



***African American Resources Advisory Commission
MEETING MINUTES
August 1, 2023***

The African American Resources Advisory Commission convened in a regularly called meeting on August 1, 2023, at the City of Austin Permitting and Development Center in Austin, Texas.

Chair Elaina Fowler called the African American Resources Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 5:56 p.m.

Board Members/Commissioners in Attendance: Chair, Elaina Fowler, Dewi Smith

Board Members/Commissioners in Attendance Remotely: Vice Chair, Cherelle Vanbrackle, Roger Davis, Joi Harden, Nelson Lender, Greg Smith, and Mueni Rudd

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

Kenneth Thompson requested to continue honoring Black Austinites by adding new tiles at the African American Cultural and Heritage Facility, starting with Alexander Porter. Porter was the first Black man to work with the FBI.

Rose Fry with Preservation Austin requested support amplifying their call for volunteers and grant opportunities to the community.

Cheryl Johnson spoke on behalf of community members supporting the community work at Bethal Cemetery and requests support in those efforts.

Harve Frank shared information on the farming importance and efforts in the community and at the Carver. Request support in advocating for after-school and community programs in response to changes in the economy and increased weather changes.

Bill Wallace spoke on behalf of the community, requesting endorsement of the Community Investment Budget.

Alleyha Dannett spoke on behalf of the community requesting the commission advocate for an end to DPS troopers policing low-income/people of the global majority areas. Provided

information from the community regarding the effects on those individuals living in those areas.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. The minutes from the meeting of 08/01/2023 were approved on Nelson Linder's motion, and Greg Smith seconded the motion.

STAFF BRIEFINGS

2. N/A

DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. Presentation by City of Austin Police Department Assistant Chief Gizette Gaslin of the South Bureau concerning the partnership with the Texas Department of Public Safety to assist with traffic stops and crime in the city. Chief Gaslin shared with the commission that there is no partnership between DPS and APD.
4. Discussion and possible action on recommendation by Joyce James, Consultant for the City of Austin Police Department, about equity throughout the department for the community. The presentation was sent to commissions. Feedback was shared with James by the Commissioners regarding outreach.
5. Item #3, a presentation by Harve Frank and Daniela Silva endorsing Community Investment Budget, was removed from the agenda.
6. Presentation by Chris Harris of the Austin Justice Coalition on recent community listening sessions about the DPS initial and upcoming deployment in Austin. Details of the timeline of DPS presence were discussed, and a support request was made.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

7. Sue Spears of Bethany Cemetery Association spoke on behalf and requested support to preserve the cemetery and promote the history of the cemetery.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

8. The motion to approve supporting the efforts to preserve and promote the history of Bethany Cemetery was approved on Greg Smith's motion, and Elaina Fowler seconded. The motion passed on a 6/0 vote.
9. The motion to approve an openly stated stance on DEI closures by City Manager was approved on Elaina Fowler's motion and Dewi Smith's second. The motion passed with a 5/0 vote.
Joi Harden abstained

WORKING GROUP/COMMITTEE UPDATES

10. Update from Safety Working Group given by Dewi Smith.
11. Update from Government That Works for all given by Fowler with the request to move on motion item #9.
12. Update from Austin Revitalization Authority given by Greg Smith.
13. Update from Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce given by Roger Davis.
14. Update from The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Nelson Linder.
15. Update from Cultural Arts committee given by Mueni Rudd.

WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ADJOURNMENT

Greg Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m. without objection.

The minutes were approved at the September 6th, 2023 meeting on Commissioner Dewi Smith's motion, Vice Chair Cherelle Vanbrackle second on a 8/0 vote.

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For more information on the African American Resource Advisory Commission, please contact Florinda Bryant at 512.974.2715.

