



Minutes

Committee on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Wednesday, June 16, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88223124424> ; ID: 882 2312 4424; Dial In: (301) 715-8592

Held virtually in an effort to protect the health and safety of the public & to mitigate the spread of COVID 19

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Jackson called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

PRESENT via audio/video

Council Member Spitzley, Chair remotely from Lansing, Michigan- excused

Council Member Jackson, Vice-Chair remotely from Lansing, Michigan

Council Member Dunbar, Member remotely from Lansing, Michigan

OTHERS PRESENT via audio/video

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff

Amanda O'Boyle, OCA

Jim Smiertka, OCA

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER DUNBAR TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM MAY 19, 2021 AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

DISCUSSION

Ordinance Amendment; Chapter 658, Section 658.03

Due to computer issues for the Committee members Ms. Boak shared her screen for the agenda and proposed ordinance.

Ms. O'Boyle spoke brief on the changes to language, removing "willfully annoy another person" replacing it with "threaten another person by word of mouth, gesture, or other physical action that insults, accosts, molests or otherwise harasses the other person". The Committee discussed the examples and situations where this could occur. Council Member Jackson asked about details on the reasoning for "harass" and Ms. O'Boyle stated it is a standard practice where you list items, or have a general word that would encompass. Council Member Dunbar asked for the OCA definition "insult, accost, molest and harass". Ms. O'Boyle stated it would be fact specific and didn't want to speculate, so she provided a scenario. She noted the goal was for some sort of guidance, because perhaps "willfully annoy" was to some sort of vague phrase. Council Member Dunbar stated the idea behind it was not to just put the public on notice, but to say to the police that there needs to be more than willfully annoy to arrest. Council Member Jackson acknowledged his support that this is directed more towards threatening behavior, but

questioned some of the words used such as “accost”, and “harass”, and asked the Committee and OCA to peel off the language that is already covered in some other ordinance or law. He asked to then look at it, to see what it would cover, which could result in the word just “harass”. Council Member Dunbar asked for clarification on if his request would be to look at other ordinances and if there is something else in the tool box that would cover this. Ms. O’Boyle then spoke on any issues they have seen in courts with the current language and also provided examples. There could be other specific ordinances that are used such as “telephone harassment”, “trespassing on the property of another”, and State Statute such as stalking, legal will pursue those more specific crimes. This is an odd situation, where it doesn’t quite rise to the level of “stalking” or “trespassing” which would very specific requirements. Council Member Jackson stated he is interested in taking to Council the ordinance as it is drafted to be reasonable and provide all the tools. Council Member Jackson asked to hold it for the next meeting since this was not his original proposed ordinance amendment, but something the full Committee was working on and then the whole Committee would be present to vote it out of Committee.
Council

OTHER

Council Member Dunbar asked for a future discussion on pursuing everyone’s thought process on gun violence and for an update from the OCA on the recently established Gun Violence Task Force. Mr. Smiertka confirmed the group had not met yet, and even though the members listed were all of the Mayor’s staff, the intent is to have other members of the Community involved. Council Member Jackson acknowledged the request for the discussion and asked that it be placed on the next Committee agenda so all Committee members can be involved in the discussions.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Submitted by, Sherrie Boak

Recording Secretary, Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee August 11, 2021