**Minutes
Ad Hoc Workgroup on Diversity and Equity Issues
September 16, 2021**

Chair Chung called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

Present: Chair Jayson Chung, Alder Kristie Goforth, Catherine Orr, Jerry Chapa, Jade Fea, Mary Anne Reed, Alicia Hazen, Raquel Diaz.

Excused:

Also Present: City Administrator Bryan Gadow, Karen Reece (Nehemiah Center), Beth Essen, Sally Buffat.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Ms. Reed to approve the July 29th and September 2nd meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Orr. Motion carried.

APPEARANCES

Beth Esser appeared to provide an update on the Monona Anti-Racism Circle, which focused on conversations among neighbors on issues and actions. Ms. Esser discussed the topic of reparations and referenced federal bill HR 40, and local government actions in Evanston, IL and Ashville, NC. She also noted a history of restrictive covenants and housing deeds.

Sally Buffat appeared to discuss a proclamation to discuss covenant language.

NEW BUSINESS

   A. Continued discussion on Workgroup charge and tasks.

       The Workgroup continued the brainstorming session with Karen Reece from the Nehemiah Center. The details of that discussion are more fully captured in the brainstorming notes, as attached.

   B. Schedule Next Meeting Date.

       The Workgroup will next meet at 3:30pm on Thursday, October 7th. Chair Chung indicated that the next meeting would dive into what the Workgroup wants to get involved in.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alder Goforth, seconded by Ms. Diaz to adjourn. The motion carried. (5:04 pm)

DEI Workgroup Brainstorming Session – 8/19/21:

Discussion Attendees: Jayson Chung, Jerry Chapa, Kristie Goforth, Mary Anne Reed, Harry Hawkins, Karen Reece, and Bryan Gadow

Discussion Items:

1) Committee Charge
   - Suggestion to focus initial efforts on racial relations in Monona (with assistance of Nehemiah).
   - Are there any other examples of other cities working with Nehemiah? No, working more with other Madison-area community groups.
   - What is structure like for group or other similar group after this 6 month period? How do we define those during this work? How do we set up Monona for the long-term work on these issues?
   - Committee could collection information on issues that could be addressed in the community in the future (e.g. affordable housing and scoring matrix for contract awarding for minority owned businesses).

2) Racial Equity in Monona – What do you think of and what does it look like?
   - Lack of policies to support racial equity in Monona (similar to equity policies in City of Madison).
   - Overcoming the defensiveness in discussions of racial experiences in Monona.
   - Seeing more representation of non-white (in books, programming, music groups, attendance at community events). Expose people to other perspectives.
   - Having an actual more racially diverse population within the community. What keeps people of color away and what do we do about those things?
   - More Black Owned and Minority Owned Businesses ("MOBs") in the community. Providing more spaces for BIPOC to enjoy in the community.
   - What do BIPOC think of Monona – "sailboats" Unconscious images lingers.
   - Additional cultural activities such as the Urban Street Art festival. Exposure to other ideas in a safe and fun environment.

3) What problem are we trying to solve?
   - How to stop people from feeling unwelcome in Monona.
   - Some people feel certain people do not belong here – insularity
   - Sense of "keep things the way they are" mentality is slowly changing.
   - Access to affordable housing that are not just apartments (home ownership). How can people of color come into Monona?
   - Monona in the past (1950s) used to be considered the "affordable" area for single family housing.
   - Providing more information to people to advance their thinking on race in the community and beyond. Focus on events that embrace and expose people to different cultures.
   - Environmental – how books are displayed in the library as an example.

- Having a voice to come back at racist or discriminatory social media postings (counterpoint to anti-inclusivity postings). Doing it in a confrontational way does not necessarily change minds, but need to provide some response.
- How do we identify, reach out to, and provide families of color information about the city and what we are working on – develop a network for more frequent connections with underheard groups.
- How to make connections with new community members in the community – that people have their back. Ambassadors of the City that are there for them and they can talk to. Mechanism to make families of color – what is needed to make them feel safe and bring them into the conversation.
- How do we know that we have changed peoples' changed attitudes? Look for an indicator.
- Give MOBs a chance to test out business in Monona ("pop-up"). How do we build relationships with people.
- Could events be held at other locations like Winnequah Park, for example consider empty city lots or South Towne parking lot to attract a broader community participation.
- Library could host local black authors and spoken-word performers.
- Small, consistent actions to build relationships.
- Example: Juneteenth march, work to do more events like this. Do more of them before they are demanded by the BIPOC community.

4) How to incorporate feedback from rest of the group?
- Nehemiah will send out some discussion questions for the group to consider.

5) Who has what responsibility/ownership in these efforts?
- City Staff:
  o Policy drafting and support (for example requiring affordable housing in new developments)
  o Involvement in community events – need to involve the community sooner in the planning.

- City Council:
  o Speak out more. State the value of inclusivity. We expect the community to be welcoming.
  o Changing policies to be supportive (example transportation policy).
  o Toolkit on how to make talking about these issues as routine. Use to on-board new Councilmembers.

- Community:
  o Community members must take the lead in welcoming and supporting BIPOC to the community. They must provide the connections and support group. Welcoming packet. Example: previous City Family Attraction Committee.
  o Some neighborhood associations do some programming on welcoming people to the neighborhood through events and interactions.

      ○ As simple as reaching out to your neighbors. Example, neighborhood corn roast. Neighborhood Day (block parties).

DEI Workgroup Brainstorming Session – 9/2/21:

Discussion Attendees: Jayson Chung, Jerry Chapa, Kristie Goforth, Mary Anne Reed, Catherine Orr, Jade Fea, Harry Hawkins, Karen Reece, and Bryan Gadow

1. What is important in racial equity work?: (1. Projects; 2) Structures/Departments/Organization; 3) Systems/Processes)

    a. Always
   - Seeing other cultures represented in events
   - Language – translate materials
   - Cultural representations in City Hall
   - More change/updating of school library to provide more representation and more relevancy.
   - Education is important – Access to materials. Important for kids and adults.
   - Closed captioning for Youtube meeting videos.
   - Arts in the community – diverse representation.
   - Ethnic food and retail opportunities
   - More diverse voices on city committees
   - Transparency – in selection of committee member process. More conversation with chairs to determine needs of the committee.
   - Transparency – How do we pass along institutional knowledge/memory?
   - Inclusionary zoning
   - Not to be stared at
   - Access to food, housing, internet and clean water
   - Festivals as having more diverse representation
   - System – develop new leadership and voices to be involved in the community. Thinking about new generation of leaders and how they can become involved in the city governance.
   - System – clear succession for the organization for continued growth
   - Departments – Mentorship of representation matters. Connecting with those that have had your experiences and been there before you.
   - Strengthen connection between City and School District
   - Youth-in-Government – Students to apply for advisory bodies (ex: Dane County Boards). Exposure and opportunity for students to experience city government.
   - Health – mental and physical health barriers for BIPOC families. Support systems
   - Ability to listen and be patience – part of being welcoming – not interpreting and judging. Cultural competency. Take time to understanding the emotion or concern behind the question.
   - Just being open-minded is not enough. Takes real action and affirmative steps.

- Reflection – ability to reflection on ones experiences and motivations. Example: My experience at this meeting might not be the same as someone sitting next to me. What is my experience vs. what is not my experience.
- Respect – always offering respect. Understanding and empathy
- Ways to facilitate conflict. How to allow conflict to happen and naturalize it, and be ok with it. Allow conflict its place with guardrails. Cross-cultural interpersonal relationship navigation.

   b. Sometimes
   - Art and access to open, natural space.

2. What is important for Monona to be involved in racial equity work?:
   a. Always
   - How the city could find pathways forward through conflict and how does the city prepare for that. Dealing with raising levels of different points of view.
   - Access to city government – what type of active outreach can occur?
   - Clean water, air, education for all, fair treatment through city services
   - Cultural welcoming/more inclusive environment/feeling of belonging
   - Transparency/Listening/Cross-cultural interpersonal relationship navigation
   - Government feels a little sterile, more focus on the personal level
   - Courage and leadership from government leadership – commit to go beyond the status quo, and push beyond the comfortable

DEI Workgroup Brainstorming Session – 9/16/21:

Discussion Attendees: Jayson Chung, Jerry Chapa, Kristie Goforth, Mary Anne Reed, Catherine Orr, Jade Fea, Alicia Hazen, Raquel Diaz, Karen Reece, and Sally Buffat, Beth Esser, and Bryan Gadow.

1. Idea of Conflict in Racial Equity Work – Getting past conflict to resolution
   a. Absence of conflict is the same as enforcing the status quo/norms
   b. Conflict avoidance is a component of white culture
   c. Tend to equate fairness with comfort – but how is still excluded?
   d. Trained into a zero-sum mindset related to resources. If something changes, does someone lose something in the process?
   e. People are comfortable with the status quo if they are not directly impacted by it. – "What's the big deal?"
   f. Conflict among ideas vs conflict among people with those ideas. No space for dialogue and listening.
   g. For example: local elections, running at large and then having to work together with those you ran against.

2. What type of events have conflicts in racial equity work?
   a. Deeds with historical racial restrictions.
   b. Correcting wrongs in policy can create an us vs them mentality.
   c. Often having the difficult conversations about race, some can internalize it as you are calling them racist.

      d.   People not knowing the history of the community and what shaped it to the way it is today.
      e.   Historical excavation and damage of burial mounds throughout Dane County and Monona.
      f.   Affordable housing location discussion

3. Core Problem: It will be difficult to make change in Racial Equity because:
   a. Some people are afraid of conflict – "we" want to avoid conflict and discomfort
   b. Deeply rooted historical nature of oppression on the issue(s)
   c. "Difficult to achieve changes to gain racial equity because historically people 'people like the way things are' due to deeply rooted oppression.

4. Direct Symptoms – Underlying Symptoms – Contributing Factors
   a. Affect – anger, claims of feeling personally attacked.
   b. Attack back, get defensive, withdraw. Indirect chatter. Organizing.
   c. Fear, ignorance (not knowing true history, narrow worldview, white supremacy culture), ambivalence, entitlement/comfort with status quo, sense of ownership – we belong and others do not, stereotypes that are learned, unconscious bias, fragility

5. Direct Symptoms – Underlying Symptoms – Contributing Factors
   d. Hate crimes, vandalism, misinformation, racial profiling (Arrowhead Drive), discrimination (can't get housing, jobs, access to opportunities)
   e. Fear

6. Direct Causes – Underlying Causes – Contributing Factors
   a. Ignorance, defensiveness (not my problem, not my fault, not my responsibility)
   b. Outdated policies and practices, capitalism, self of individualism vs collective good, negative stereotypes of BIPOC are reinforced by inaccurate portrayal in media, etc.
   c. Lack of diversity, education gap, lack of resources (financial and other), barriers to participation
   d. Lack of turnover/term limits on committees blocks access to other voices
   e. Narrowly structured process – need to be "experts" to participate in the process – Who is an expert and who is not
   f. You come to the government, we don't come to you.

7. Committee Charge: Learning, all voices, identify initiatives

8. Where does MGSD, private sector businesses, fit in?

9. How do we embed DEI work into all work rather than having it become an add-on?

10. Youth mentorship in government

11. Connecting with other groups that are involved in and advocating social change