robin Rue Simmons, Carlis Sutton, Bonnie Lockhart, and Claire McFarland Barber

Absent: Councilmember Devon Reid

Other Present: Kimberly Richardson, Deputy City Manager; and Tasheik Kerr, Assistant to City Manager

CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Chair Councilmember Braithwaite.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one was present for Public Forum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Committee member Simmons, seconded by Committee member Lockhart, to approve the minutes for the September 2, 2021 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION

Reparations Financial Donation Report

Tasheik shared that as of October 1, 2021, the City received \$26,230.29 in donations to the Reparations Fund. This represented an increase of \$100 from September. Committee member Simmons recommended the Committee send out a thank you letter to those that have made a financial donation. Committee member Lockhart mentioned conducting outreach to the community. Committee member Simmons recommended a subcommittee work on bringing awareness to donating with help from the Evanston Community Foundation. Councilmember Braithwaite recommended a donation link be added to the City newsletter.

Restorative Housing Program Update

Deputy City Manager Ms. Richardson reported that 146 individuals have applied to the Restorative Housing Program. At least 29 were ancestor applicants. There was one

person who chose none of the categories. Next week, Staff will begin compiling data and beginning the verification process.

Councilmember Braithwaite stated that the deadline for applications is November 5th. By the end of the year, the Committee would have approved all applicants. Ms. Richardson informed the Committee that as applications come in, each name would be assigned a number. The Committee would not know the names of the applicants, only the numbers. The number of applicants multiplied by \$25,000 would result in a budget for the Restorative Housing Program.

It was recommended that the Committee meet to approve the applications on November 11 and to select the applicants on November 30th. The Committee discussed various models for selecting applicants. Committee member Simmons suggested the use of a software program to conduct the random selection. Councilmember Braithwaite advised the Committee to avoid electronic systems that might be prone to glitches. Committee members Simmons and Sutton shared concerns about the perception of a lottery process. Councilmember Burns added that he is in support of a randomized, visual process. Ms. Richardson provided an overview of the selection process.

Councilmember Burns inquired whether applicants would be provided an opportunity to correct deficiencies in their application. Ms. Richardson responded that staff has been addressing those deficiencies and have followed up with individuals. As to applications that are ambiguous, staff will bring those applications to the Committee for consideration.

Councilmember Braithwaite shared concerns around predatory lenders and contractors as it pertains to senior residents. Committee member Simmons shared that workshops on this topic would be provided by the Dearborn Realist Board at the Evanston Community Day event scheduled to be held on December 4th. Committee member Lockhart shared that the Committee should be proactive in safeguarding seniors against fraud prior to the funds being released. Committee member Barber mentioned the work the Committee would need to do to allow for autonomy while providing guidance.

Adjournment

It was moved by Committee member Barber to adjourn the meeting, second by Committee member Simmons. Meeting ended at 10:15 am.