



# African American Resources Advisory Commission

## MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 6, 2018

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The African American Resources Advisory Commission convened in a meeting on Tuesday, February 6, 2018 at Britton, Durst, Howard, and Spence Community Center, 1183 Chestnut Avenue, in Austin, Texas. The meeting was called to order at 5:35 by Chair Kenneth Thompson.

### **African American Resources Advisory Commissioners:**

**Present:** Chair Kenneth Thompson, Vice Chair Chiquita Eugene, LaTisha Anderson, Jessica Faith Carter, Miriam Conner, Aaron Demerson, Clifford Gillard, Tam Hawkins, Daryl Horton, Marissa Jones, Nelson Lindner, Ruthie Redmond, and Gregory Smith

**Absent:** None

**City Staff in Attendance:** Economic Development Department (EDD) Acting Deputy Director Sylnovia Holt-Rabb, Assistant City Manager Mark Washington, Brion Oaks Chief Equity Officer, and EDD Development Services Administrator and Liaison Linda Hayes.

### **1. Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of the January 9 regular meeting were approved unanimously following a motion by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Jones.

### **2. Chair's Report:**

Chair Thompson thanked everyone who attended the Martin Luther King Day ceremony and noted that the Commission was recognized at the march. He thanked Dr. Burnette for opening the Huston Tillotson campus to the public as part of the celebration. There are many things going on in the community, and it is important to prioritize where we focus our attention. He asked each commissioner to identify three items to bring to the attention of their council member. He suggested that the Carver Museum, phases two and three, as well as maintenance should be on everyone's list. Commissioner Smith reported that he and others are in talks with City management regarding the appointment of the EDD Interim Director.

### **3. Citizen Communication:**

- a. **Steven Blake**, a pastor in East Austin spoke to the Commission about the Stronger Austin initiative, a public-private partnership between Austin Public Health, Austin Parks and Recreation Department, UT School of Public Health to provide free and accessible health and wellness activities for people of all ages.
- b. **Simone Wilson** with EDD's Music and Entertainment Division said that February has been designated as Love Austin Music Month and encouraged participation to visit live music venues. She spoke about City Council's live music and the City's ATX Busking Pilot Program in the Green Water Treatment Redevelopment District. Applications are currently being accepted. Finally she announced that on March 1 the City will host a Musician Compensation Summit.
- c. **Quincy Dunlap**, new President and CEO of the Austin Area Urban League introduced himself.



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### 4. Presentations:

- a. **Austin Parks and Recreation Department Division Manager Laura Esparza and Carver Manager Bamidele Demerson** gave a six-month update on the progress of ongoing maintenance and repairs at Carver. Maintenance Week occurred at Carver in January. There are bond packages dedicated to broad categories of major repairs such as HVAC repairs, and roof repairs. Another \$5 million has been approved for repair and maintenance at the Carver. Because of its limited budget, at times PARD has partnered with citizens or nonprofit organization to assist with repairs. Three CMC work-orders were completed and 8 out of 16 critical repairs was completed during maintenance week. Three out of nine important repairs and 13 upgrades (cosmetic) were completed. The last bond Advisory Task Force meeting will be Thursday February 8<sup>th</sup>. PARD is exploring grants with partners for infrastructure as well as for programming. Funds for the light board replacement will come out of Ms. Esparza's division budget. Mr. Demerson thanked everyone who has worked to help the Carver Museum and asked Commissioners and the public to visit the museum.
- b. **Ms. Esparza** provided an update on the Artist Access Program launch. PARD has paused the program, formerly known as the Artist Residency Program, and will hold a community engagement process beginning in March with the goal to start the program July 1, 2018. A working group is being formed that will consist of one member from each of the groups that interact with PARD's History, Arts and Nature Division, including all of the quality of life commissions. PARD is working with Brion Oaks, CPIO community engagement personnel, the City Clerk, Law Department, and EDD to develop the process. Ms. Esparza asked the Commission to elect one commissioner to represent it in this process.

### 5. Working Groups:

- a. Photograph Selection for Mural: Event will be held in March or April.
- b. Health and Mental Health:
- c. Public Safety: After the meet and confer contract wasn't approved by Council, the Interim City Manager suspended all operations of the Citizen Review Panel. As a result, the newly appointed Police Monitor has no real authority. The other result of the lack of a contract is less diversity in hiring. In a presentation at the Public Safety Commission on February 5 meeting a request was made for a non-profit to conduct independent investigations; without the City being involved. Commissioner Linder asked that commissioners and community members show up on February 15 to meet the new city manager.
- d. Expansion of the Carver Library: Update provided by PARD
- e. Solar and Economic: Meeting anticipated with Austin Energy
- f. Youth and Education: No update
- g. Urban Music/Other Cultural Activities: Commissioner Smith nominated Commissioner Conner to represent the Commission in the community engagement process and Commissioner Eugene seconded. The nomination was approved unanimously.
- h. Affordable Housing and Equitable Planning Group: No update



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### 6. Old Business:

- a. Discussion on possible action for the coming year:
- b. Budget discussion and recommendation: Chair Thompson advised commissioners to start thinking and talking about the budget. He wants to start next month to discuss the budget. ACM Washington announced that tomorrow a budget work session will be held at the Wyndham Hotel; discussion will focus on the strategic plan. Staff will provide an update at the next commission meeting.
- c. Resolution: Chair Thompson pointed out that according to NPR, Austin created 451 resolutions about gentrification yet gentrification continues. Commissioner Linder said that a report in the Austin Monitor assessing the Mayor's Task Force on Institutional Racism said there were very few action items to address the issues identified because resources were not allocated. Chair Thompson said that the Commission needs to speak with one voice. Commissioner Horton said that the commission needs to learn from last year, and start early meeting with Council members. Mr. Oaks pointed out that a resolution is an initial step that has to be followed up.

### 7. New Business:

- a. SMBR - Disparity Study (2018) Sponsored Commissioner Anderson and Commissioner Muscadin
- b. Soul-y Austin: Nicole Klepadlo Economic Development
- c. Mission Impossible
- d. Carver Museum: PARD will return in May
- e. Austin Independent School District Education Dessert: Norman & Simms Elementary Schools; what other resources are scheduled to be repurposed?
- f. 2016 Mobility Bond Draft Proposed Corridor Construction Program: Mike Trimble, Director of the Corridor Program Office will be invited to March Meeting to talk about how the bond impacts the African American community.
- g. Invitation to new City Manager: Dr. Washington will schedule
- h. Regular updates from the different community organizations including NAACP, ARA, Black Chamber, Urban League and Black ministers' alliance

Commissioner Smith announced that an opening reception for an art exhibit will take place on February 15 at ARA. The featured artist is Juanita Cole Towery; her art will be on display through March.

The March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held at Britton, Durst, Howard and Spence Community Center, 1183 Chestnut Avenue.

### 8. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned following a motion by Commissioner Smith seconded by Commissioner Jones.