

Greenbelt Reparations Commission Meeting Minutes DRAFT

VIRTUAL MEETING

Tuesday, July 23, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Agenda

Roll Call
Adoption of Agenda/Minutes
Update on Tribesby Proposal
Reparations Research Policy Subcommittee
 Glossary of terms
 Museum visits
Discussion on What are Reparations (see document)
Subcommittee Updates
Public Comment
Adjourn

Commissioners Present

Tom Adams
Chelsea Barnes
Rhema Bjorkland
Gail Crichlow
Francis DeBernardo
Lorena Ferdinand
Adriane Harris
Chiquita Jackson
London McCloud
Mark Miller
Shabnam Mojtahedi
Denise Nadasen
Robert Rand
Lois Rosado
Jonathan Taylor
Sarah Wampler
James Williams, Jr.
Mark Wilson

Commissioners Not Present

Konrad Herling (alternate)
Yahshuah Ford

Note: Former Commissioners René Sewell-Raysor and Joseph Hamlin have resigned

City Staff Liaisons Present

Megan Searing Young
Tyra Smith

Chair Lois Rosado noted a quorum present and called the meeting to order about 7:03 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda:

The agenda was adopted.

Approval of the Minutes:

Lois requested a few minor changes to the June minutes. Mark Miller also sent a few typos to Denise. Denise agreed to make these changes. Tom moved to approve the minutes with revisions and Sarah seconded. The June 2024 minutes were unanimously adopted with minor changes.

Update on the Meeting with Tribesy:

They will adjust their proposal to fit our budget, which is \$10,000. The training will begin in mid-August. A schedule will be provided to the Commission. The Executive Committee will serve as their steering committee to guide this work. A list of topics for their survey was provided. A concern was noted that there are no indigenous people identified for the survey. The Commission will try to get someone to represent the Indigenous community. Perhaps Peter Landeros or Elder Newman.

Reparations Policy Research Subcommittee:

Subcommittee members include London, Sarah, Chiquita, and Denise.

They provided an alphabetized glossary with two sections (one for African American and one for Native American). A glossary from Providence was also provided because they also focused on the same two populations. Medical racism was missing from the glossary. Mark Wilson had also sent a list of definitions. A suggestion was made to have the glossary organized by more categories, and another suggestion was made to have no categories. There was a brief suggestion of having two separate definitions – one for internal use and one for external use. A request was made to make the glossary more digestible. There was a suggestion to keep it simple and only include terms that will be used by the GRC and have only one set of terms. The glossary will start out broad and terms that are not used will be removed. A discussion about inflammatory terms ensued that included a discussion of what is White Supremacy and how it impacts reparations. Mark Wilson sent a graphic that described various kinds of racism. We can ask Tribesy to help us define this term in a way that is approachable.

The RPR would also like to plan two trips: one to the African American Museum of History and Culture and one to the National Museum of the American Indian. It will take a few months, and they will try to schedule this field trip for a Saturday.

What are Reparations?

Lois shared a draft of the definition (see below). The discussion suggested that we include religious institutions, specify the definition is for the Reparations Commission of Greenbelt. The definition will be used on the postcard. The postcard will also include Megan's email address and a QR code with a link to our website: reparationscommission.info.

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

What are Reparations?

Reparations is a process of repairing and healing from the harms that have been unjustly inflicted on African Americans and Native Americans/American Indians by government laws, policies and practices and by the private sector that benefited from the injustices such as banks, corporations, insurers, educational institutions, and health systems. "These groups that have been injured have the right to obtain from the government or corporation responsible for the injuries, that which they need to repair and heal themselves".

"Examples of groups that have obtained reparations include Jewish victims of the Nazi Holocaust, Japanese Americans interned in concentration camps in the United States during WWII, Alaska Natives for land, labor and resources taken, victims of the massacre in Rosewood, Florida and their descendants, Native Americans as a remedy for violations of treaty rights, and political dissenters in Argentina and their descendants." National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America.

Forms of Reparations Include:

- Memorializing those who have died without the recognition of the harms caused by government laws and other social institutions.
- Apologizing for the harms done or Recognition of tribal rights and culture.
- Providing scholarships for educational advancement.
- Designing and funding community empowerment and economic development programs.
- Repatriating the remains and artifacts of American Indians.
- Supporting land requests by members of the Piscataway and other indigenous nations for violations of treaties and stolen land.
- Insuring equity in the form community benefits such as public and recreational services, health care services, education, housing and direct remuneration where applicable.
- Guarantees that there will be no repetition of the injuries done to bring healing and closure to those injured.

The above definition of reparations and description of forms of reparation are based on the principles identified by the United Nations Human Rights Council, discussions with Piscataway nation representatives and the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America.

Subcommittee Updates

CEES would like to create a photo booth of pictures related to racial dynamics and how Greenbelt evolved. The exhibit will be displayed at the Farmer's Market and at the Labor Day Festival. (Please sign up to staff the tables.) The following suggestions and comments were made regarding the photo booth:

- Create a storyboard to provide some context for the images.
- How will the pictures engage the community and spark discussion?
- Provide the definition of reparations to communicate that it is educational.
- Provide some reflection questions and/or a comment box.
- Use some color pictures.
- Create a quiz or an interactive display.
- Include in the map the land owned by the first African American in Greenbelt.

It was agreed the CEES could move forward with creating the final product, but share it with the full commission before making it public. Jonathan Taylor committed to doing further research on the land owned by African Americans.

HRS interviewed Peter Landeros about the Indigenous people in this area. He is willing to present to the Reparations Commission. Another interview with John Henry Jones who is a pioneering African American resident of the old Greenbelt. He has some interesting views on other parts of Greenbelt. The videos for these interviews can be shared with the full commission. A request was made to provide a summary of the interviews to be included in the final report.

Public Comments

Two members of the public informed us that the reel and meal on August 19 is a movie about the "Cost of Inheritance". They will share a copy of the recent reparations commission report with the council for people who attend. They will have small group discussions. The questions for that discussion will be shared with the Reparations Commissioners. They would like to get a speaker to speak on reparations for slavery. There will be a monthly program that they would like to create.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm

Minutes are respectfully submitted by Denise Nadasen.