

Marion  
May 15, 2018

#### Jill's Key Takeaways:

- *Quality of Life Form for Advancing Outcomes:* Quality of Life Commissioners will work with their respective Commissions to submit FY2019 budget recommendations using the [new form](#) that aligns recommendations to [Strategic Outcomes](#) adopted by Council on March 8, 2018. Commissions will then vote on a formal resolution to Council no later than May 21, 2018. The intent is for Quality of Life Commissions to provide recommendations earlier in the annual budget process so that City staff can incorporate them into the City Manager's proposed budget to Council.
- *Budget Process is Part of Government that Works for All:* Upon conclusion of this budget cycle, participants are interested in debriefing what worked and did not work with this year's budget process, in order to improve the next cycle.
- *Joint Recommendations:* Participants generated a list of initiatives ([listed below](#)) that cross Quality of Life Commissions and generally agreed to jointly support these, while each Commission would apply their "lens" to recommendations. [These are on Page 4.](#)

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#### Action Items:

- ~~Action #1: Equity Office will create a list of go-to resources for Quality of Life Commissions to aide in filling out budget recommendation form.~~
- ~~Action #2: Budget Office to provide Quality of Life Commissions with community engagement campaign materials, including translated versions. These are currently being developed.~~
- ~~Action #3: Quality of Life Commissions will take formal action on Commission-specific budget recommendations and any joint recommendations no later than May 21, 2018.~~

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## Minutes

### Welcome

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Brian welcomed everyone to the meeting with an anecdote learned from the Chicago conferences attended by the Equity Office and members of the Mayor's Office and City Council. In the work that we do fighting for equity within our communities, solidarity is a key to success. The approach of "It may not be my issue, but I'll show up for you and you for me" gives our voices the most power, and it's important to remember no one but the community owns our work, or our Commission, or our Office.

### Objectives

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Jill then opened with these objectives:

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- Equip the Quality of Life Commissions for submissions of their Recommendations
- Gauge the interest in potential Joint Recommendations
- Develop a shared understanding of the Buds and Roses not covered last time

And the group added one more:

- Answer how we can keep the community informed and involved in what the Commissions are doing throughout this budget process? Particularly with the tight window of time to get the recommendations in.

### Rose/Buds

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We then went around and read out the Rose and Buds from the posters created at the last work session, recorded and transcribed by Brandon. Major themes of the Roses were the recognition of City Council that Equity work is needed, the intersectionality promoted by the Equity Office, the cooperation between the Commissions and communities, and the strides that have been made already. For Buds, the new process and opportunity to influence the process, the alignment and impacts of the recommendations, the communication, the Equity Office, and the Consensus-building work.

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Additionally, we re-emphasized the need for our community engagement, particularly in light of the way the budget process was hidden in secret in the past. Further, methods of communication and information sharing were discussed, as was a concern with the Commissioners appearing to be "gatekeepers."

## Share-Out

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In the share-outs, we discovered that the timing of the distribution of the Form became an issue. For the African American Quality of Life Advisory Commission, the monthly meeting had already occurred before they received the Form, not allowing them to discuss or work with it. For the Asian American QoL, they were able to work with the Form when they met, and found the form easy to use, and that the order of the questions did force them to think about the recommendations in new ways.

Issues were raised with the balance between ambition and conservation in requesting funding levels. Staff encouraged the Commissions not to put limits on their recommendations.

There was also frustration with the metrics. Several Commissions didn't feel the provided options accurately covered what they wanted to influence.

A substantial discussion focused on influencing the process, and the allocation of resources between forming recommendations and pushing for process change. There was a lot of desire for a flat allocation for the Quality of Life Commissions, say at 1% of the full budget. This would allow greater time to go into the community and collect proposals.

The response from Staff was that this is a new process. The frustrations the Commissions feel in working through the Metrics, Strategies, and Outcomes are being felt by Departments as well. Also, given the tight timeline, it was decided the time and energy would be better spent in going through the process as-is, treating it as a pilot, and using the time after May to lobby for greater change in the process.

Two forms of this influence were discussed. One suggestion was a joint resolution from the staff liaisons to Council about potential process changes. The other, via Staff, was to make use of the large bodies of the community the Commissions serve. In going to the dais, it was suggested the Commissions bring that affect this process is having on your communities, on how these peoples aren't being served. In showing that solidarity, showing you're watching Council, you can make them take notice.

Communication, both between the Commissions and the community, and the Commissions and the Departments or potential vendors was raised. The group wanted to ensure the relevant parties were not surprised by these recommendations, reducing the risk of the money coming in and not being put to use in the correct or most impactful way.

Further problems were raised by the issue with information-sharing. There was a desire for a database to access departmental representatives, along with potential workshops or presentations by the Budget Office in order to help inform the community of the new process. Further, the Equity Office has been tasked with creating a community engagement guidebook or template, to ensure the communities are informed and involved.



## Working with the Form

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After lunch Brandon went through a brief demonstration of the form on Qualtrics, tracing the logic of the questions displayed, along with covering a few resources for data while taking in suggestions from the Commissions for additional data sources.

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Then, we broke for Commission-level work, and developed a draft list of joint resolutions. It was decided that for each of these recommendations, each Commission should develop the recommendation from the lens of their community, and at the end the Commissions will add support for each of the individual recommendations.

## Joint Recommendation Topics:

*Isabel would to support joint recommendations from the 4 QoL including*

### • **Restore Rundberg**

- Spoke to by Hispanic/Latino QoL
- **Mission:** Wants 100k for the hiring of a staff person to assist the initiative in building capacity and connecting different groups across the community
- **History:** the Initiative began as a DoJ grant, but now it's crossing over
- Not clear which Indicator to pair with, concern about unintended consequences in pairing with Safety, as the issues with Profiling and Criminalization of People of Color are well-known and demonstrated

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### • **Language Access**

- Spoke to by Asian-American QoL
- **Mission:** Expand the funding to translate at a departmental level to provide translation/interpretation services
- **History:** Recommended it past two years, was jointly funded with Hispanic/Latino QoL to staff a Community Language Coordinator
  - There was also a "Language Access Plan" completed by each Department, though there wasn't strong plans in place for when/why to do translation

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### • **Immigrant Support**

- Spoke to by Hispanic/Latino QoL
- **Mission:** Provide permanent, long-term funding for direct financial assistance and legal services to immigrants, possibly including mental health assistance
- **History:** Recommended funding for emergency legal assistance, received finally last month, but only one-time funding
- Indicator: Feeling Welcomed to the Community

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### • **People's Plan for Anti-Displacement**

- Spoke to by Hispanic/Latino QoL
- **Mission:** Establish a low-income housing fund, as detailed in the "People's Plan," allocation \$16M from the Budget each year for the fund

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- **History:** This is one point on the 6-point "People's Plan," written by community organizers and recommended to Council by the Anti-Displacement Task Force
  - There is an "affordable" housing fund within the Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department, but this would be specifically low-income and involve third-party oversight

- **Mental Health\***

- Spoke to by African American QoL
- **Mission:** "Mental health funding specifically earmarked for partnerships with community organizations or entities providing mental health facilities at no cost or on a sliding scale within communities"
- **History:** Last year requested 750k for this purpose, was not approved
- Crosses over with LGBTQ QoL Working Group on Health
- Must not go to providers there now, as those partners haven't moved the needle for PoC
- Specific emphasis on 1st and last bullets of "Vendor Characteristic" portion of QoL Form
- Asian American QoL would also request support for alternative forms of care, as is common in other cultures

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- **Job training/Workforce Development\***

- Spoke to by African American QoL
- **Mission:** 1.5M to provide economic opportunities around job training for Science, Technology, Engineering, (Arts), and Math and healthcare positions, particularly targeted to 18-24 year-olds who have double-digit unemployment rates
- **History:** Requested last year, not approved.
- Asian American Quality of Life is also working on a 55+ training program, as they are the other age demographic with particularly high unemployment rates
- Also work being done in City to develop system of "Workforce Solutions" targeting a hire of 10,000 people in the next 3-4 years

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- **Fair Justice\***

- **Mission:** Ensure the contracts passed gives weight to offices created by City, such as [the Office of the Police Monitor](#) with the Austin Police Department contract and [the Office of the Police Monitor](#)

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- **History:**

- **LGBTQ+ QoL survey/study**

- Spoke to by LGBTQ QoL
- **Mission:** Commission a survey, as with the other Commissions, to establish a data set and measure needs within the LGBTQ+ community
- **History:** Requested last year, not approved. The other QoL Commissions have undergone surveys such as these to establish rich data source from which to draw needs
- Cuts across all Commissions

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- **PrEP Access\***

- Spoke to by LGBTQ QoL

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- **Mission:** Expand awareness and access to PrEP pills, a treatment demonstrated to be 92% effective (according to the CDC) in reducing the risk of HIV infection
- **History:** Received 35k last year, but requested ~4 times more.
  - Could also be a form of reallocation from other Austin Public Health HIV prevention programs
- Cuts across all other Commissions

- **Community Health Workers/Navigators\***

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- Spoke to by Asian American QoL
- **Mission:** Expand program beyond pilot program, and instead contract with community health organizations. Connects people of different cultures and languages to direct healthcare services.
- **History:** An original program of the Asian American QoL, it's being run in coordination with APH through the Asian American Resource Center non-profit. Received only half of requested funding last year, and program is operating as a pilot still. As is, employees of program themselves do not have health insurance due to low funding.

- **Access to health insurance\***

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- Spoke to by Asian American QoL
- **Mission:** Provide money to organizations providing community services in obtaining/understanding health insurance, as 65+ immigrants frequently haven't spent enough time in the country to be eligible for Medicare
- **History:** Hispanic/Latino QoL was receiving 238k to provide this service for the whole county, but now it's been cut to 13k

- **Senior transportation\***

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- Spoke to by Asian American QoL
- **Mission:** Provide greater funding to reduce social isolation among seniors
- **History:** The program exists at the Asian American Resource Center, and was previously approved for a van, but it has not been delivered in two years.
- There was also discussion around finding a more flexible solution, or partner to reach a greater number of seniors
- Ride Austin vouchers have been discussed
- Further, there was a question of whether to align this with Mobility, and it was decided to start at outcome: reducing social isolation, and working from there, so probably not Mobility

- **Welcoming Cities Program** serving immigrants, refugees, isolated communities, diverse cultures

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- Spoke to by Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life
- **Mission:** Create a more clear, accessible resource to understand the services and programs offered by the City
- **History:** Used to be a city program, but now it has come out of the Asian American Quality of Life survey that the community doesn't know what services are available.

- **Arts and Culture**

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- Spoke to by Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life
- **Mission:** Provide funding for capital building and maintenance of cultural centers, along with programming in those cultural centers
- **History:** This was included in the bond requests, and the Hispanic/Latino QoL was supposed to receive 75k for this, but has never seen the money since

\* Correlates with Council's "Top 10" Indicator categories

#### Action Items:

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- Action #3: Quality of Life Commissions will take formal action on Commission-specific budget recommendations and any joint recommendations no later than May 21, 2018.

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