



Reparations Subcommittee
Friday, November 20, 2020
9:15 AM
Minutes

Alderman Rainey motioned to suspend the rules to permit members to convene via a virtual meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Call To Order/Declaration Of A Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 9:17 a.m. by Alderman Robin Rue Simmons. Committee member Alderman Ann Rainey was present. Alderman Peter Braithwaite was absent. Staff members Kimberly Richardson, Nicholas Cummings, and Tasheik Kerr were also present.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Alderman Rainey, seconded by Alderman Simmons, to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2020 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Communication

A. Financial Update

Alderman Rainey announced St. Nicholas Catholic Church would be donating \$1,000 to the Reparations Fund. Tasheik shared that as of November, the Reparations Fund received \$14,234 in donations.

Discussion

A. Program Development

Interim Assistant City Manager, Kimberly Richardson, presented an overview of the Restorative Reparations Housing Programs. The programs consist of homeownership, home improvement, and mortgage assistance. Committee members provided feedback on each program.

The Committee also reviewed outstanding items which include the administration of the programs, the creation of a Reparations Eligibility Review Committee structure, and the role of the Reparations Committee.

Alderman Simmons requested staff provide a list of examples whereby residents could show proof of discrimination. Alderman Simmons also requested staff develop a survey to

determine how many residents are eligible for reparations.

Alderman Simmons emphasized this program is not intended to replace HR 40; a bill that would establish a commission to study and develop reparation proposals for African-Americans. The local reparation program is one step towards repair. Alderman Simmons encouraged residents to strengthen this program and to not relieve the State and Federal government of their responsibility for reparations.

Alderman Rainey stated that the City needs to look at increasing reparations funding. She noted that Public Benefits, the requirement for developers to include forms of benefits in their development project, is one source. Alderman Rainey recommended that the Reparations Subcommittee encourage the City Council to authorize contributions to the Reparations Fund as an appropriate Public Benefit.

It was moved by Alderman Simmons, seconded by Alderman Rainey, to have staff place on the City Council agenda a discussion regarding the reparations program development.

New Business

A. Presentation by Bennett Johnson

Alderman Simmons announced Mr. Johnson is a native Evanstonian who had campaigned for civil rights.

Mr. Johnson presented the concept of The Freedom Plan. The Freedom Plan consists of five basic parts: 1) Formation of a Real Estate Investment Trust 2) Formation of a Freedom Education Fund 3) Formation of a Freedom Health Care Fund 4) Formation of a Freedom Venture Capital Group and 5) Formation of a Truth and Reconciliation Group.

Alderman Simmons noted the City's Reparations Fund is limited to housing and economic development. There is a supplemental reparations fund, the Evanston Reparations Community Fund that might address some of the components of The Freedom Plan.

Public Comment

Ndonga Nyomo, of Our Village the Black Evanstonians, noted she had not received responses to her questions. She is also in favor of the developer donating to the Reparations Fund. Ndonga also added that the developer should be made to include mix income housing and housing for black legacy Evanstonians.

Meleika Gardner inquired whether a widow would qualify for reparations if her husband was deceased; whether an individual could use the fund to invest in a business rather than property; and would there be any reparations from the State of Illinois.

Brenda Greier stated that the reparation programs are copies of programs that already exist. She inquired whether there is a program for seniors. Brenda recommended the committee involve black professionals.

Tina Paden noted the Subcommittee had not shared the amount of money received from the cannabis revenue. Tina noted that an eighteen-year-old is not qualified to buy a house. Tina recommended the Subcommittee find out how many individuals would qualify for the reparations program. Tina shared that cash payments are needed.

Carlis Sutton requested that the Subcommittee prioritize the recipients of the Reparations Fund. Mr. Sutton noted that opportunities that make homeownership possible should be emphasized. Mr. Sutton shared that the reparation programs don't meet the needs of the elderly.

Jason Beeferman requested there be more clarification regarding the amount of money in the Reparations Fund.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.