



AGENDA
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
Friday December 14, 2018 @ 11:30 a.m.
Council Conference Room, 10th Floor, City Hall

Councilmember Carol Wood, Chair
Councilmember Brian Jackson, Vice Chair
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment
4. Approval of Minutes

November 9, 2018

5. Discussion
 - A.) Copy of letter sent by the Mayor and Council President to address the Public Charge on Immigration Law Changes
 - B.) Discussion on next year's committee and how it will look
6. Other
 - Updates on Participants in the Committee
7. Adjourn

DRAFT



MINUTES
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
Friday, November 9, 2018 @ 11:30 a.m.
Council Conference Room, 10th Floor, City Hall

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:37 a.m.

Committee Members

Council Member Carol Wood, Chair
Council Member Brian T. Jackson, Vice Chair
Council Member Patricia Spitzley - absent

Others Present

LaSondra Crenshaw, Council Staff
Joe Abood - Attorney's Office
Lisa Hagen – Attorney's Office
Elaine Womboldt—Rejuvenating South Lansing
Stacey Locke - Peckham
Tammy Lemmer - TCOA
Jim Bale
Guillermo Lopez – LLEAD/BOE
Mark Brown – NAACP/ACLU
Laura Griffin – Riverside Self-Advocacy Team
Carolyn Boyle – DNCAP
Anna Hill – Michigan Immigrant Rights Center

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 26, 2018 AS AMENDED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0

Presentation
Anna Hill – Immigration Law Changes

Mrs. Hill spoke on Immigration Law and Public Charge. The current definition of “public charge” is a person who has become or is likely to become primarily dependent on the government for subsistence. Under the current policy, which USCIS has not changed and will not change for some time, the only benefits considered in the public charge test are:

- Cash assistance such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and comparable state or local programs.
- Government-funded long-term institutional care.

On October 10, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) posted a proposed public charge regulation (a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking) in the federal register, asking the public to submit comments by December 10, 2018, before it becomes final. If the regulation is finalized in its proposed form, it would mark a significant and harmful departure from the current policy. For over a hundred years, the government has recognized that work supports like health care, nutrition and housing assistance help families thrive and remain productive. And decades ago, the government clarified that immigrant families can seek health care, nutrition and housing assistance without fear that doing so will harm their immigration cases. If this rule is finalized, we can no longer offer that assurance.

Council Member Wood asked do they want us to predict the future. Mrs. Hill advised yes however that is a very inaccurate way.

Mrs. Lemmer stated that in 1882 the intent of the law was to not let people cross the border and not let them into country, but it is not being applied that way now. Mrs. Hill advised that when applying for a green card you could have student, visitor, undocumented, or work visa, etc.

Mrs. Hill explained how public benefits factor into this law. Adding on cash assistance, non-emergency Medicaid, food stamps, housing assistance, Medicare Part D Low Income Subsidy, Long-term institutionalized care at government expense.

Council Member Wood asked what if a parent has a child who was born in the United States. Mrs. Hill advised that if you get benefits for children it should not interfere with parents getting United States status.

Mrs. Hill explained the proposed new regulation and how it would make it difficult for people with disabilities. And advised 283,000 Michiganders including 114,000 children could feel the chilling effect. Along with the loss of federal funds to Michigan, potential economic ripple effect, and potential jobs lost.

Mrs. Hill explained that immigrants should know the rule is prospective and nothing has changed yet. For most immigrants there is no advantage to discontinuing use of public benefits for themselves or any family member.

Mrs. Hill then went over the proposed rule timeline. The proposal was published Oct 10, 2018 and the deadline to give comments is Dec 10, 2018. Department of Human Services has to review comments and respond to every unique argument that is raised. Final rule will be published within a 60 day period before going into effect. And submitting to the comment portal is really important.

Council Member Wood asked if as or right now this is all administrative. Mrs. Hill stated that yes it is.

Mrs. Hill advised if you are a green card holder and plan to leave the country for six months or longer you should talk to an immigration attorney first. Getting the issue raised is very important. Engaging in the comments process now could really make a difference.

Council Member Wood advised the group that at the next Committee of the Whole meeting Nov 19th we will be having a presentation on Protecting Immigrant Families in Michigan.

Discussion
Ordinance – Amend Chapter 297 Human Rights

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE HUMAN RIGHTS ORDINANCE CITY COUNCIL TO VOTE NOVEMBER 19, 2018.
MOTION CARRIED 2-0

Discussion
Climate Change

No discussion

OTHER
Updates on Participants in the Committee

NAACP Formal Election for the branch Nov 10th at 10am

Nov 14th Annual breakfast 8am Peckham

Nov 19th Everett High School will be providing 500 families in the community with dinners and they are looking for volunteers

TCOA being recognized Dec 7th

TCOA Advisory Council age 60 and over have 2 vacancies they meet the 2nd Thursday of every month at 1:00 p.m.

Every Wednesday 5:30 – 6:30/7:00 Jail Tours - Ingham County sheriff office

Sparrow Volunteers- if over 55 go through VIP office

Friday and Saturdays 8:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m. Midnight Basketball - Hill Center

Adjourn

Adjourn at 12:49 p.m.

Submitted by,

LaSondra Crenshaw, Administrative Assistant

Approved _____

Andy Schor
Mayor



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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF LANSING, MICHIGAN

December 4, 2018

Honorable Kirsten M. Nielsen
Secretary, U. S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Nielsen:

It has been brought to our attention by the Michigan Immigration Rights Center, Michigan League of Public Policy, and the United States Conference of Mayors that there is a new proposed regulation on “public charge” by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. We clearly understand the intent of the “public charge” test. However, the new proposed rule takes an extreme approach that could ultimately punish immigrants for accessing non-cash benefits that were set in place to assist families in the United States on becoming contributing members of their communities.

In the City of Lansing, we see daily the positive impact legal immigrants contribute to our economic and cultural communities. For those immigrants who are on the path to citizenship, the proposed rule would jeopardize the documentation of benefits of naturalization for earnings, employment and home ownership. This proposal will impact access to health care, housing options and, in the end, have a negative impact on our economy. This rule change will open the door to immigrants fearing the new rule and not fully taking advantage of the federal programs that are available to assist them. Instead, they could be pushed towards state and local programs that might not be able to fully support them.

This letter is our formal request for your department to reconsider taking any action on the proposed rule because it jeopardizes our future as a country. A country where immigrants are offered a new opportunity to prosper in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andy Schor", is written over a white background.

Andy Schor
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Wood", is written over a white background.

Carol Wood
City Council President

“Equal Opportunity Employer”

