

The JOINT CD and FINANCE Committees held a meeting on **Monday, July 24^h, 2023** beginning at 7:40 P.M.

CD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Committee Chair Callahan, Mitchell, Oswald, Schneider, Lipian

FINANCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Committee Chair Stewart, Tollett, Cerra, Davis, Schneider

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Corbin and Simmons

OTHERS PRESENT: Law Director Deery, Mayor Whitfield, Safety Service Dir Lundy, Asst. Dir Williams, Finance Dir Pileski, Building Official Farkas, Asst Dir Calvert, Police Chief Pelko, HR Dir Yousefi, Engineer McKillips, WWPC Supt Korzan, Public Works Supt Conner

1. Approval of the Joint Meeting Minutes from May 8th and May 22nd, 2023.

Motion made by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Oswald to approve the said minutes.

2. The matter of creating a new City Committee, titled ‘The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee’. *[Tabled from March 13th, 2023].*

Referred By: HR Director Yousefi

HR Director Yousefi came up to the podium with 2 members of the committee; Mary Gibbs of the Police Dept and Debbie Mason of the Law Dir’s Office. City Council passed a resolution in 2020 to declare racism a Public Health Crisis. From this action, the idea of a DEI Committee was born. We now need to build on the work that has already been started. It was committed to improving equity and improving the quality of life of minorities. It’s only a matter of time before we are asked as a body, what are we doing about this? Systemic racism exists everywhere. It’s defined as the complex interaction of culture, policy and institutions that holds in place the outcomes we see in our lives. Elyria’s resolution states that racism acts on institutional and interpersonal levels which operate throughout time and across generations. Talking about racism is about spreading awareness so that it can be properly addressed. One of the actions the City is taking is the formation of this committee. This committee will work to ensure the diversity, equity and inclusion for all employees throughout the City. They will engage in discussions around practices and inclusion in the workplace, education of staff, create a safe space to allow any and all input from each employee. They are asking council to create this initiative by passing this ordinance. Employee recruitment and retention depends on diversity and inclusion. Diversity improves innovation and diverse teams make better decisions.

Director Yousefi went on to ask to help build on the work which has been started and to act as an ally for DEI and to pass an ordinance establishing this official City Committee.

Chair Callahan thanked HR Director Yousefi.

Mr. Lipian asked who will sit on this committee and how are they chosen?

Ms. Yousefi said they are volunteers and they have approached others, it's completely volunteer. Systemic racism is often unconscious and implicit bias where it's spread across our culture for many centuries, that it has become such a part of the fabric of policies and institutions. This committee would like to review policies, look at different events, and educate and to be part of the solution.

Mr. Lipian asked how will the committee resolve to reduce bias for what it is, implicit or hidden and not clear or unconscious, to produce more fairness?

HR Dir Yousefi said implicit bias has to be recognized for what it is and once that happens we can work to change it.

Asst Dir Williams said that part of this is an awareness that bias exists and we have to be intentional on how we address those things; training, education, awareness, and engagement, which is a part of this process. We all have bias and part of this is an enlightenment and an awareness where it's not accusatory. We didn't acquire it because we wanted to. Part of the role of the committee is to make sure that we are receiving training and they can discuss and recognize these things and making sure the employees have that access to create a better culture and climate that everyone will benefit from.

Mr. Lipian asked what is meant by equity why is equity used instead of equality?

HR Dir said equality is about everyone getting the same thing. Equity is about everyone getting what they need to succeed.

Mr. Oswald asked how much will this cost and do we have funds in place? Is it in the budget?

HR Yousefi said there is a DEI Committee Fund in the HR Budget in amount of \$10,000.

They will also do some fundraising to help alleviate some of the costs.

Mrs. Davis asked if employees that come for training, are they going to be paid? Are they going to have meetings during work hours? And why is there a treasurer as part of the committee?

HR Yousefi said every trainer is different, they've looked at many different opportunities. They hope to do training during work hours. They have a treasurer because they'll be doing fundraising.

Law Dir Deery said the some of the specifics of the ordinance for creating the committee are still being worked out. Monies that go to the committee will be overseen by the Finance Dir's office.

Mr. Tollett said he remembers Council allocating \$10,000 a year ago for printed materials, lunches and misc. expenses for this committee.

That concluded the discussion on this topic.

Chair Callahan read the committee report and asked for a motion.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

Motion was made by Mr. Schneider and second by Mr. Oswald to authorize an ordinance for the creation of the new committee, (DEI Committee).

MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

FINANCE:

Motion was made by Mrs. Davis and second by Mr. Cerra to authorize an ordinance for the creation of the new committee, (DEI Committee).

MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

Seeing there is no further business for Community Development he asked for a motion to adjourn the Community Development portion of this evening's meetings.

Motion was made by Mr. Schneider and seconded by Mrs. Mitchell to adjourn The Community Development Committee Meeting at 7:55 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED

The evening's meetings continued with The Finance Committee Meeting which began at 7:56 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Colleen Rosado, Secretary/Administrative Assistant