



African American Resources Advisory Commission MINUTES

**MEETING
WEDNESDAY, March 9, 2016**

The African American Resources Advisory Commission convened in a meeting on Wednesday, March 9, 2016 at Street-Jones Building, Room 400 in Austin, Texas.

African American Resources Advisory Commissioners in Attendance: LaTisha Anderson, Jessica Faith Carter, Aaron Demerson, Chiquita Eugene, Clifford Gillard, Daryl Horton, Marissa Jones, Greg Smith, Nelson Linder, Kenneth Thompson. **Absent:** Tam Hawkins, Garfield Landry, Michael Lee, Ruthie Redmond, Aaron Whatley

City Staff in Attendance: Interim Assistant City Manager Mark Washington, Economic Development Department (EDD) Assistant Director Sylnovia Holt-Rabb, EDD Small Business Program Manager Vicky Valdez, EDD Economic & Business Development Liaison Dusty McCormick, Councilmember Houston's Senior Executive Assistant Beverly Wilson, and EDD Liaison Linda Hayes.

1. **Approval of the Minutes:** The minutes of the February 3, 2016 meeting were approved with one correction: The date of the meeting was changed from January 13th to February 3rd and the word "approve" on the second page was changed to "approved".

2. **Citizen Communication:**

Candice Cooper, Vice Chairman of the African American Heritage Network (AAHN), requested that an item be placed on the agenda for the next meeting and the concerns will be provided prior to the April 6th meeting.

Rae Smith-Hearn, representing Relay for Life of East Austin, requested that the Committee participate or sponsor a team for their event to be held April 22nd at Reagan High School from 7:00 am until 2:00 pm. The family-oriented event is a fundraiser. They will celebrate cancer survivors at a dinner on Thursday, April 21, 2016 at 6:00 pm at Mount Sinai Missionary Baptist Church.

3. **Introduction of New Commission Members:**

Three newly appointed commissioners were present; they are Marissa Jones representing the Austin Area Urban League, Greg Smith representing Austin Revitalization Authority and Nelson Linder representing the NAACP.

4. **Presentations:**

- a. Joya Hayes representing the City of Austin Human Resources Department presented on City of Austin Workforce Trends as an Employer. This presentation focused on the cultural diversity of the City of Austin workforce. A similar presentation was made to the Asian American Quality of Life Commission and the Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission.
- b. Acting Assistant City Manager Mark Washington provided an update on the hiring of the City's Equity Officer. The firm Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and Hawkins will help with the selection and recruitment of the new Equity Officer. Town Hall meetings will be held throughout the city to get feedback from the community.
- c. In response to the Commission's request, Austin Energy Conservation Program Manager Karen Poff presented on the Community Solar Project. The presentation focused on the different location, how customers can subscribe to the solar energy project, and how the payment process works for the project.

Concern: Commissioner Kenneth Thompson would like the minutes to reflect that he requests an employee from Austin Energy attend the next meeting to discuss the solar project and it will affect Senior Citizens in East Austin.

- d. Dr. Fred McGee provided the Rosewood Court Historic Designation Update. He reported that Rosewood Courts was built in 1938, and gave in depth presentation of the history of Rosewood Courts, of public housing in the City of Austin and why public housing was built for the city's minorities.
- e. Austin Police Chief Art Acevedo and Chief of Staff Brian Manley presented on the Austin Police Department's policy regarding excessive use of force.
- f. Sr. Research Analyst Jim Padilla of the City's Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department presented on the FY 2016-17 Action Plan and Community Needs Assessment.

NEW BUSINESS:

Staff will have information on the retreat with suggested dates and locations for the retreat.

5. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

1. April Meeting
 - a. Ryan Robinson presentation on the Demographics of the City
 - b. Police Monitors Office
 - c. African American Heritage Network
 - d. City Budget

The meeting was adjourned by Vice Chair Dr. Chiquita Eugene.