



DEI Committee Minutes
Via Zoom Pursuant to Chapters 113 and 115 of the
Codified Ordinances (as amended in Ordinance 22-28), and
Resolution No. 22-29, enacted March 22, 2022.
Thursday, May 18, 2023
8:00 a.m.

Members Present: Council Chair Sean P. Malone
Mayor David E. Weiss
Council Member Anne Williams
Citizen Member Julie Kaufman

Others Present: Chief Administrative Officer Jeri E. Chaikin
Chief Diversity Officer Colleen Jackson

The meeting was called to order by Council Chair Sean P. Malone at 8:05 a.m.

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Approval of the March 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that because there is a light turnout today they do not have a quorum to approve the minutes. He looked them over and there are a lot of great ideas being generated in the conversations.

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Final update on the internal DEI Assessment and Action Plan

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that they will turn to the Internal DEI Assessment and some of the takeaways.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson stated that the City has been undergoing an Internal DEI Assessment with our partners, MGT Consulting. She is very pleased with the feedback and there was good employee participation. MGT did focus groups with two groups of employees, and a full City staff survey. They interviewed each department director to make sure they had a good idea of policies and procedures so they could give us feedback. A couple of great things that came out of it was an internal DEI Task Force, which is similar to the DEI Committee, but comprised of employees from every department. The internal DEI Task Force has created an action plan for things to implement over the next year or so. Some of the things include increasing communication around DEI, making sure there's cohesion across departments, increasing cross-departmental collaboration, and upping the training and development opportunities internally and externally. MGT's Lamont Browne came in and spoke with the City's Management Team, and the DEI Task Force. She is currently meeting with each department to review the results with them, answer questions, and get feedback about the process.

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Every employee was given access to the full report, and those without email access had a printed version delivered to them. They also got a copy of the action plan. It was very thorough and she thinks it will guide the City for the next couple of years on the DEI journey. There are opportunities in the future to reassess and chart progress. She is grateful to MGT and for the cooperation of the staff. The fact that we have done this has boosted morale, not that it was low, but people are excited and encouraged that the City cares enough to make this investment both in time and money. They are looking for the committee to actualize the plan.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that because of the sensitivity of getting employees to speak up about their internal experiences while working for the City, a lot of the responses are going to be kept confidential to encourage people to speak freely about working for the City. One thing worth the public knowing is that employees have not always been treated as well as they would like by residents in some of their service capacities, whether in the Public Works Department or the Recreation Department in their interactions with the community. That's something for everyone in the community to be mindful in how they treat those who are providing public services.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson added that all of the responses were kept anonymous. The only thing that wasn't completely anonymous obviously was the focus groups because employees attended, but no one from leadership. MGT was really big on protecting the anonymity of our employees so that they would trust them to share actually how they felt. They discovered some public facing employees have negative interactions with some residents. She did a training with every department personally, and those are things they shared with her. They have been updating the customer service handbook, making sure that employees are aware of the rules, and what they don't have to tolerate. She has also been talking about what the external messaging should be. The good part is overall most Shaker residents treat employees who provide community services with respect and appreciation, but no matter where you go, there will be outliers who do not. They are trying to limit that. She is first trying to show up for employees to empower them so that they know what is expected of them and how they are supported. Then what they need is leaders and other residents holding each other accountable so they don't treat employees poorly. There will be more campaigns around that and opportunities for people to show their support of employees.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that there are opportunities for some follow up down the road as the City internally tries to implement a lot of these policies and practices so that employees feel like they have a more supportive workplace.

Mayor Weiss added that he attended a few pieces of this to emphasize the Administration's and the City's support of this assessment. He also had the privilege of attending one of the ending sessions where a group of employees presented the action plan from the internal assessment. He was really impressed by the candor, the sensitivity, the thoughtfulness of the ideas, and the tone of the conversation. Not that he should be surprised, but it's always nice to see employees really engaged and really dedicated to this process. Hats off to everybody who put it together for approving it. It was really great and it is just the beginning.

Ms. Anne Williams stated that she appreciated the presentation that was given at the Council retreat. It provided a lot of depth as to the process. She really appreciates all the effort that went into it. The action plan that was developed is robust and a great roadmap. She hopes that as the City works through internally some of these roadmaps and achieve some of these goals, they can share them with the public. She understands they're not doing it at this point with the action plan, but thinks they are going

to achieve some very valuable steps in the City as they work through this. She hopes they can share some of this with the public so they can understand what the City is doing in a more concrete way. There is really good work that has been done in this assessment, and there is great work going forward. She would like to share as much as they can.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that some of the recommendations were to formalize policies that are already in place where the City has been operating on them informally and just has not put in writing in one centralized place.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson stated that it was interesting because some of the things they were applauded for doing are in practice, but not necessarily in policy. When any organization has existed for a long time, it's important that people know how things work and that those things are written somewhere. Should leadership change, those things can remain. Those types of changes are going to be easy to make once they are written down so they can be relied upon. It was enlightening to learn the impact that had. It was a great discovery process and she feels supported and uplifted by how each department director is willing to help actualize it.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that he looks forward to hearing more about the implementation of that in the future. There was a question in the chat about where to find the action plan. He asked if some of those things could be made public at some point.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson stated that she will find out.

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Discussion of the request by ELL program for reimbursement of meeting expenses.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that they received a request by the English Language Learners Program spearheaded by Carolyn Steiner for reimbursement of meeting expenses. There is a page on the City's website now which sets forth the process the DEI Committee discussed for reimbursing meeting expenses, up to a maximum of \$250 to support meeting space, reservation fees, food, speaker fees, and child care to facilitate meetings that are consistent with the DEI mission or DEI goals. This is the first request which they received by email since the form wasn't online at the time. Ms. Steiner is hoping to have two focus group meetings with the English Language Learners to find out what support attendees would like to have and how they can improve their program. These meetings will probably take place later in June or perhaps July. They did exchange some emails on this, and he believe the majority of committee members are supportive of reimbursing this request. If that's the case, the only thing worth discussing is whether the \$250 expense limit is a hard cap or they might be willing in some instances to reimburse greater amounts. Ms. Steiner is requesting funds of up to \$1,000, but it would include translation services for some of the international residents who don't speak English. She was not expecting that she would need all of the translation services that she itemized. It also includes some small expenses for food. He believes they agreed the work is worthy of the committee's support. The question is how much support to provide.

Ms. Kaufman agreed they should support the request. Ms. Steiner has been working very hard and mission wise it is definitely on track with what the DEI Committee is doing. She asked if there is a

finite amount to use by a certain date in case someone else asks and wondered if they can also accommodate another request.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that the DEI Committee was appropriated \$25,000 for reimbursement of meeting expenses, and for other initiatives. He does not believe they have spent more than \$1,500. They have purchased snacks for some of the meetings and they're half way through the year. They talked about allocating \$5,000 for meetings of this nature.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson stated that they discussed having a pot of \$5,000 from which community members could apply for these types of reimbursements, which is why they ended up setting a \$250 cap for each request to help as many people as possible.

Ms. Anne Williams stated that \$250 is a good guideline but should not be a hard and fast rule. She feels strongly about supporting this up to the amount requested. It is a different kind of meeting given the translators, and the depth of services needed to have this meeting effectively. Ms. Steiner is a very valuable resource, and this is a very important meeting. Given they haven't had a lot of requests, or spent a lot of money last year, she would be very supportive of this request. Even if they have to bump up the pool of \$5,000, it is worth it to accommodate a meeting such as this. The proposal has such great detail and it's hard to argue with the expenses. When they were thinking about \$250 they imagined a group getting together at the library and providing childcare, and food perhaps, without a lot of other expenses. This is something different they weren't anticipating when they talked about that \$250 guideline. This is really valuable and they have the money. It would be wonderful to have that many community events where people are asking for money and support. They can accommodate this with the budget they have.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that the proposal says up to \$1,000. Some of the translators would come from relatively far away and some of it depends on the types of languages needed. They quoted \$120 for two hours of translation from the translation services used by the Shaker Schools. If all the beginner students from the class attended, they would need translators in French, Nepalese, Spanish, Turkish, and Ukrainian. That would require five translators at \$120 an hour for two hours.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson suggested language to the effect that if people would like to request more they could submit additional information and appeal to the committee. It is not posted yet online with the form because the committee had not had an opportunity to talk about it. This is the first request but Ms. Steiner has provided these kinds of services for years. They also talked about in the future not making it necessary for people to be reimbursed. For now they will be reimbursed, but they can add that language also. As the word gets out, they can keep a cap and use it all. Now it is better to use it and support this project.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that they could tell Ms. Steiner the committee is supportive up to \$250. If she'd like to submit more after the fact they could consider the request depending on the number of translators that come. If they get a lot of meeting requests, speaker fees may be \$200 to \$1,000.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson stated that means in a year's span, they would only support five events for \$1,000. A question from the chat was where people can find information on these funds and how it is being publicized. When the DEI Committee received the allocation, they discussed in the meetings they would like to provide this support. They haven't publicized it outside of the meetings yet. The

form is active on the website, but most people don't know about it. Their goal for the end of this year is to increase the communication about it. They are working on a plan to get the word out.

Ms. Anne Williams stated that they have to consider each request as people come up with ideas. If they involve speaker fees, they may look at each one individually. She would hesitate to tell Ms. Steiner they are supportive only up to \$250 because she doesn't know if Ms. Steiner will feel comfortable planning without knowing she is going to be reimbursed for the expenses outlined. She would prefer to support her up to \$1,000 or her requested amount dependent on the reimbursement form she provides. Assuming it is in order and she spends the expenses as planned, they should commit upfront to doing it. This is a big deal. Given Ms. Steiner's history working in this field, it's not a one-off.

Ms. Kaufman agreed about the \$1,000 being fair. She appreciates how thoughtful the committee is about the money and forms. It is important but on the flip side, the committee is about being inclusive. Ms. Steiner is trying to get translators so people can participate in a conversation. There is no question they should fund this.

Council Chair Mr. Malone suggested they approve her request. It looks like they are all in favor. They could change the cap to \$500 or include the suggested language on the website for people who wish to request more than \$250.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson offered to come up with a few options to be added to the form and submit them via email to the committee. They want to make sure they are being equitable. If someone requests \$1,000 they have to weigh it based on the value they're offering, and how it fits in line with DEI values. Ms. Steiner has a history doing this work. The rest of the applicants may not have that. She will work on draft language and send it out. When they meet next time they can decide what to use or it may already be posted based on their responses. Hopefully, within the month they can get the word out and let people know they would love for people to use this money to help advance important DEI initiatives.

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Discussion on resident participation on committee.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that he would like to talk about attracting and retaining residents who would like to do DEI work along with what they've been doing so far with committee priorities. There is a meeting tonight at the library from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the Boulevard Room on the second floor focused on neighborhood association work. They invited all the neighborhood association leaders that are listed on the City's website to attend. It's open to anyone in the community who wants to work on neighborhood engagement work. They would like to get a better handle on the type of work that's going on in the different neighborhoods, what people would like to do in those groups, and how the City can support them. They have had a few departures on the committee from resident members. He asked if they should go back to the pool of applications they had when they started the committee, or finish out the year with the group they have and recruit people through the broader community conversation meetings.

Ms. Anne Williams confirmed the citizen members on the committee: Julie Kaufman and Tracy Williams. She believes it is important to add more now. They have six months left of this year, and it's important to have more citizen representation on this committee.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that they always had three citizens along with some citizen subcommittee vice chairs.

Chief Dei Officer Ms. Jackson stated that the original concept was to focus on the areas of the task force, so they started with three subcommittees: Racial Equity, Youth Engagement, and Welcoming/Inclusion. Each of the subcommittees had a resident member as the chair and a vice chair. Tracy Williams was originally the vice chair of youth engagement. When the chair left she stepped up as chair. When the Chair for welcoming/inclusion stepped down Julie Kaufman stepped up as chair. Andrea Boyd continues to serve as the vice chair. Both the chair and vice chair of the racial equity subcommittee have stepped down. During the DEI Committee retreat they opted to get rid of the subcommittees and create goals which people could choose to manage. As they get better established and clearer in terms of the community understanding what the committee is doing, she believes they will be able to garner support once again.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that they probably still have a handful of applications that were great that they didn't get a chance to extend an invitation to last time. They can consider them now. It has been a year and a half since folks applied, so they can check to see if they're still interested.

Ms. Kaufman stated that the reasons people join or leave a committee may vary depending on personal situations. The reasons for people coming or going might be something to discuss at some point. Inviting a new person is great as inclusion is a topic here. They should not leave it open for the rest of the year. She is concerned about the way a person is selected, how that works, and how it appears. There were over 90 applications the first time, but now that some actual work has been accomplished, it might make sense to see who is actually coming to the meetings. There is a place on the website to submit your name if you are interested in being involved in a City committee at any point. She asked about that process. She is not committed to any process, but asked if there is a procedure that usually happens.

Mayor Weiss stated that it used to be very informal. People would either nominate themselves or someone else would recommend someone for a committee. To make it more transparent a form was created on the City's website. People can see descriptions of the committees and submit their information to serve on a commission, board or committee. When openings arise that is one of the ways we find people that are interested. Things change and sometimes someone isn't able to participate any longer, but it was intended to be a way for everyone in the community who wants to serve to have a way of expressing that interest.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that with this committee in particular, there was a concerted effort to publicize the opportunity when it started. They did something similar with the Sustainability Committee when it started. Typically it's just an appointment by the Mayor. In this case they had some pretty extensive discussions about who would be on the DEI Committee at the outset. Some combination of that probably would make sense here. They have some applications and anyone is able to apply at any time. They can see what the pool of applicants looks like and discuss it internally with the Mayor. It sounds like there is agreement to try to get someone appointed relatively soon. There is a meeting tonight with the neighborhood association leaders. Historically those organizations have

been good jumping off places for people who want to get involved in public service and more involved in our civic affairs here in Shaker. The more they can do to get people involved in the neighborhoods and on committees, the better. Maybe other names will appear throughout the year. They don't know all the reasons people leave, but they're starting to get a little more focused around some of the topics. It is worth considering if they should change the format in some way, what the expectations are for resident participation, or if they should be clearer about looking for folks to take some initiative and ownership of a project.

Ms. Kaufman asked if there is a job description for citizen members on the committee, and stated that it would be really helpful. It would be a way of explaining what it entails and what they expect from people.

Ms. Anne Williams agreed that would be helpful. For this committee and the Sustainability Committee, the role of citizen members is a little bit different than the rest of committees. They expect they will be well informed and read all the information provided before the meetings, but it's mainly going through agenda items on actions that the City is taking, but not necessarily asking them to do anything outside of that work. In that way there are different expectations. It is important to explain the expectations this committee has for citizen members, and what they can expect from the committee.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated in response to a question from the chat about whether they can meet at other times because making an 8:00 a.m. meeting is tough for people. They are hoping that when people have time they can work on some of the projects. These are meant as passion projects. They are obviously consistent with DEI goals and people have some flexibility in helping them set those goals. They have a couple more months before considering goals for next year so this is a time when people can jump in and generate new ideas.

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Update on progress made on committee priorities, including reminder about Community Conversation on work of neighborhood association.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that they made some progress on a number of priorities including the point-of-sale process. The discussions segued into a very lengthy discussion at the Council retreat. There may be some tweaks to that program under consideration as a result of the DEI meeting held earlier in the year. He has done a little bit of building awareness of an alignment with City wide priorities with his recreation working group meetings. Obviously a lot more to come on that front as the School District goes forward with its plans. The list of minority-owned businesses and promotion of them is one area that might be worth a discussion at the next community meeting in August.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson stated that she is working with the Economic Development Director on a DEI community conversation for businesses to know how they want to be supported. There will be a community conversation with the business community this summer. She will report back on ways the committee can help them.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that they have a couple months to come up with topics for the next community conversation but that might not be a bad topic to focus on later in the year as well. They are having a meeting tonight on revitalizing neighborhoods and community engagement work. The

City is open to all ideas. They want to continue to support the work in Moreland and help it become more sustainable and resident led. They also want to engage residents in other neighborhoods to see if they can build cross neighborhood connections. Economic Development staff have had meetings on continuing the welcoming projects with the neighborhood association ambassadors in the library. That work continues as well. A couple of the other goals they set were things that didn't necessarily lend themselves to specific individual meetings like collecting qualitative data and feedback and establishing authentic connections with individuals in the community. Those obviously are bigger, longer term topics. They have made some progress on all of the goals, but they still have a lot of work to do. This is a time when a new resident or resident member of the committee could jump in and help to shape things going into 2024.

Ms. Kaufman stated that she noticed on social media that there was a Fernway neighborhood post about a barbecue event they're planning for September. It made her think about the meeting tonight and how there was a particular person on her street who was the head of the neighborhood association. She reached out to the person in Fernway who posted the event publicly and tagged a couple of other people who had said they were interested in it to let them know there was a community conversation meeting tonight. She saw what they were doing as engagement and inclusion work. There are many things like that that are happening that she doesn't know about. The purpose of the meeting tonight is bringing in neighborhood association leaders, but it made her think of other things.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that's exactly what they're trying to get at. He thinks about the beer garden that we used to have at the Van Aken district. He doesn't know why we can't have a beer garden/grill-off barbecue at Chelton Park and at a different neighborhood in Shaker another month. Those kinds of ideas are what they are hoping to spark here. He wonders how the City identifies these random events, supports them and helps others do similar things.

Ms. Anne Williams stated that Council members get a weekly notice about block parties and the people organizing the block parties. Sometimes they are very dynamic subsets of the neighborhoods. They have never made an attempt to reach out to the organizers, to ask if they want to be involved in a conversation about what they do.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that is a terrific idea because they are currently organizing for his block. He will go to his share this summer.

Ms. Anne Williams stated that there must be a way to connect them. She was thinking about a model for blocks that don't have block parties, who don't know how to get started, and how the committee can support them. It might have been helpful for tonight but it is something to look for in the future.

Council Chair Mr. Malone stated that they shouldn't look at this as a one-off. They should continue to engage with residents who are doing this work. He is looking at meeting with the neighborhood association leaders as a starting point. Maybe they can use the block party list for the next opportunity.

Chief DEI Officer Ms. Jackson stated that she would follow-up with comments made in the chat regarding equity in the sports committee that the school created, and reach out to them to see if there's any way from a City and recreation standpoint she can be involved. She will reach out to Dr. Burnley this afternoon.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Colleen Jackson, Chief DEI Officer