



Reparations Committee
Thursday, May 5, 2022 @ 9:00 AM
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, G300

**COMMITTEE MEMBER
PRESENT:**

Peter Braithwaite, Councilmember, Claire McFarland Barber, Committee Member, Bonnie Lockhart, Committee Member, Robin Rue Simmons, Committee Member, Carlis Sutton, Committee Member, and Devon Reid, Councilmember

**COMMITTEE MEMBER
ABSENT:**

Bobby Burns, Councilmember

STAFF PRESENT:

Tasheik Kerr, Assistant to the City Manager, Nicholas E. Cummings Corporation Counsel

1. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 9:12 a.m. by Chair Councilmember Braithwaite.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. McCoy thanked the Committee for their work and shared her support for the work on reparations. Mrs. McCoy invited residents to a free homebuyer's seminar at Faith Temple Church on Saturday, May 14 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event is held in conjunction with Liberty Bank.

Mr. Johnson recommended the Committee consider "The Freedom Plan," which consists of five basic parts: 1) a real estate investment trust, 2) an education fund, 3) a health care fund, 4) a venture capital group, and 5) a truth and reconciliation group. Mr. Johnson also shared that reparations should not be limited to a time period.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of the April 7, 2022 Reparations Committee Meeting Minutes

Minutes are approved

Moved by Committee Members Claire McFarland Barber
Seconded by Committee Member Bonnie Lockhart

Ayes: Councilmember Peter Braithwaite, Committee Members Claire McFarland Barber, Committee Member Bonnie Lockhart, Committee Member Robin Rue Simmons, Committee Member Carlis Sutton, and Councilmember Devon Reid

Carried 6-0

4. COMMUNICATION

A. Recap of Reparations Acknowledgement Dinner

Committee Member McFarland gave a recap of the dinner and thanked and acknowledged the recipients for participating in the program. The Committee recognized that this program is not a complete repair, but an important beginning. Committee Member Lockhart shared the importance of showing the community that something has happened. Committee Member Simmons requested a press release be sent by the City describing that funds have been dispersed.

B. Reparations Financial Donation Report

Assistant to the City Manager, Tasheik Kerr, noted that as of May 1, 2022, the City received \$69,253.79 in donations to the Reparations Fund. No donations were received in April. Councilmember Reid shared that members should have access to the amount in the fund.

Staff recommends the Reparations Committee accepts and place on file the May 1, 2022 Donation Report.

Moved by Committee Member Robin Rue Simmons
Seconded by Councilmember Devon Reid

Ayes: Councilmember Peter Braithwaite, Committee Members Claire McFarland Barber, Committee Member Bonnie Lockhart, Committee Member Robin Rue Simmons, Committee Member Carlis Sutton, and Councilmember Devon Reid

Carried 6-0

C. First Repair Update

Committee Member Simmons noted the framework for reparations also falls under international law and that there is a broad discussion of reparations across the country. There were no updates on the state and national levels. The Cook County Commission on Social Innovation has invited a discussion on reparations. On the local level, efforts continue to grow. There are now over 400 reparations initiatives at the local level. The African American Redress Network has mapped and categorized these efforts.

5. DISCUSSION

A. Restorative Housing Program Budget Amendment

Corporation Counsel, Nicholas Cummings, stated that staff has been tasked with finding ways to fund the Reparations Fund. The City's CFO has recommended the use of a no-

interest loan or the use of a General Obligation (G.O.) Bond. Mr. Cummings shared that the Law Department does have concerns with the use of G.O bonds. G.O bonds are typically used for projects that benefit the community generally. As to the no-interest loan, Mr. Cummings stated that federally regulated banks may not receive payment from a tax on cannabis. A new product that could be of consideration is Cannabis-Based Municipal Bonds.

Committee Member Barber inquired about the discussion that the repair aspects of the Reparations Program benefit the entire community regardless of whether the community member is a recipient or not.

Committee member Simmons shared she would like the Committee to allocate the remaining funds above the \$400,000 that was allocated for the Restorative Housing Program, however, more information is needed regarding the remaining amount in the Reparations Fund. Mr. Cummings responded that the remaining amount would enable an additional 5 people to get reparations funding. Committee member Simmons noted it was originally recommended that the City utilize the City's graduated Real Estate Transfer Tax to fund reparations. Committee member Simmons also proposed the use of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars. Mr. Cummings responded that ARPA funds are federal funds and the federal government dictates how those funds are utilized, however, the vast majority of the funds can go into the black community at the discretion of the City Council.

Councilmember Braithwaite shared that the Committee should also be mindful of the support that will be needed should the Committee accelerate funding for the program.

Councilmember Reid suggested using General Fund dollars to fund the additional \$2.6 million to support funding the remaining 106 beneficiaries under the Ancestor category. Mr. Cummings responded that the use of General Funds may open the City up to more litigation.

6. CONSIDERATION

7. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Braithwaite adjourned the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.