



Reparations Committee

Thursday, October 6, 2022 @ 9:00 AM

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, G300 (Hybrid)

**COMMITTEE MEMBER
PRESENT:**

Devon Reid, Councilmember, Kristian Harris, Councilmember
Robin Rue Simmons, Committee Member, Bonnie Lockhart,
Committee Member, Claire McFarland Barber, Committee Member,
Carlis Sutton, Committee Member

**COMMITTEE MEMBER
ABSENT:**

Bobby Burns, Councilmember

STAFF PRESENT:

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

1. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Committee member Robin Rue Simmons.

Committee member Simmons congratulated 2nd Ward Councilmember Kristian Harris on her appointment to the City Council and the Reparations Committee.

B. Ancestral Acknowledgement

Committee Member Carlis Sutton read the Ancestral Acknowledgement.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Committee Member Claire McFarland Barber and seconded by Councilmember Harris to approve the September 1, 2022 Reparations Committee Meeting Minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

3. DISCUSSION

A. Reparations Funding Scenarios

Committee Member Simmons recommended the Committee discuss the following funding scenarios:

1. Advancing 3.05 million from the General Fund to the Reparations Fund. (Total program budget for the Ancestor recipients is \$3,450,000. \$400,000 has already been allocated to the first 16 recipients.)

It was moved by Councilmember Devon Reid and seconded by Committee Member Simmons to discuss advancing 3.05 million from the General Fund to the Reparations Fund.

Councilmember Reid noted the City has a healthy surplus of funds in the General Fund. Committee Member Barber shared that she is concerned that using General Funds might open the City to legal challenges. Corporation Counsel Cummings responded that using General Funds increase tax-payers standing to challenge the program. Councilmember Reid mentioned some risks with all revenue sources and that he trusts Evanstonians to do the right thing. Corporation Counsel Cummings noted he would seek to obtain further analysis on tax-payer standing and risks.

2. Restricting the graduate real-estate transfer tax and designating a dollar amount or percentage in perpetuity.

Committee Member Simmons recalled she had first identified the use of the incremental real-estate transfer tax to fund the reparations program due to its appropriateness.

Corporation Counsel Cummings recalled he provided a memo in June to the Reparations Committee that explored various home-ruled taxes as sources of revenue to supplement the Reparations Fund. The City Council can reallocate those sources of revenue. Committee Member Sutton inquired about the amount of revenue collected from the incremental real-estate transfer tax. Committee Member Bonnie Lockhart asked whether there was precedent for using this source of income in another way.

Corporation Counsel Cummings inquired whether the use of the revenue collected from the incremental real-estate transfer tax would be in addition to the 10 Million dollars set aside for Reparations. Committee Member Sutton noted that the City receives funds from developers in lieu of affordable housing. He recommended that the Reparations Committee inquiries about this source of funding. Corporation Counsel Cummings said the Affordable Housing Fund does not have the same level of revenue due to an amendment in the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance that encourages developers to incorporate affordable housing rather than paying the fee in lieu of affordable housing.

It was moved by Committee Member Simmons and seconded by Councilmember Reid to add the revenue collected from the incremental real-estate transfer tax as an additional funding stream. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Setting aside 3 million dollars of ARPA funds for economic development.

Committee member Simmons shared that it is advised that the Reparations Committee look to utilize ARPA funds for economic development for qualified census tracts. Corporation Counsel Cummings noted that the Treasury Department has identified communities of color as most impacted. Though the City cannot specify race as a qualifier for programs, it can use other qualities as outlined by the Treasury. Corporation Counsel Cummings recalled the

City Council allocated 18 million for negative economic impacts and services for disproportionately impacted communities.

Committee Member Sutton inquired about using CDBG dollars to support housing rehabilitation. Committee member Simmons requested staff provide a list of the City's Home Rule Taxes.

It was moved by Councilmember Reid and seconded by Committee Member Simmons to set aside 3 million dollars in ARPA for reparations for economic development. The motion passed 5 to 1; Committee Member Barber opposed it. Councilmember Reid amended his motion to set aside 5 million dollars in ARPA for reparations. Councilmember Harris seconded the amendment. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of the Local Reparations: Restorative Housing Program Designation of Beneficiary Form

Councilmember Reid inquired whether Ancestor recipients could still receive funding first instead of younger beneficiaries of the Ancestors. Committee Member Simmons noted that an aspect of the program is building intergenerational wealth. Committee Member Sutton inquired about recipients who have passed. Corporation Counsel Cummings pointed out that the Law Department's position is that once the City designates someone as a beneficiary, the benefit goes to the probate court. It was also noted that the Power of Attorney is specifically for Restorative Housing Program and not a general designation.

Moved by Councilmember Reid
Seconded by Committee Member Sutton

Ayes: Councilmember Reid, Committee Member Rue Simmons, Committee Member Lockhart, Committee Members McFarland Barber, and Committee Member Sutton, Councilmember Harris

Carried 6-0 on a recorded vote

4. CONSIDERATION

There were no Items for Consideration.

5. COMMUNICATION

A. Reparations Townhall - October 22 at Second Baptist Church

Committee Member Simmons announced that a Reparations Townhall would occur at Second Baptist Church on October 22 at 11 am. Dr. Michael Nabors would host the Town Hall.

B. Reparations - Youth Art Contest

Committee Member Simmons noted the Arts Council and the Reparations Committee have partnered on a Reparations Youth Art Contest to engage the youth in Reparations. Evanston Youths are asked to respond to the question "What does Reparations means to you" in any

art form. Four Evanston youths would receive \$200 in cash.

C. Chicago Film Festival screening of "The Big Payback"

Committee Member Simmons announced the film "The Big Payback" follows the reparations process since the passing of Resolution 126 R-19. The film will be screened at the Chicago Film Festival on October 22.

D. RFQ 22-58 Housing Services Provider for The City of Evanston's Local Reparations Restorative Housing Program

Assistant to the City Manager, Tasheik Kerr, noted the deadline for submission is October 11.

E. Reparations Financial Donation Report

Councilmember Reid inquired about the tax opinions regarding providing direct cash benefits. Corporation Counsel Cummings shared that the opinions were sent to the Reparations Committee. One of the tax opinions indicated the City could provide direct cash benefits. The other opinion addressed whether the program would have implications for those already receiving government assistance.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jason Lauren noted the Judaism community had passed a resolution in favor of reparations. He noted there were not a lot of Caucasian residents present at past Reparations Town Halls. Jason read a portion of the Resolution.

Bennett Johnson recalled that in 1999 there was a reparations conference held at Northwestern. He recommended that the Reparations Committee looks into the conference. Mr. Johnson also suggested the Reparations Committee look to develop a real estate investment trust, a venture capital group, a health care fund, and an education fund.

Ndona Nyomo Muboyayi noted she supports the Reparations Committee asking for more funds for Economic Development. She also shared that Family Focus would receive 3 million dollars for a welcome center to assist Latino immigrants. She inquired whether they were receiving funds due to the changing complexion of residents.

Pricilla Giles noted that black persons who own or rent need some repairs and that funding for reparations should go to all African Americans.

Tina Paden thanked the Reparations Committee for making the meetings hybrid. She noted that the City had allocated funds to economic development already. She also shared that the real estate transfer tax went to the affordable housing fund. She suggested the Committee combine the donations fund with the cannabis funds to avoid violating any laws. She also noted she would like to hear more about the opinion of allowing cash payment.

Traci Powell inquired whether the reparations program would have an education component. She noted the achievements that would be provided to African American Residents.

Jordie Davies noted she is a researcher at John Hopkins University. She is conducting a case study on the Evanston ordinance and the political conditions for developing the ordinance.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Reid moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:33 p.m.