



## MINUTES

### Equity and Empowerment Commission

Thursday, October 21, 2021 at 6:30 PM

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, Virtual

**COMMITTEE MEMBER  
PRESENT:**

Karla Thomas, Vice-Chair; Darlene Cannon, Commissioner; Devon Reid, Councilmember; Jane Grover, Commissioner; Kady McFadden, Commissioner; Kymberly Walton, Commissioner; LaShandra Rayfield, Commissioner; and Omar Salem, Commissioner

**COMMITTEE MEMBER  
ABSENT:**

Alejandra Ibañez, Chair; Councilmember Cicely Fleming

**OTHER PRESENT:**

Kimberly Richardson, Deputy City Manager, Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner, and 5 guests

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**A. New Member Welcome and Introductions**

Vice-Chair Thomas called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Ms. Thomas started the meeting by introducing the new members on the Equity and Empowerment Commission. Commissioner Cannon, McFadden, Rayfield, and Salem were appointed in early October by the City Council. The Commission said their goodbyes and well wishes to ICMA Fellow, Shenicka Hohenkirk, as she departs the City at the end of the week.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Approval of the September 16, 2021, Meeting Minutes**

Staff recommends approval of the minutes for the Equity and Empowerment Commission meeting of September 21, 2021.

**For Action**

Moved by Commissioner Kymberly Walton  
Seconded by Commissioner Jane Grover

**Ayes:** Commissioner Jane Grover, Commissioner Kymberly Walton, Commissioner Darlene Cannon, Vice Chair Karla Thomas, Commissioner Kady McFadden, Commissioner LaShandra Rayfield, and Commissioner Omar Salem

**Approved 7-0 on a recorded vote**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Community member Mr. Bennet Johnson spoke on the Five/Fifth TIF District.

**4. DISCUSSION**

**A. Discussion of the Equity and Empowerment Commission 2022 Meeting Schedule**

Ms. Richardson provided the Commission with the draft calendar of the 2023 meeting calendar. Commissioner Grover informed staff that the dates were off by a day and requested that the Commission consider not meeting during Passover. Ms. Richardson stated that she will provide a corrected meeting schedule and include any dates before and after Passover for consideration.

**B. Creation of a Working Group to Develop an Equity Assessment Tool**

Vice-Chair Thomas spoke on the creation of the working group to develop an equity rubric for the Commission to use to evaluate the city policies again at an equity lens. The working group will consist of 3 members from the Commission. Commissioner Cannon and Rayfield stated their interest in joining Vice-Chair Thomas on the working group.

**C. Status Update of Commission 2021 Assignments**

Ms. Richardson informed the Commission on the status of the community survey and Commission ordinance legal review. Ms. Richardson requested Dr. Alvin Tillery of Northwestern University to review the draft of the community survey to receive feedback on the survey design. He did reach out to Ms. Richardson and stated he would take a look and provide feedback to the Commission. Secondly, she informed the Commission that the Law Department review of the language to the Equity and Empowerment Commission enabling ordinance is in process. She will have their comments for the next meeting.

**5. REPORTS**

**A. Update on Year One of the Racial Equity Diversity Inclusion (REDI) Committee**

Ms. Richardson introduced, Meagan Jones, co-lead of the REDI Committee and the Neighborhood and Land Use Planner for the City of Evanston. The REDI Committee started in January 2021, a group of 16 City employees spanning multiple departments use a Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) model in an effort to dismantle institutional racism embedded in the policies and practices of the City. The REDI model views racial equity as an inclusive, continual process rather than solely an output. It is heavily focused on policy rather than individual bias and is an iterative process that needs at least a three-year time commitment.

**6. COMMUNICATION**

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-Chair Thomas called the meeting to adjournment at 7:53 p.m.