

CITY OF PHILOMATH
Inclusivity Ad Hoc Committee
August 18, 2020

Mayor Eric Niemann called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency, members of the Committee and staff attended by videoconference. The public was also provided with log-in instructions to listen and observe the meeting electronically.

A. WELCOME/ROLL CALL

Mayor Niemann welcomed everyone and asked Ruth Causey to serve as chair. Councilor Causey agreed and began to lead the meeting.

B. APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES

1. July 7, 2020

Motion by Mayor Niemann, second by Councilor Jones, approved 3-0 (Yes –Causey, Jones, Niemann; No –none).

Chair Causey raised concerns about a letter that she heard was circulating the community that accused members of the City Council of being racists. She expressed disappointment in hearing this and stated she felt the Committee had worked hard on getting the resolution written and passed. In response to a question from Councilor Jones, Mr. Workman stated staff had not received a copy of the letter or heard anything about it.

There was a review of the letter submitted by Maeve Dempsey with comments from Chair Causey and Councilor Jones in support of the resolution and adverse reactions to several comments about at the previous City Council meeting.

Rose B. provided testimony opposing the comments made by Councilor Thomas at the last meeting. She read a prepared land declaratory statement.

Giana Bernardini provided testimony about the comments made by Council Thomas, expressing the conversation about the resolution were not appropriate because the resolution had already been passed.

Zina Allen provided testimony stating the last meeting was upsetting to her and she felt that Councilor Thomas's comments were hurtful and harmful.

Amanda Little-Kellam read a statement about the last council meeting, specifically the muting of video and the comments opposing land declaration statements.

Abigail Kurfman provided comments about concerns as a new Philomath resident, regarding white supremacy, and stated she was committed to participating in this process and sharing resources.

Jessica Andrade read a statement concerning statements made at the council meeting and requesting people be held accountable.

There was discussion about why some people providing comments during the meeting were asked follow up questions and others were not and why some people were engaged and others where not. There was support for allowing comments throughout the meeting.

Zina Allen comments on the difficulty she felt as she was feeling marginalized by the discussion at the council meeting. She stated marginalized individuals have to listen a lot but don't often get a lot of space to talk about their issues.

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2 A break was taken from 6:56 to 7:00.
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4 There was discussion about the meeting recording and Mr. Workman stated he failed to
5 start the audio recording at the beginning of the meeting, but it is being recorded at this time.
6 There was discussion about the concern of the audio of the first meeting not being recorded.
7 Councilor Niemann offered for anyone who wished to restate their message is welcome to.
8 There was discussion about disadvantage of not having the audio and video.
9

10 C. NEXT STEPS & PRIORITIES

11 Councilor Jones spoke to his priorities and goals, including:
12 Series of opportunities for people to come together and learn together about various topics.
13 Land Acknowledgments –expressed concerns about it becoming a token if it was something
14 that was done because it had to be done each meeting, compared to the value they bring
15 when they are done because they respect and honor those that came before us. There was
16 discussion that the School District has permission to use the mascot “Warriors” and we
17 should follow up to see if the curriculum is being followed through on and revisited.
18

19 Mayor Niemann discussed efforts the City made earlier this year in acknowledging the Siletz
20 Tribe and efforts to provide education from the Oregon Black History Pioneers.
21

22 Rose B. expressed desire to provide training to City Council members and said that should
23 be added to the list. She recommended meeting on a weekly basis between now and the
24 next council meeting. There was additional discussion about the cost of meetings and the
25 cost of training coupled with resources at OSU and at the state level that could be utilized.
26

27 Zina Allen recommended the NAACP, disability advocacy group, and people at the college.
28

29 Mayor Niemann noted the upcoming free conversation hosted by DOJ, December 27-28
30 Virtual “I Have a Dream” March in D.C.
31

32 Abigail expressed concern about the term “training” as opposed to “learning” and training,
33 including the need to provide compensation to marginalized populations that are providing
34 this service. She asked about the website hosting a section for “opportunities for learning”.
35

36 Jessica Andrade stated that the DOJ meetings are not considered training, but an
37 opportunity to share grievances and learn.
38

39 D. FUTURE MEETING DATES

40 There was discussion about different dates and times; the Committee agreed to meet
41 Tuesday, September 22 at 6:00 p.m. Chair Causey offered to be available for a meeting
42 with just her at 6:00 p.m. on August 25.
43

44 There was discussion about the membership of the Committee and Mayor Niemann
45 continuing on the committee or not.
46

47 Mr. Workman clarified that those wanting an email invite to next week’s meeting need to
48 email him or look for the meeting information on the website.
49

50
51 E. ADJOURNMENT

52 Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.
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