



Minutes
Committee on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
Wednesday, March 23, 2022 @ 4:30 p.m.
City Council Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Jackson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Council Member Jackson, Chair
Council Member Brown, Vice-Chair
Council Member Hussain, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Renee Richmond, Council Staff
Lisa Hagen, OCA
Heather Sumner, OCA

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public present at this time, therefore no public comment.

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM MARCH 9, 2022, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

DISCUSSION

ORDINANCE – Chapter 256; Section 256.01-256.03; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Board

Councilmember Jackson explained that from the last meeting Ms. Boak had sent multiple emails asking if the Committee had questions for Kim Coleman to send them prior to today's meeting since Ms. Coleman could not attend and she would answer them via email, no questions or supplied through email. Councilmember Brown indicated he briefly spoke to Ms. Coleman, he then handed out a copy of the Draft Ordinance with highlighted portions that he had inquiries on. He continued referring to page two, line 3 as it states "staff" and right now that is only one person, he also asked what the goals of the Board are as it doesn't indicate. Councilmember Brown stated he believes this should be something that reports directly to the Mayor and be on an organization chart and be responsible for city employees. Ms. Sumner asked if she could address is concerns as she has some answers. She said changing the word "staff" is unfeasible, one person cannot be responsible for every single city employee. She continued that right now it is only one "staff" person but that will increase so we can keep that in the ordinance, so it doesn't have to be amended at another time.

Councilmember Brown stated he was expressing is thoughts as he is new and learning. He handed out a few of other city organization charts including Lansing and believes the DEI Advisory Board should report directly under the Mayor. He referred to his notes on page two,

lines 12-15 and his thoughts are that it should advise the Administration, staff, etc. and adding that even the HR Director had indicated that she has not been able to sit with the Diversity Officer and that's concerning.

Councilmember Hussain asked if law could speak on the administration/legislative functions and roles of them and us. Ms. Hagen replied that in terms of the cities of East Lansing and Wyoming their administration has a department for DEI. She continued that for Lansing this is not a department of Lansing, this is an Advisory Board created by an Ordinance, and to create a department that would be an Administration decision, and you have to think of salaries, having it part of the budget, so the organization charts are off topic since Boards do not have organizational charts. Councilmember Brown said he understands the advisory vs. department but was bringing the org charts as a visual aid to have in regard to having the Advisory Board report to HR or the Mayor. Ms. Sumner commented that where this is going is these are questions for the Mayor, this ordinance is very specifically meant to address the Racial Justice and Equity plan, if Councilmember Brown wants something beyond that goal, he needs to have that conversation with the Administration. Councilmember Brown added that he read the entire RJE plan and is just wondering what the Mayor's vision is and it isn't clear in the ordinance.

Councilmember Hussain said he understands Councilmember Brown's concerns as to what work is going to be done and that can be something we talk about during Brown Bag, and they are trying to have an ordinance in place to carry out an action plan and the way he read it he is good with it. Councilmember Brown replied he thought someone from the Mayor's office would be at the meeting to answer questions. Councilmember Hussain stated that Ms. Coleman did not receive any questions by the Committee, and Councilmember Jackson reiterated that he told Ms. Boak that Ms. Coleman wasn't needed because no questions were submitted as requested ahead of time. He continued that the Mayors MJREA did their work, and this ordinance is something that came out of that, but this is general and broad in topic, and he doesn't understand how they will get their "assignments", but anything DEI related should go through the Advisory Board.

Councilmember Jackson said he doesn't have a problem on tabling this and having someone come in for discussion and asked if it would hold anything up like appointments. Ms. Hagen indicated that depending on the changes another public hearing may be needed. Ms. Sumner indicated she wasn't clear on what questions are not being answered, and Councilmember Brown again said he is new and is not one to pass something because it is DEI and wants to know the Boards function to be effective and stated maybe whomever drafted it from the Administration could answer questions. Ms. Sumner reiterated that it sounds as if there are specific questions for specific people and not satisfied as to how it is going to work, there is a lot of aspirational language in Councilmember Brown's notes on how the operationalization of the RJE plan is and it cannot be explained in an email, she added this legally passes but makes sense to bring in those that have the answers as law does not. Councilmember Hussain stated as being on a lot of different boards, this does create questions on how they are going to operate and how often they may meet.

Councilmember Jackson verified that what he is hearing is that there are more questions needed in-person. Ms. Richmond asked to verify if someone from both the Administration and HRCS is requested for the next meeting on 4/13, and Councilmember Jackson confirmed whoever can speak on the ordinance.

RESOLUTION – Membership Consideration for Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Board

Ms. Hagen stated that this cannot be voted on until the previous agenda item is tabled, and Councilmember Jackson concluded to table this for the 4/13 meeting as well.

OTHER

No other topics of discussion.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Submitted by Renee Richmond

Recording Secretary, Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee April 13, 2022