

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION
DECEMBER 12, 2022 – 7:00 PM
SPECIAL MEETING**

PRESENT: Comms. Rodriguez, Quinn, Terretta, Sakiyama

ABSENT: Comms. Bencola, Puentes

STAFF: Cedric Melton

CALL TO ORDER: 7:15 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Comm. Sakiyama motioned for agenda approval Comm. Quinn provided a second. All were in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEW BUSINESS:

CRC Chairperson Rodriguez opened the meeting with announcing Village Manager Kevin Jackson's and DEI Officer Dr. Danielle Walker's presence and purpose at the meet and greet.

Village Manager Kevin Jackson, opened the meeting with commentary on why the meet and greet happened. An overview of the agenda was presented. VM Jackson explained the rationale for CRC and DEI to go deeper in to discussions on integrating the DEI and CRC work plans during a special meeting in January and so he was glad for the meeting.

Per Chairperson Rodriguez, there will not be a regular meeting in December. However, there will be a special meeting in January to complete the work plan and then the regular meeting in January will be used to finalize and vote on the work plan.

Introductions were made and the meeting began with an ice-breaker activity. The theme of the meeting centered around connectivity with Dr. Walker presenting.

A distinction was made between the terms diversity, equity and inclusion. Dr. Walker expounded on GARE'S Theory of Change in the context of how to normalize, organize, operationalize, and assess attitudes, situations, and actions. Dr. Walker used the overview of the 2023 Work Plan for Oak Park Community Advancing Racial Equity and Social Justice (Oak Park C.A.R.E.S) to demonstrate how the DEI and CRC can integrate. The goals of OP C.A.R.E.S. involve Content, Culture, Community, and Champion; the DEI Program 2023 plan is "Planting the Seeds."

In connecting the “why” the need for DEI, attendees volunteered examples of why DEI is important to them with responses such as:

- the need for the human side to show – safety, sacrifice, basic needs
- generational inequities can be addressed
- cultural loss through assimilation can be addressed
- DEI gives people who are often left out, a voice
- it promotes acceptance as opposed to tolerance
- it opens the eyes of all through a new lens
- it allows for innovation and addressing complex problems

Meeting attendees participated in a group activity, utilizing the goals of Content, Culture, Community, and Champion to begin to think of how to design the work plan to connect the DEI program and the CRC. The work plan involves quarterly actions and outcomes. There was talk of “train the trainer” whereby the CRC members can hone in on different opportunities of involvement within the CRC, within the community and in areas of collaboration.

The commissioners expressed their gratitude for the direction from the DEI Officer Dr. Walker and thanked the Village Manager, Kevin Jackson for taking time to meet with the CRC.

Village Manager Kevin Jackson offered closing remarks as he looks forward to the next steps and the relationship between the DEI office and the CRC. He also expressed his concern for the youth in Village of Park and related that he has been in talks with Districts 97 and 200 as well as the Park District regarding youth development in the village of Oak Park.

CRC Chairperson Rodriguez closed the meeting. Date and time for the special meeting will be determined to happen before the regularly scheduled meeting which is on 1/18/2023.

Motion to adjourn was made by Comm. Terretta and seconded by Comm. Saiyama. Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.