

APPROVED MINUTES
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION Special Meeting
July 10, 2019 – 7:00 PM VILLAGE HALL – ROOM 215

1) **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Brewer called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2) **ROLL CALL:**

PRESENT: Commissioners Annemarie Kill, Kelly Benkert, Maya Puentes, Brynne Hovde, Jacquelyn Rodriguez, and Chair Glenn Brewer

ABSENT: Commissioners Karin Grimes and Brandon Green

ALSO PRESENT: Cedric Melton, Director of Community Relations Department; Trustee Walker-Peddakotla (7:49 P.M.)

3) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Commissioner Benkert moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hovde. The agenda was approved unanimously.

4) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** None

5) **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

6) **OLD BUSINESS**

A) CRC Racial Equity Recommendations

1. Status of CRC's proposed "Oak Park Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement"

Commissioner Kill provided the current status and history of the proposed "Oak Park Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement" which included the Community Relations Commission (CRC) recommended version from May 15, 2019 as presented to the Village Board, a separate version as amended by members of the Village Board, and a redlined copy displaying the difference between the previous two versions. Members of CRC had previously agreed to leave advancing of a revised "Oak Park Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement" to the Village Board.

2. Drafting of CRC recommended Oak Park Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Commissioner Kill provided copies of approved Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policies from Village of Oak Park governmental partners and examples from other communities. Members of CRC discussed how to move forward. Chair Brewer suggested CRC start with drafting a proposed Resolution that would lead to an Ordinance, and subsequently policy for approval by the Village Board. Discussion was

had on the potential advantages for directing efforts directly to drafting an Ordinance rather than spending time on a Resolution. Chair Brewer made the point that beginning with a Resolution provides for opportunity to continue advancing their efforts to reach goals.

Members of CRC referred to Evanston's Racial Equity Resolution as an admirable example. The Commission discussed how they can learn from Evanston's process and identified challenges with the process that exist in Oak Park. Chair Brewer shared the Village Manager would recommend CRC clearly identify tasks in their work plan for Board approval. Chair Brewer reiterated that it is his understanding that CRC's Trustee liaison would need to request bringing discussion of CRC proposed "Oak Park Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement" off the "table" in order for it to be voted on. Chair Brewer did inform the Village Manager that CRC has every intention of moving on to proposing a Racial Equity Policy. The Village Manager is suggesting education for members of the Village Board regarding Racial Equity as it relates to policy in order to assist with advancing the conversation. Commissioner Hovde shared her realization that policy makers should be leaders for championing this agenda. Members of CRC identified the need to advocate for racial equity with Village Board members. It was determined that members of CRC will divide and approach each member of the Village Board with a consistent set of questions, with the goal of understanding what hurdles exist in moving forward racial equity policy. Chair Brewer shared he will talk to President Abu-Taleb and Trustee Taglia, Commissioner Kill will meet with Trustees Andrews and Moroney, Commissioner Hovde will speak with Trustee Buchanan, Commissioner Rodriguez will meet with Trustee Walker-Peddakotla, and Commissioner Benkert will meet with Trustee Boutet. Commission Hovde took notes on discussion for developing a consistent introduction and questions regarding collecting feedback on CRC's work plan.

Chair Brewer welcomed Trustee Walker-Peddakotla (7:49 P.M.) to share her opinion on members of CRC meeting with members of the Village Board. Trustee Walker-Peddakotla responded that she and her female colleagues will be pushing for racial equity as a priority Board goal for 2020. She suggested a helpful task for CRC would be to assist with advocating for and developing a one page worksheet for staff to use as a guide in assessing every agenda item through a racial equity lens, and including that information with the agenda item as it goes to the Village Board.

After discussion, it was decided that Commissioner Kill will draft an introduction for interviews with members of the Village Board. Further discussion was had on information desired to gather in those interviews, and how to address different Board members in order to be successful. Additionally, members of CRC discussed what else they can do to include different sectors of the community regarding moving forward with a responsibly constructed racial equity policy. Trustee Walker-Peddakotla asked CRC to consider what budget requests they may have to reach goals in their work plan.

7) Adjourn

Commissioner Rodriguez moved to adjourn. Chair Brewer adjourned the meeting at 8:23 P.M.