

AUGUST Reparations Commission Meeting Notes

August 16, 2023, 7:00 pm, Youth Center

Public Agenda

1. Icebreaker
2. Welcome
3. Agenda/Minutes review
4. Report from the facilitation subcommittee
5. Report from the education subcommittee
6. Report from the historical subcommittee
7. Administrative items
 1. Update from the steering committee
8. Open the meeting for public comments
9. Next meeting time and location
10. Announcement
11. Adjourn

Attendance

Commissioners Present:

1. Rhema Bjorkland
2. Francis DeBernardo
3. Lorena Ferdinand
4. Adriane Harris
5. Konrad Herling (virtual)
6. Mark Miller
7. Denise Nadasen
8. Lois Rosado
9. Rene' Sewell-Rayson
10. Jonathan Taylor
11. Sarah Wampler (virtual)
12. James Williams, Jr.

Alternates Present:

1. Gail Crichlow (Virtual)
2. Mark Wilson

Staff Liaison(s) Present:

1. Megan Searing Young

Those not Present:

1. Tom Adams
2. Chelsea Barnes
3. Yashuah Ford
4. Chiquita Jackson
5. Joseph Hamlin

6. London McCloud
7. Shabnam Mojtajedi
8. Robert Rand
9. Pamela Taylor (virtual)

Meeting Notes:

- **Icebreaker:** What do you like to do in the summer?
- **Minutes from June and July:** Approved with changes. Two abstentions (Rhema and Denise) and none opposed.
- **Report from the Facilitation subcommittee:**
 - o Tom Adams (not present), Denise Nadasen, and James Williams (not present at the time of the update)
 - o The RFP closed on August 11.
 - o 13 proposals were received. Megan will place them in the google drive for the search committee to review.
 - o The search committee will review the proposals and narrow the list down to a smaller group of candidates who they will interview. There is a meeting already scheduled to select candidates for the next round.
 - o After the interviews, the search committee will select finalists for the full Commission to interview.
- **Report from the Education subcommittee:**
 - o Lois met with Eric McDonnell (see here report "Reflection!"). He is the chair of the San Francisco Reparations Advisory Committee, which has 15 members. They formed subcommittees. They developed a draft plan for the work, which is structured with a clear purpose. Public and community engagement was important. They had a monthly newsletter to highlight various stories. Mr. McDonnell said they could have done a better job with engaging the press. They had a lot of interviews and recommended not recording interviews. The committee's work is done now. Reference: The African American Redress Network: <https://redressnetwork.org>
 - o Sarah met with the Evanston Reparations Commission, who are primarily members of the city government. They focused on the logistics on how to make it happen. They recommended wrap-around support services for those receiving reparations. Evanston focused on housing and worked with folks at Howard to disburse grants for housing. They suggest connecting with Howard and getting legal counsel early.
- At this point, the Zoom call was hacked and we closed the Zoom and waited for Megan to reconnect with those who were online. Megan will follow up how we can secure the Zoom connection and still meet the open meetings act requirements.
- **Report from the Historical Exploration subcommittee:**
 - o Lorena shared that they are continuing to research and collect resources. They will finish reviewing the content in the coming month. There may still be more resources. They will create a resource list and share it with the full commission.

- They are still planning a visit to the Greenbelt Museum.
 - Rhema thanked Lorena for heading up the subcommittee. She added that they plan to have an annotated bibliography soon. She also indicated that they need to confirm how they define “harm.”
 - Sarah added that the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act [ed by MM] dictates what museums are allowed to hold for any federally recognized tribes.
- **Administrative update**
- Thank you to Sarah and Bob for setting up our document management system in google drive.
 - Steering Committee update
 - Council report will be developed in September. Denise to collect subcommittee reports, synthesize them, review them with the steering committee, and send a draft to the full commission by September 6. We hope to vote on the report to send to the Council for the October Council meeting.
 - Roles
 - Jonathan made a motion to replace the existing steering committee with the heads of the various roles and the subcommittees. To clarify, there will be only a new Executive Committee and the steering committee will cease to exist. The new Executive Committee will be 8 individuals.
 - Rene indicated that she didn’t know she would be serving on the Executive Committee when she volunteered to be Parliamentarian, but she is happy to serve.
 - The motion was passed with 10 in favor and two abstaining (Mark Miller and Rhema Bjorkland)
- **Agenda Items for Next Meeting:**
- **What to do about commission members who are consistently absent**
- **Public Comment:**
- Analysis paralysis. We basically know the harm that has been done in terms of health, education and financial. How will Greenbelt handle this? Money will not work because there isn’t enough money to make reparations to everyone who has been harmed.
 - Lois made an announcement that she will be representing the Greenbelt Reparations Commission at Fort Monroe, VA, at their 400 years of African American History Commission.
 - Frank indicated that we should move the November meeting because it is currently scheduled for two days before Thanksgiving and many people may be away.
 - Lois indicated that she and Shabnam, in their roles as Communicators, are preparing an article about the Commission.
- **Next meeting: Tuesday Sep 19st at Council Chambers @7:00pm**