

**Race Equity Advisory Committee
January 20, 2022 Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER

Present: REAC members Deanna Martinez, Eric Stahl, James Friday, Jing Fong, Peggi Erickson, Renni Bispham, Savanna Rovelstad, Sue Wilmot.
Liaisons Brenda Fantroy-Johnson, Clarence Moriwaki.

MINUTES

Minutes were approved.

AGENDA

Agenda was modified and approved with the following amendments:

- Item 7 #NoBIPD Expansion moved up the agenda to be Item 5.
- Added to agenda (now Item 7): Group request to speak before REAC regarding letter sent to Bainbridge Island School District.
- Added to strategic planning subcommittee discussion: REAC action on a recommendation to City Council on a race equity action plan

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

THANK YOU LIAISONS :: WELCOME LIAISONS (James)

Brenda, thank you for continuing to be on the Race Equity Advisory Committee and also for your leadership within the Council. We appreciate everything you do. You have been instrumental getting us to where we are. We appreciate you so very much and we could not be here without you.

Rasham, it's going to be a big loss, all the advocacy with the committee and the city council. She has been an instrumental part of being honest, open, willing to challenge and to persevere through the storms that she'd had to go through to get where she was. I will miss her. She has been a light. When we were searching for a beacon she was always there. She was always willing to stand up for the little guy. She has always been willing to challenge the status quo, to get to the truth.

Welcome, Clarence! It is wonderful to have you here. I am welcoming you, hoping that you can bring your truth to the group and that we can embrace that and work towards equity on all sides of the spectrums of the goals that we're trying to achieve.

Clarence: I did request to be part of this and there's a couple things that happened in the selection that have made history that a lot of people have overlooked. Both Brenda and I are the first elected officials, African American, Black, and Asian that ever served in this community. What's also noteworthy is that we're an island of about 90% white and mine was the only race where a white person was not on the ticket. This city has effectively broken a couple barriers in terms of color and representation, with the election of Brenda and myself.

Brenda: Nobody other than Clarence (and I) said they wanted to be on this committee. I'm really proud of the way you have formed your committees and how you're doing all the work in the background. It's not just about events and marches and buttons. We've got to get down to the causes of systemic racism and that has to do with the policies that come out of city council. I want to applaud you all for the work that you're doing.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION ON KITSAP ERACE #NOBIPD PRESENTATION

Eric: We had a presentation at our December 2 meeting from Kitsap ERACE regarding the BIPD/court facility expansion. We had a request from them, both at the meeting and follow-up correspondence. They're asking for a needs assessment that takes into account a race equity perspective and with an equity lens. James asked that the law and policy subcommittee take it up, which we've done.

Earlier today, I sent REAC a draft letter to the city manager to the City Council for your review. What we're proposing is essentially adopting the recommendation from ERACE. It's a letter to the city council stating that we've made the following recommendation at tonight's meeting. REAC recommends that before any final decision is made regarding a new police court facility, the city should engage a qualified outside party with an understanding of systemic racism and experience in applying a race equity lens to law enforcement to assess the communities existing policing needs and to review the proposed facility.

The letter goes on to point out that we think this recommendation is consistent with the city's stated commitment to consider history and the reality of inequalities for marginalized people. That's right out of our formative ordinance in the Bainbridge Municipal Code.

Our understanding is that the Council is going to have a discussion on the facility at the January 25 meeting and we're urging them to incorporate into that discussion a forward-looking needs assessment. And then we say too often the city considers the impact that new initiatives have on the most marginalized members of our community after the decision has been made. We don't want that to happen here. Allocation of resources to law enforcement has a tremendous impact on local communities as a whole.

Eric: Word change, second to last paragraph, replace the word *minority* with *marginalized*.

My suggestion would be that we move to adopt. Policy currently says that liaison shall bring to the agenda anything that that the advisory committee requests, so I would make that part of the motion, as well, that our liaison bring this to the Council. The letter is also addressed to the city manager.

Brenda: I want to try to find the way the best possible way to get this going. Are we sending it to Council in an email or are you going to send it to Council in an email, and then we discuss it at a Council meeting?

Ellen: The Race Equity Advisory Committee can send a letter to the whole council expressing your views if it's adopted by the committee, but in order to put something on the agenda you would need to work with Blair on that. And there's the Councilmember part at the end of the

meeting, where you can provide information that you'd like to have discussed and then Council looks at it and decides whether or not it wants to discuss it at a future meeting.

Brenda: You just reminded me the process is that we have a document that we can write up to add something to the agenda, but in order for it to be placed on the agenda at a certain date I would have to bring that up at the agenda setting meeting which happens on Fridays. If you want them to see this before the 25th, you should email this to the Council and to Blair.

Jing: It feels like we are perpetually asking this question procedurally. What do we do when we have a resolution, or we want to weigh in? Is there a set process by which we can look at the criteria and say, *This is the path we're going to take?* or do we have to revisit it every single time we have some kind of resolution or a letter or an opinion on that we need to pass on to the Council or the city?

James: I would just like to know how we can get directly get our proposals through without jumping through a lot of hoops which seemed to be occurring more frequently now than it was in the past.

Brenda: What I see the problem is that you come up with an idea that you want to get to the Council and instead of (you) getting it to the Council, you want the liaison to get it to the Council. The only way the liaison can get into the Council is to go through procedure. You are welcome to send an email to the Council. You don't need to put me in the middle of it, but you seem to want to. I have to fill out a form to get it put on the agenda. It's not like I can just say on any meeting, "Hey Council I got this for you." I can't do that.

Eric: For this one, let's do both: send it separately to the council and the city manager and enter a request that the liaisons place an item on the council meeting agenda. It would be worth at least reminding the council members who will have already received this if we approve this that this request and recommendation exists.

Clarence: I think we're making it more complicated. When we do reports, Brenda could report that we met with you this evening and that there was this letter that was sent, and it's been emailed to council members. Please consider that and REAC wants to discuss that as an agenda item. It's open and transparent. The public knows that the email was sent to all of us. The important part is the information gets to us.

I also wanted to mention that if it's important to you to have that read into the record at the next meeting, you could pass a motion to ask one of your members to participate in public comment and read that as a communication from REAC. It would be important that you pass that motion so that it would be on the record.

Deanna: What's more important to me is that they know and that they have the information. And, at that point, it's on them. If it's not on an agenda, the ball's in their court.

We can only deliver the message and then it is out. People are going to have to either put up or shut up. We can't keep on saying that we're about equity if we're not going to move that way. And I've stated it before there's a history here. \

Eric: I move that the committee approve the draft recommendation with the one-word revision that we discussed and that the secretary, on behalf of REAC, send the revised letter to the city manager and the city council; that we request that liaisons place the item as appropriate on the city council agenda; and that we authorize a member of REAC to read the recommendation into the record before the city council.

The motion was seconded and approved. Deanna volunteered to read the recommendation on behalf of REAC at the city council meeting on January 25th.

Brenda: I just wanted to say that I don't have a problem bringing the issue, as we discuss it on the 25th. That was my plan all along. It's like, REAC wrote you this letter, what are we doing to move the needle?

SUBCOMMITTEE PROGRESS

Finance: Nothing to report.

Law and Policy:

Renni: We've been asked to look at the liaison job description. We heard previously that there was concern about the liaison's ability to speak forthrightly or bring our issues to the council.

We made some edits to the liaison policy. Without the added language, there's a tension between paragraph two, which basically says your liaison has no authority to provide direction and guidance to us other than that which the council tells you to say and paragraph three that says you can talk to us about what you think as an individual, not as a city councilperson.

Our thought is that we be clear that the liaison to be able to help us understand how things get done in the city. This prohibition on giving us guidance, other than the direction of the city council, does not actually prohibit councilmembers from telling us what they think, individually. That's consistent with what's in paragraph number three. And again, I just made it clear that councilmembers aren't supposed to join in the deliberations unless we invite them to. If we do, then they can speak for themselves.

It's kind of ridiculous, in my mind, if the liaison sees us going down a path that's really bad—and they have no direction from the City Council—and we don't even know enough to ask them to join into discussion; they have to sit there quietly because they can't do anything. I think adding in if they wish to speak for themselves, they could jump in and say *hey, actually, you know, I think that's not the best idea, there's a better idea.*

The rest of the changes are trying to be sensitive to gender identity, and not just be limiting to she or he or him or her. Also, I just wanted to make it crystal clear that it's not just the things that are listed in this policy that liaisons can bring to the city council. This is why we inserted "including but not limited to" language to make it very clear.

Brenda: I just wanted to say before any council member can request to have something on the agenda there was really not much of an avenue to get things on to the agenda. There's a history of council members being sanctioned.

I certainly have not been the kind of person that don't speak my mind. I really don't need a job description for that. But when it comes to things that you need to know about city processes. It's not that I'm holding back. If we don't know, we don't know. I applaud you for updating this. What's the next step for this? Who do you send it to to get it approved?

Renni: I would simply make a motion that we recommend that the city council take a look at this and adopt to update the process.

Clarence: It would have to come to the council as some sort of amendment to the manual of governance that's already adopted and approved.

I get where you're going, but I think it takes away the intent because you could have a council member who could be very overbearing, who might want to steer your committee in a certain way and dominate your committee. We're supposed to allow you to set your own direction and your advice is to our city. So, that's why there's that little safeguard there to allow you, as a group and all the other advisory committees for that matter, to use us as you can. That's the only concern I would suggest would be problematic

Renni: Are you talking about the line in paragraph two or paragraph three? Which specific part?

Clarence: Two. This provision does not prohibit a council member from speaking for themselves as state in section three below." We have to clearly say this is my point of view.

Renni: You have two provisions: one that specifically says you can't talk to us. It doesn't mention, except for this circumstance. You have another provision that says you can speak to us. The two of them don't reference each other. And so, what I'm attempting to do here is just make it very expressed that there is no tension between those two things.

Clarence: Yeah, well look at the parentheses after Section A. *The council member wishes to speak for themselves* in the parentheses. It says in this situation the council member must expressly state that they're speaking for themselves, not for the entire council. It's already indicated in the policy that when we speak, we are speaking for ourselves, and we have to we have to say that up front because it cannot be implied that we are speaking for the council.

Eric: The problem that this is trying to address has some recent history here. I think the benefit of the change to paragraph two is frankly to avoid the sanctions that Brenda mentioned. There have been instances that either stifled what a liaison has been able to convey to us that would be of interest to the committee or has been used to sanction a liaison for crossing the line into providing direction or guidance. It seems to happen a lot, specifically around this committee or issues related to race equity because, you know, frankly we discuss things that sometimes make traditional governing operations uncomfortable. This is coming up through our committee and not another advisory committee—that it has been a problem, where our liaisons have felt stifled or saddled in what they can express.

I think the intent here is that you can provide general guidance and answer questions on what the process is without fear of having your colleagues say, *Oh that went too far*. To me it's a bit of a free speech provision.

Clarence: My speech is pretty free, I think, because I can say what I feel. It says here, "state that you're speaking for myself not for the entire council." I'm not trying to diminish what you're trying to get to. I think it's already there.

James: You would have to understand the history of REAC to understand what occurred. The city council sanctioned people who were trying to help us. It was continuous, and it negated some of the things we were trying to achieve. I just remember how some of our task (force) members and liaison had to suffer because of that. And so, I really agree with what Renni is saying because of the history.

Renni: The other thing I want to add is I didn't take anything out. It's still our committee. You don't get to run our committee, but you're not prohibited from expressing what you think might be helpful. I think we're big enough individuals that if someone tried to run our committee for us I have no problem pulling this out and saying, *Okay, you're gone too far right, thanks for your opinion. You said it. We understand.*

I don't think we need the protection of the city council to help us tell people who overstep their bounds or try to run our meetings for us. This is intended to address what has happened, which is stifling and chilling the speech of liaisons to bring our ideas forward. We just want to make it clear, so that when a liaison tells the city council what we asked them to deliver that they don't get sanctioned with, *You went beyond what we the city council directed you to do. We didn't direct you to help them navigate the same processes.* It's still our committee, the citizen committee.

Renni: This is our recommendation to city council, who I assume knows if they like this, how to get it to happen. We are an advisory body to the city council in our charter.

It clearly says that the reason that REAC was formed is to advise the city council on how to deconstruct or change structural racism. They hired us to give them advice, but there's not been one request for advice from the City Council, and I'm saying to myself, how is it possible that you form this thing to give me advice three years ago and in the three ensuing years nothing has come before you to where you said, "I wonder what the REAC would advise us on this topic about?"

So, when you hear the frustration, it's that you form the committee that's allegedly supposed to advise. You never asked for advice and—I'm not talking to you, Brenda and Clarence, I'm talking to city council at large. We don't get any requests for advice about anything. Is there no curiosity on the part of the city council of anything that you've decided in the last three years? Where it has occurred to you that, maybe, just maybe, this might have something to do with inequity and a lack of inclusion? Nothing that you've done in the last three years has occurred to you that you might want some advice on the council you asked to help you dismantle systemic racism.

Deanna: The way that it (liaison policy) is written and the way it is done, there are barriers. Whatever we can say about it, the council will do what they want and do whatever they are going to do. And that is where I end with my energy. Thank you.

Brenda: There have been requests for REAC to weigh in on things. I'm thinking about the money that the city got. I'm thinking about affordable housing. Whether or not advice was given or whether or not it was in time or timely, slowly it happened.

James: It was after the procedures had already been done and decided upon that we were asked for some type of advice, after the fact. I understand that what we're proposing is that we have a level of understanding before it gets to that point.

Renni: My motion is that we recommend to the city council that they accept this recommendation from REAC to amend the duties and expectations of the council liaison as written here.

Motion passed to approve.
We will send Brenda the document.

Jing: So procedurally for the No BISD Expansion, I am sending that letter to city council and city manager. For this liaison change, how would you like to communicate it?

Ellen: I think these two items are a little bit different. One is a statement from the Race Equity Advisory Committee to the council and the other is a request for the council to amend by resolution a document that affects all council committees. There are two different ways that you would take that forward.

I think that Councilmember Fantroy-Johnson accurately summarized what would come next, which is that she would take that or Councilmember Moriwaki would reflect that request to the council and then the council would decide if they want to take that discussion up later.

Jing: Sorry to belabor this so Ellen. Just to be clear, we would send the amendment to the liaison policy to Councilmembers Fantroy-Johnson and Moriwaki with a request that it be placed on the council agenda. Brenda would write up the form as an item to discuss.

Events and Outreach

Peggi: We updated the events and outreach plan with a caveat this is based on what is reasonable in view of what's going on with public health.

Here are the things that we thought that the REAC might like to do this year:

- January: We sort of participated in the annual MLK March and celebration—it went virtual. James did submit a video. However, for some reason they didn't play James's video, and I'm not sure why. There were three keynote speakers and a lot of great presentations, some performances and poetry. It was quite a good event.
- February: There's going to be Black History Month and most of it will be virtual. We're talking about presenting a movie: Harriet, Just Mercy, or Mandela.
- Education series on fourth Thursday via Zoom presentation.
- Listening sessions on first Thursday via Zoom. This is in the strategic plan. REAC could explain what it is, what we do, what our mission is. We could ask people what do you think REAC ought to be addressing? What are the issues that you feel are important?
- Public workshop on basic concepts of racism, structural racism institutional racism with activities and discussions in a breakout room. It'd be like our own little mini training.

- Schools and equity with MAC. There's a lot going on in the schools. One of our sessions could be about equity, what's going on with the school district and kids, the district improvement plan, and the Equity Plan. How to talk to kids about race or racism
- Summer movies with an equity theme at Waterfront Park.
- First Juneteenth celebration on the island (Sunday). There's normally a big community celebration in Bremerton on the Saturday. Speakers and booths at Waterfront Park.
- Grand Old Fourth.
- Farmers Market table. James has been doing the heavy lifting on this. Let's see about the possibility of each of us committing to a couple of Saturdays during the summer.

James: Everything is going extremely well with the acceptance of our decals. The downtown community knows this decal means that it's a safe haven for people who may be experiencing injustice, that they have a haven that they can walk into. We've distributed over 400 buttons and about 150 decals. We're going to be doing a media blast with the Chamber of Commerce, hopefully within the next two weeks about why these decals around the community will be understood and accepted.

Brenda: I was looking at your events and you got a lot on here. I was wondering about the missing and murdered Indigenous women. That day is coming up in February. And then there's also Cesar Chavez birthday. I just wondering if we are missing some things that we might want to get involved in. Also, Clarence and I were on a call for African Americans and Asian Americans who were elected in Washington and one of the keynote speakers was the director of the Washington Office of Equity. I just wonder what they have going on in the way of equity.

Peggi:

- Dr. J was one of the keynote speakers on the MLK Day thing as well. The county has hired someone too and we should also be getting in touch with them.
- We're going to be meeting the first and third Wednesdays at five o'clock, so we'll be meeting in just two weeks.
- Newsletter and email updates. James and I need still need to get together to input people's emails who signed up at the Farmer's Market to subscribe to REAC. We'll work with Kristen Drew, the city's communications officer to send updates.
- Sue, I think that you were working with Brenda on a social media event for equity signs. Do you have any update? No update provided.

Jing: One of our strategies in the strategic plan was outreach to community and it included events. And one of the tactics was for the events committee to look at events, prioritize them, and determine what you do, what you do well and come up with your list. Do you anticipate that you're going to try and do them all? Are you going to focus on three or four because that's just a lot of energy and a lot of time? That's my concern.

Peggi: It isn't just the committee, it's all of us.

Jing: I know that, but even if it's all of us, I'm just saying that's a lot. And we have a lot of other work to do with policies and laws and a race equity plan and working with the city to come up with a racial equity lens. I'm concerned that we're biting off more than we can chew. Also, there are so many other groups, including Kitsap ERACE, MAC, and individual communities,

whether it be BIJAC or Bainbridge Black, that are planning events. Is there overlap or some opportunities to partner?

In terms of outreach, Blair had brought up the plastics ordinance and the other environmental ordinance for gas-powered machinery for landscapers. How does the city engage with people from those impacted communities? *Who do I talk to? Who would be impacted by this? and How do I communicate with them?*

Blair had articulated a concern for the mom-and-pop restaurants, people who might be more challenged and don't have as many resources for buying new supplies. There are grants to educate. For Events and Outreach, does this include outreach to communities that will be impacted by city ordinances?

James: They made those decisions before we had an opportunity to speak on how we felt about that. We were not included in that. I just want to make sure that for the record, that is where that stands.

Deanna: I want to back up what Jing was saying and also add that some of our subcommittees are putting in literally the midnight oil. Some people are in seven hours zooms, taking a break, —probably like 30 minutes—and then going into another three hour zoom meeting. I don't think that all of REAC should pitch in with events, but I think that we should all pitch in wherever we can.

I think that we should always provide another avenue for people to participate, especially in this time. We can live stream or offer opportunities to participate remotely.

Peggi: I'm hearing that we should go back and work on this and simplify it a little. Another tact is if people are willing to be chairman of certain events.

Jing: Of great significance is the 80th anniversary of Japanese exclusion. That's definitely something we should be part of. Another thing Blair talked about was with meeting with Zero Waste, the Downtown Association, and the Chamber. I don't know whether that's part of the climate change subcommittee. Lastly, it would be great if the events committee could put together the draft because the strategic planning subcommittee is getting together, and we'll place all this work in one big picture so we can see what we have the capacity to do.

Peggi: Okay, we'll be meeting before our next meeting, so we'll bring back something taking into consideration your feedback.

Training and GARE

Peggi: I mentioned at our last meeting that there are two ways to attend the annual membership meeting in Portland. You can attend in person, or you can attend online.

In-person (\$400, 20% discount with 10+ people)

- Tues, April 19: Evening reception
- Wed., April 20: Plenary, keynote, and three breakout sessions.
- Thurs., April 21: Two plenaries and one breakout.

Online option (\$125)

- Tues., April 19: Separate conference with breakout session.
- Wed., April 20th: Live stream of plenary, separate breakouts, livestream keynote.
- Thurs., April 21: Livestream two plenaries, one online breakout.

You can go on GARE's portal to register. I think we can wait till maybe end of February to make a decision who wants to go, in-person or online. How do we want our budget to cover this? How do we want to get the City Council and the city involved? Last year, Kate Brown registered people for the conference and it came out of the city budget.

I think it's really important for people on REAC to attend this whether they attend in-person or online. It's about people in other jurisdictions who do what we do sharing what they do.

Brenda: I just want to say I thought it was a great conference, and I will be going in person.

Strategic planning

Jing: Blair's feedback on strategic plan suggested specific work plan items or activities, which we placed under the corresponding strategy and tactic.

Listening sessions. We're going to set up appointments with council members and community leaders and have a set of questions for comparative purposes i.e. what are your expectations? what would you like to see REAC do?

Auto referral resolution renamed advisory referral resolution. We didn't know the status of this resolution, so it was re-sent to Blair. We are waiting for his response.

Climate Change

Deanna and Savanna: Working on language of the last question of the equity tool with Lara. Checking in if Ellen had more information on meeting with Zero Waste, Downtown Association, and the Chamber about the environmental ordinances.

PLANNING COMMISSION SELECTION PANEL

Ellen: A couple of years ago in 2020, the council made a change to the selection process for the Planning Commission when there are vacancies. This includes an invitation to the Race Equity Advisory Committee—it was the Race Equity Task Force at that time—to suggest a member of your committee who would participate in that selection panel. It's not a requirement but it's an invitation.

- There are two vacancies right now. There are 11 applications.
- Interview process will entail at least two meetings in February, where selection committee reviews the applicants and schedules the interviews.
- An initial meeting will talk about the applicants, followed by a meeting where the interview panel interviews the folks who have applied.

Renni volunteered and will serve on the Planning Commission interview team. Peggi will provide Rennie with a race equity lens document that has interview questions related to equity. Ellen will forward the information Renni needs.

RECAP OF MLK EVENT

Brenda: It was a great event. Everything went as planned. We had the station for people to show their vaccination card. About 40 people came. Everybody was masked and socially distanced. We had police, councilmembers there.

It was a heavy movie. it's the kind of movie that it takes a couple of days to get over after you've seen it. I thought we would have some discussion, but I could barely speak so it just ended and everybody pretty much dispersed.

Renni: I was just struck by the parallels of '64. And here we are in 2022, fighting the same battle. What are they arguing about in Congress right now? Voting rights?

Sue: The conversations outside before the movie and afterwards were cool, and people came up to us that asked us what we were doing.

James: I had to walk out quite a few times because coming from the Deep South, you know I experienced walking across the bridge every afternoon. It was deeply disturbing and shows you exactly where we stand today versus where we were back then, the struggles we've endured for change that are being just erased every day.

Deanna: I just want to say quickly and acknowledging what Brenda said about the recovery time of learning of knowledge. Doing deep dives into history hits you and it takes you a couple of days to recover because a lot of the time it's knowledge that has been kept from you. I appreciate the showing of that movie.

FOLLOW-UP ON REAC ITEAMS

*Posting of REAC Vacancy

Ellen: We have received two applications at this time the position is still open so I really hope that you'll all encourage people you know who would be qualified to go on the city website and apply or share that however you can with folks. When it closes on the 28th, a week from Monday, we'll let you know how many folks have applied and continue on with the process

*Kyle Rittenhouse Resolution was tabled by James.

BISD LETTER (added by Renni)

There's a letter we got from a group of community members who became aware of a group on the island branding themselves as Bainbridge Parents for Honest Education and associated with the Foundation Against Tolerance and Racism. One would think, *Oh, it's just a parent group on the island that is concerned and so they just go to the school board asked questions.* However, I just wanted to make sure that anybody who watches this understands this is not just a mom and pop shop operation. It is a national thing.

We've asked community if you've experienced racism or become aware of incidents to share that with us. This is one of the things that people shared with us. It's alive and well here on Bainbridge; we're not exempt. It's a movement to take over school boards and remake them in the image of others who think that social justice work is an evil thing.

Jing: Adrian Maletesta, Laura Van Dyck, Rachel (forgot last name) and Janna (forgot last name) sent a letter to all REAC members calling attention to this group Parents for Honest Education and the Foundation Against Intolerance and Racism.

This was the first opportunity we saw for people to fill out our intake guest form. It's not up on the website yet but Savannah sent those questions to the group and the group filled them out. So now, Savannah and James have their information and are deliberating on that request, as we gave them the charge to do. We said that you would be getting back to them in the next couple days, and as the agreed policy stands, if James and Savannah do not take action within 10 business days or deny the request then a member of REAC can bring it up again.

Eric: Part of that policy also was that once we have responses, it be shared with the full REAC. Can you please circulate the responses?

Jing: I will do that. That was my bad.

Peggi: To be clear, the people that are asking to appear before us are MOBI, who are organizing against Parents for Honest Education. It's an anti-racist group that's trying to organize against this anti-CRT (group).

RACE EQUITY LENS (added by Peggi)

Peggi: When jurisdictions undertake the work of equity, they generally follow a path—I've gotten this from my research at GARE. The pathway is often 1) making a commitment to equity and 2) there's training too—but I'm going to bypass that because that's where we've been hung up for two and a half years—and making a race equity action plan; and 3) creating race equity tools, things like race equity lenses, etc.

What I would like to see us pursue— and this is part of our strategic plan— is to do what we've done in terms of a recommendation and send something to the city council to say we would like you to make a commitment to equity, direct the city to create a COBI race equity action plan and also direct COBI to create the race equity tools that go along with the plan, in collaboration with the Race Equity Advisory Committee.

I know we've been deep in our committees, but I think we have to take this step now. I feel that it's urgent for us to give this advice. These are really important steps for the city, and that they themselves write them. We don't write this plan and it becomes shelfware. I would like to pursue this at our next meeting. We can take this to the strategic planning group and we can come up with something that's worded appropriately.

Eric: What Peggy just said is the single most important thing this committee is tasked with doing. My biggest takeaway from the GARE sessions last May was that the end game here is institutionalizing what this committee is doing.

We're a committee of volunteers. We have for better for worse, often been reactive and responsive as opposed to, on top of things. The goal, ultimately, is to have the city itself, incorporate, adopt and accept—make it second nature— that a race equity lens is part of the toolkit that is automatically applied to any policy that affects the community at large.

I think it should be the top item on our strategic plan and I fully support everything Peggi just said.

Jing: I hundred percent support what Peggy just said as well. My question for Ellen and our councilmembers: I know you've already been working with Scott Wynn and have really stepped up to make a commitment to race equity. Does the city initiate this on its own or do you need the council to endorse this. Can you just go ahead and make that commitment?

Brenda: I think that the city manager has already made a commitment to equity. How do we formalize that and embed it in our processes? I think your proposal, Peggi, is the means to get to that end. It's saying to the city, *Okay, you and most of the council members have said that they're committed to equity. So now put your put your money where your mouth is. Or put your policy where your mouth is.*

Let's put a request for proposal out there to get somebody to help us to create this equity lens and whatever steps that we need to take. I would hope that you would outline it in a document the steps that you expect this city to take in support of equity.

Ellen: City staff with the guidance from Councilmember Fantroy-Johnson started working on this last year. We've watched a couple of videos and have also had some ongoing training. There is an administrative staff portion of this work that is started and is continuing— actually have a meeting tomorrow. There's a significant amount of work that we're doing on this.

I think that the council has also started this conversation amongst itself for council training. I expect that will continue on. You're talking about a separate organization or a Municipal Corporation as a whole, what that plan would look like. We haven't gotten there yet but we are actively working in that direction.

Peggi: I have an appointment with Blair so I will speak with him about the work the city is doing when I meet with him on the first .

Jing: How do we go about pursuing this resolution?

Peggi: I thought we said earlier that the strategic planning committee should do it. Is everyone agreed to that? We should bring a draft to this group, the way other people brought drafts tonight.

Agreed.

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

Clarence: It was our study session. Congressman Derek Kilmer talked about the new infrastructure bill, the funding that might be coming our way and how we're going to prioritize our projects. The city has put together a list of projects that they believe can qualify. It could be several million dollars coming to our city for infrastructure projects and that's a good thing.

Brenda: Puget Sound Regional Council has a draft transportation plan on their website, asking people to weigh in. As a side note, I'm part of the equity committee for that Council. They have

equity tools they're using to determine where this money is going to go—Kitsap, King and Snohomish counties.

I will send out an email to the Race Equity Advisory Council about the three public webinars where you can listen and weigh in on where you think the money should go. For me, it's important that REAC sees someone else using equity lenses and the questions they're asking so that marginalized people aren't left out when big bodies of government determine how they're going to spend transportation dollars or any dollars.

James: I was just wondering whether or not REAC is going to have any input on how these funds once they're allocated are going to be used.

Brenda: I think the time to comment on it is now. I don't know that you'll have a chance once it gets allocated. It's not like the city gets to decide where the money is going. This is done at a different level.

Clarence: The list the Public Works folks put together was just a wish list that says these projects could be eligible. There has been no prioritization.

James, we don't know the amount that might be appropriated to us. This was just Congressman Kilmer touching base to give us the broad view because he's also got other congressional districts competing for these funds

Peggi: Could one of you send us a list?

Clarence: It should be on the website but yes, we can send it to you.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Peggi: I just want to mention that when Brenda, Jing, and I met with Blair about the Selma planning, he mentioned that Bainbridge Island is going to ban or, I believe, it's already decided to ban gas-powered yard tools.

I don't believe that anybody asked the landscaping community to be at the table when this decision was made. I don't know that the city has any plans to mitigate the impact to the many many many people on this island that either travel here to work or live here. It's their living. I think that there are equity issues involved in this particular decision. Is this part of the climate plan? He was saying maybe REAC could go out and socialize this with people in that community. I feel like we're at the tail end in that scenario.

Ellen: The city is actively looking at eliminating its own use of gas-powered equipment. We are anticipating launching a pilot project for that and working forward through 2022 to see how that works. There hasn't been a city-wide decision on that—that would be something that you would see on a council agenda. Council would have to take action to make that happen.

Peggi: So there's still time to have a race equity analysis on a decision like that.

Ellen: Yeah, that would be correct. It is in the Climate Action Plan as a recommended action but it's not one that's been taken up by council yet.

James: Has there been an impact study on how that would affect people's lives and professions? Are they going to reimburse people with electric tools to replace their gas tools? Have those kind of things been taken into consideration when thinking about the impact that this would make on Bainbridge Island? Has anyone done a feasibility study on that?

Ellen: It is included in the Climate Action Plan. It's not an action that's been started yet, so there hasn't been a feasibility study. It would certainly be something that could be considered as part of the discussion.

I encourage you to track the discussion and make that suggestion as we move forward. I'm certain the city is looking into the types of equipment that could be used. We've made that decision personally so the impact will be supported by city funds.

Clarence: To underscore what Ellen said, this is our maintenance people eliminating the gas, not a city-wide policy. The city of Bainbridge Island government is phasing these things out.

There is no ordinance coming forward in the reasonably near future that addresses anything like this for city-wide regulation— just for cities, our city government staff

Ellen: Our city organization is undertaking this for climate reasons but also for the health of the folks who are using that equipment. It's a better health choice for folks. We haven't made a community-wide change.

Deanna: I'm in agreement with the part where we are not extracting fossil fuels, not relying on fossil fuels anymore. What I'm not okay with is the lack of consideration that we're talking about and how that can be rolled out.

One of the people that was running for the City Council was really interesting—I think it was the League of Women Voters—talking about landscapers from off the island, can't come in and do their work. It was mind boggling to me. I looked at the faces of people on the panel and the different reactions. I was like, Did you hear that? Did you catch that? The audacity of that comment was mind-blowing. Not even considering those lives. Just like that.

I am so tired of the focus being put on black and brown folks for the problems. When you have a whole zip code that wants a better deal, wants to have their landscaping done, and all of their fall cleanup done and everything to look nice and neat. I want people to understand how we are attacking these problems, and how we're making it about the group that's providing the service, that is marginalized, that has not a lot of choices. And somehow the group of people that is hiring them and wants them to do this work gets off scot free. It's about the brown folks.

James: I just want to bring to attention the whole getting rid of plastics. We were all going to use paper bags. They were doing it free. Now it's eight cents apiece. You know how this is supposed to be so good for the planet but the people who are suffering are the people who could use the eight cents to to buy something for their families. The impact it had on marginalized people was much more than it was on people of power and people who had the money and the prestige to get through these things.

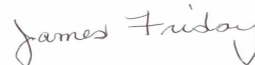
I just hope that the city council takes into consideration how this impacts people that can least afford to make those kinds of changes. The mom and pop shops who are still taking hits for paper straws. This comes out of their bottom line. Everybody wants to sing Kumbaya, but nobody wants to pay the bill. You expect the public to take care and pay for these things—that perspective needs to change. There needs to be a better discussion before these types of things are incorporated into our lives here on Bainbridge because I know from the history of Bainbridge what comes next. Watch how the city manipulates those kind of situations into what the city desires from the beginning. That's just my opinion.

I don't think that the Race Equity Advisory Committee should be asked to go socialize anything that hasn't had a race equity lens applied to it.

Clarence: I just wanted to follow up, Deanna. It was actually a candidate, and we were talking about the roundabout on 305. That candidate said one way to solve congestion was if we just got rid of all the landscape trucks coming in and off the island that we could solve the pollution overnight.

I wish I could have time machine and go back but I was so gobsmacked. I mean I had to think in my brain at the moment, *Did I did I hear that?* I regret it because that's when you should step in and say, *Would you please repeat what you just said?* That was a stunning comment and had I had an opportunity I would said, *What about all of the firefighters and policemen and healthcare workers and the teachers and the people working at grocery stores who drove off the island? I bet there are a lot more of them.* He did not win, so that's good.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.



James Friday, Chair

02/03/22