



MINUTES

Equity and Empowerment Commission
Thursday, August 17, 2023 @ 6:30 PM
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, Hybrid Room 2404

COMMITTEE MEMBER PRESENT: Devon Reid, Councilmember, Hilda Morales, Commissioner, Darlene Cannon, Commissioner, Molly Malone, Commissioner, Kady McFadden, Commissioner

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT: Karla Thomas, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT: Tasheik Kerr, Assistant to the City Manager, Liam Bird, Manager of Organizational Performance and Equity

1. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Commissioner Cannon moved to approve the amended minutes from July 20th, and Commissioner Malone seconded. The amended minutes were unanimously approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Tina Paden, a landlord in Evanston who owns property in wards 2, 4, 5, and 8, advocated for equitable treatment of landlords in Evanston who support affordable housing. She also advocated against a Real Estate Investment Trust in Evanston. She spoke about experiencing discrimination in Evanston, how Black residents experienced being pushed out, including her family, and how she is impacted as a Black landlord advocating for affordable housing in Evanston.

4. DISCUSSION

A. Participatory Budgeting

City staff informed the committee someone from PB will be at the next meeting.

Councilmember Reid provided an overview of the various participatory budgeting proposals. Councilmember Reid shared that using an equity lens in PB projects is important. Folks as young as 14 are allowed to vote.

B. Review the list of the referrals on the Referral Tracker

Councilmember Reid shared that he plans to make a referral for a new tax for self-checkout kiosks. It would be a charge on the business for having self-checkout kiosks.

Commissioner Malone shared there may be limitations due to OSHA for hiring youths to work instead of self-checkout kiosks. Companies are not able to hire youths because you have to use a ladder and need to be over 18 to push the elevator. Commissioner Malone proposed having a process to gather community input on this topic.

C. Public Engagement Policy

Councilmember Reid inquired about what such a policy really means in practice. What does it cost in practice? This item will be added to the next meeting agenda.

D. Equity and Empowerment Mission Statement

This item will be added to the next meeting agenda.

E. Recruitment for EEC

Chair, Commissioner Cannon shared she emailed the Mayor about a recommendation for EEC. She also asked the Mayor to send a notification out. Karla also posted on Facebook pages. Commissioner Grover will end her term in September. Chair Commissioner Cannon recommended adding a youth member.

5. CONSIDERATION

Councilmember Reid recommended the Commission add a discussion about the budget to the next meeting agenda. Chair Commissioner Cannon shared that the Commission can make recommendations on how to make the budget more user-friendly. Councilmember Reid recommended having staff walk through the new budget widget. He inquired whether it's interactive, user-friendly and whether it really helps residents in looking at the budget.

Manager of Organizational Performance and Equity, Liam Bird, shared that he is in discussion with the Budget Manager on adding an equity lens to the budget.

6. COMMUNICATION

7. REPORTS

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.