



Reparations Committee
Thursday, November 3, 2022 @ 9:00 AM
Virtual

COMMITTEE MEMBER PRESENT:

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

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

Bonnie Lockhart, Committee Member

STAFF PRESENT:

Tasheik Kerr, Assistant to the City Manager, Mari Johnson, Assistant City Attorney

1. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

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

A. Ancestral Acknowledgement

Councilmember Harris read the Ancestor Acknowledgement.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of the October 6, 2022 Reparations Committee Meeting Minutes.

It was moved by Councilmember Reid and seconded by Committee Member Claire McFarland Barber to approve the October 6, 2022 Reparations Committee Meeting Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Approval of the October 22, 2022 Reparations Town Hall Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Councilmember Reid and seconded by Councilmember Harris to approve the October 22, 2022 Reparations Town Hall Meeting Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

3. DISCUSSION

A. Recap of Reparations Town Hall

Chair Simmons provided a recap of the Reparations Townhall. She reviewed the public comments. Members of the Committee provided responses to the public comments.

B. Designating a percentage of the Real Estate Transfer Tax on the sale of property over 1,500,000.01 to the Reparations Fund

Chair Member Simmons shared that the conversation regarding using Real Estate Transfer Tax for reparations was discussed as a funding source in 2019. She noted the City's CFO, Hitesh D. Desai, provided a chart of the Transfer Tax Revenues from 2020.

Councilmember Reid stated he would like to ensure there is a minimum guarantee of \$1 million a year to the Reparations Fund.

Committee Member Sutton addressed the criticism received that the current program is not Reparations. He shared that the Committee worked to distinguish and prioritize programs based on residents' feedback.

Councilmember Reid shared his concern with the discussion amongst the Supreme Court Justices on October 31 regarding Affirmative Action. He suggested that the Committee place a timeframe on its recommendation to protect the Reparations Program. Councilmember Reid also suggested that the time period be reviewed every ten years. Committee Member Barber suggested that language also be added to indicate that the program is reviewable and renewable.

It was moved by Chair Simmons and seconded by Councilmember Reid to move forward 1 million dollars annually from the Graduated Real Estate Transfer Tax on properties above 1.5 million dollars over a ten-year period in line with Resolution 126-R-19. (Roll Call Vote).

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

Approved 5-0 on a recorded vote

C. Home Rule Taxes

Chair Simmons mentioned Corporation Counsel Cummings shared a list of Home Rule Taxes as requested by the Committee. Councilmember Reid shared he is in favor of using General Funds to show the City has a systemic commitment to ensure Reparations is being funded. Councilmember Harris added she is interested in the City's sales tax revenue. Committee Member Barber reminded the Committee that Corporation Counsel Cummings had recommended against using General Funds to protect against possible litigation.

Mari Johnson, Assistant City Attorney, noted that the law department is waiting on a memo from Jenner and Block LLP regarding who might have the standing to challenge the Reparations program. Regarding the sales tax, it would depend on how the money was allocated to the Reparations Fund.

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

Chair Simmons noted a combined proposal was submitted from three organizations serving

the Evanston community. Committee Member Sutton shared his concerns with one of the entities.

John Gonzalez, Purchasing Specialist, inquired whether there is any interest in interviewing the proposers. Committee member Barber inquired whether it's advisable to re-open the RFQ to invite other BIDs. Mr. Gonzalez responded that the RFQ could be re-open, but the Committee risk not getting any bids, and the current proposer might not be interested in submitting another bid.

Councilmember Reid inquired about building capacity internally.

4. CONSIDERATION

5. COMMUNICATION

A. Reparations Youth Art Contest - Deadline Extended - Jan 9

Melissa Molitor, Chair of the Arts Council, noted the Arts Council recommended extending the deadline to ensure the call for artwork is shared more widely. The Arts Council will also offer art supplies for anyone interested in submitting artwork for this contest. Reparations Committee Members suggested outreach efforts to increase participation.

Dino Robinson of the Reparations Stakeholders Authority of Evanston (RSAE) updated the Committee. Mr. Robinson noted the RSAE has been educating residents and the faith community about the local reparations initiative. Donated funds are held at the Evanston Community Foundation.

B. Reparations Financial Donation Report

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Tina Paden shared she would like to hear from Corporation Counsel Cummings on the cash payment option. She would also like to see the application open again. She inquired how funds would be divided amongst children should a reparations recipient die. Ms. Paden recommended the Committee invite Mayor Biss to a meeting to discuss his family members' reparations procedure. She also recommended that the donations fund be combined with cannabis revenue so the amount in the fund can be made public.

Khosro, a visual art communicator, noted he is working on a film that highlights issues affecting the black community. He shared that he has some suggestions on how to bring the dialogue around reparations to folks that oppose reparations. Khosro also shared that he would like to motivate and educate first-generation immigrants on how they are beneficiaries of the efforts blacks made in America and how they could play a part in healing the Black Community.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Burns moved for the meeting to be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

