



Reparations Committee
Thursday, June 2, 2022 @ 9:00 AM
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, G300

**COMMITTEE MEMBER
PRESENT:**

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

**COMMITTEE MEMBER
ABSENT:**

STAFF PRESENT:

Tasheik Kerr, Assistant to the City Manager, Nicholas E. Cummings, Corporation Counsel, and Audrey Thompson, Director of Parks and Recreation

1. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

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

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Council Member Reid and seconded by Committee Member Simmons to approve the May 5, 2022 Reparations Committee meeting minutes.

A.

3. COMMUNICATION

A. First Repair Update

Committee Member Simmons announced advocates of HR 40 have called to action an Executive Order to be signed by President Biden. As to local updates, California and Harvard University have released respective reports pertaining to their study of reparations. Harvard has pleaded a hundred million dollar commitment to reparations. Concerning Evanston, the Evanston Interfaith Community will launch its reparations efforts on June 13.

B. Reparations Financial Donation Report

No action was taken on this item.

4. DISCUSSION

A. Presentation of Evanston Project for Local Assessments of Needs (EPLAN)

Staff recommends the Reparations Committee accept and place on file Evanston Project for Local Assessments of Needs (EPLAN) Presentation.

Moved by Councilmember Devon Reid

Seconded by Committee Member Robin Rue Simmons

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

Carried 7-0 on a recorded vote

Ike C. Ogbo, Director of Health & Human Services, noted the EPLAN is a five-year plan that identifies health issues in Evanston. The Health Department is mandated by the Illinois Health Department to update the EPLAN. The three health priorities the EPLAN will address are mental health, health disparities, and climate resiliency. The EPLAN will align with other health initiatives.

Kristin Meyer, Community Health Specialist, presented data on the factors that shape the health of Evanstonians.

B. Discussion Regarding Use of Various Tax Revenues to Fund the City's Reparations Fund

Staff recommends discussion regarding the benefits and risks of recommending various tax revenues be used to fund the City's, Reparations Fund.

Nicholas Cummings, Corporation Counsel, noted the distinction between the recreational cannabis revenue tax, which is funding the reparations fund, and the medical marijuana tax. Mr. Cummings advised the Committee to consider the use of funds that are discretionary such as the City's Home Rule taxes versus those that are mandatory to fund reparations. Mr. Cummings advised that the use of mandatory funds might allow individuals (taxpayers) to have the standing to claim discrimination based on equal protection.

Discussion ensued on the difference between mandatory and discretionary spending. Council Member Burns inquired whether the use of mandatory funds would increase the chances of individuals winning in court. Mr. Cumming replied that the use of mandatory funds might make it more likely for the court to determine the City violated the equal protection clause unless the program can be designed in a race-neutral way. Committee Member Sutton noted the current funding stream is insufficient to fund the program. Council Member Braithwaite recommended the exploration of other sources of revenue and partners.

Committee Member Simmons noted the funding for the reparations program was projected with an expected three dispensaries. Committee Member Simmons recommended an

update on the status of the cannabis licenses. Committee Member Simmons also recommended a formal invitation be sent to other Evanston institutions to support the Reparations effort.

Council Member Burns noted evidence had not been provided that the City would lose in court. Discussion ensued on the difference between mandatory and discretionary spending. Council Member Reid inquired about cases related to taxpayers' standing.

5. CONSIDERATION

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Bennett Johnson noted Black Evanstonians could not go to the Evanston Hospital. Mr. Johnson also noted the Freedman Plan includes aspects of health. The Committee should not focus on one aspect of reparations. Mr. Johnson recommended the Committee look beyond City funding in order to make reparations sustainable.

Ms. Yvette noted this is her first reparations meeting. Ms. Yvette encouraged the Reparations Committee to think beyond the system that broke Black Evanstonians.

Ms. Giles shared she is disappointed that there is no plan for the population that experienced redlining.

7. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Committee member Braithwaite and seconded by Committee member Simmons to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.