



MINUTES
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY
Friday, December 9, 2016 @ 11:30 a.m.
Council Conference Room, 10th Floor, City Hall

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m.

Committee Members

Councilmember Carol Wood, Chair
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley
Councilmember Jody Washington- left at 11:51 a.m.

Others Present

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney, left at 11:34 a.m.
Branden Wadell, Assistant City Attorney
Judi Harris, St. Vincent Charities
Stacey Locke, Peckham
Jim Bale, Greater Lansing Labor Council
Guillermo Lopez
Tammy Lemmer, TCOA
Elaine Womboldt

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPITZLEY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 28, 2016 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPITZLEY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 18, 2016 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER WASHINGTON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 2, 2016 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

Mr. Smiertka introduced new Assistant City Attorney Brandon Wadell, with litigation experience.

Discussion

Ms. Boyer was not able to attend, and was rescheduled for the December 16, 2016.

Final Report to Council on Ad Hoc Committee Activities

Ms. Lemmer provided an update on the Snow Sergeants. The Disability Network is working on coordination of volunteers, however currently there is no pool of volunteers, but has delegated a staff member to search out volunteers. The program does not functioning as an emergency response program, therefore anyone who needs assistance needs to sign up in advance. The phone number for The Disability Network is 517-999-2760.

Councilmember Wood explained discussions held in other Committee meetings on the visually impaired receiving phone call notifications when they are in violation along with a notice, and asked if the group wanted this added to list going to Council as part of the report. Ms. Womboldt asked if the visually impaired could have an appeal process or more than 24 hours to clear their sidewalks. Councilmember Wood explained that this is a special assessment, so having a criterion for a class of people would not work, but currently everyone has the avenue to appeal if they can provide proof. Councilmember Spitzley asked if the Committee on Public Service can waive the entire fee, and Councilmember Wood stated yes if they are able to prove the walk was cleared.

Councilmember Washington stated that she had provided the information on the special events and fees to the Cesar Chavez Committee and they would like to pursue applying for City funds and sponsorship. Councilmember Wood stated that the Internal Auditor is trying to access the program to research the information on events, sponsorship, etc., however does not have access yet. Councilmember Washington asked for the process on the sponsorships to be provided in writing.

The Committee moved onto review of past meeting minutes to report activities to Council.

Topics continue –

- Snow Sergeants- Tammy Lemmer provided a phone number for The Disability Network – 517-999-2760. Mr. Bale and Councilmember Washington offered to assist.
- Peckham site visit and social justice training. Interaction between the groups was an asset.
- TRIAD - Traci Ruzi presented on empowering senior citizens, independent residents or those who need help in their homes. The presentation had a discussion on donations and 100% give back. The presentation also highlighted a program call “No Senior without a Christmas”.
- CATA - Sandy Rios CATA presented to the group information on the Spec tram opportunities, fixed routes, and routing systems and how they are determined. There was also a discussion on bus shelters. Ms. Harris confirmed that CATA has a quarterly meeting and someone from St. Vincent’s does attend.
- LFD - Chief Talifarro outlined the hiring processes, emergency EMT issues, and making sure they were addressing communicating with those with English as a second language. The group asked for an update from LFD on if any of the trainings had been incorporated, if any organizations have been invited to trainings, and informs the LFD that they are willing to participate. Mr. Lopez added that this presentation also spoke on the time frame with their hiring, and asked for questions to be posed to LFD if that was corrected. Councilmember Wood stated her opinion she thought all positions have been filled, but could ask if those time frames issues have been correct. Mr. Lopez asked for the question to be asked then if LFD is preparing to fill retirement positions. Councilmember Spitzley pointed out that there was also a challenge in finding diverse fire fighters. The LFD informed the group during the presentation that they were doing

training on the job, and also making contact with the high schools. Ms. Lemmer informed the group that currently there is a group at MSU working with LPD and LFD to respond to elder abuse calls, in conjunction with TRIAD.

- 911 Center Director presented and the group felt there were concerns that were not addressed, and they did not have all the information the group was looking for. The Director did inform them of a lot of turn over because of the stress of the job, and how they are always performing in house training. The group had asked to be brought into the 911 Center for those trainings so they could tell the call takers their concerns, but there has been no contact with anyone in the group to participate. Ms. Harris added to this topic that the group also heard about Smart 911, and that practice has been incorporated with her organization and they advocate for this program.
- St. Vincent's Refugee Services – Judi Harris presented on the population of refugees being incorporated into the area. Currently there are discussions at the State level and testimony on halting refugee settlement in Michigan. There was only one speaker allowed and that person, Ms. Harris stated, did not speak to the vetting or consultation of immigrants. Ms. Harris informed the group on December 9, 2016 that in the last Fiscal Year there were 776 refugees settled, 425 of those were kids.
- The group over the 2 years of the Committee all supported the understanding that they want to encourage the positive feedback in the community.

Councilmember Wood routed a resolution sent to her from Mr. Lopez supporting Lansing as a sanctuary city. Mr. Lopez stated that it was brought up in 2009, but not acted on by Council. Councilmember Wood stated that there is information out that if a City declares them a sanctuary city, they could lose Federal funding.

Mr. Lopez asked if the Committee could review the proposed document and make changes. Ms. Womboldt asked to change it to "welcoming city" to avoid concerns with funding. Mr. Lopez referenced page 2 of the document which listed other cities in the United States that have declared themselves Sanctuary Cities. Councilmember Wood stated we will provide an updated list.

Councilmember Spitzley recommended changes to page 3, second "Resolved" should state "report crimes" not "crones"; fourth "Resolved", third sentence should state "who can fully" not "could"; and lastly asked for law to review the fifth "Resolved". It was suggested we coordinate with the LPD and LFD make sure that adopting this does not put their funding in jeopardy. Councilmember Wood asked Law to review all "Resolved" clauses, and the 2nd and 3rd "WHEREAS" for accuracy.

Councilmember Wood continued by also stating that there needs to be a conversation with the Administration to make sure there are no obstacles or creates a divide in the community.

The group will continue the review of the document at the 12/16/2016 meeting.

Ms. Womboldt asked that the activity with the installation of the Peace Pole be added to the list of items reported out to Council.

Updates on Participants in the Group

Mr. Lopez distributed program information from ALPACT, and would provide local ALPACT info to Council staff to distribute.

Councilmember Wood informed the group that the next meeting on December 16, 2016 Heather Boyer with LLMSW will be there to present, and the discussions on the group topics will continue. The group at the next meeting will also decide who and when they would like to meet in the future to continue as a group meeting.

Ms. Lemmer stated that CMH will have a forum at Peckham on December 12, 2016.

Adjourn

Adjourn at 12:47 p.m.

Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager

Approved by Committee on December 16, 2016