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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m.

Committee Members

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

No quorum present

Others Present

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Mayor Schor
Marilyn Plummer, Community Outreach and Mayoral Staff
Dax Carpenter, Disability Network
Griffin Rivers
Brandon Waddell, Assistant City Attorney
Dr. Joan Jackson Johnson, HRCS Director
Sarah Lehr, LSJ
Mark Brown, Community Organizations; ACLU; Lead of Lansing, NAACP of Lansing
Amanda Bernes, NAACP
Judi Harris, St. Vincents Catholic Refugee Services
Sandy Wolfe, Peckham
Joseph Abood, Chief Deputy City Attorney
Tammy Lemmer, TCOA – via conference call
Laura Griffin, Peckham

Minutes

Minutes will be moved to the next meeting.

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Presentation - City Boards/Commission Developing policies for inclusion on Boards -Mayor Schor and Mayoral Staff

Council Member Wood acknowledged and thank the Mayor for attending. She noted the Committee extended an invitation so that the Mayor could be made aware of their concerns and suggestions the Ad Hoc Committee had before he beginning appointments to Boards & Commissions.

Introductions were made by the participants.

The Committee hoped that Mayor would consider some of the issues outlined in the policy report that was developed over a series of meetings before he makes any appointments. Noted that this AD HOC looks at how services and policies are addressed in the City.

Dr. Jackson Johnson asked who handles the Snow Sergeants, how it is funded and said someone donated a snow blower that could be donated to them. She was directed to Mr. Carpenter and Ms. Boak provided his contact information to Dr. Jackson Johnson.

Council Member Wood explained to Mayor Schor what this Committee had accomplished which included amending the Human Rights Ordinance, and how those complaints are now being addressed. Based on some the inclusion training the Committee felt it was important to look at the Board and Commission appointments are addressed, and how to integrated those Boards. The Committee started by proposing a draft policy, and they also are encouraging a paper application for those that do not have access or use a computer. They also felt the applications should be available at all City owned buildings.

For transparency purposes the Committee is now asking the Mayor to make available in all the referrals for appointments, the applicants resume when they are forward on to Council for action.

Ms. Lemmer also proposed a "Conflict of Interest Statement" form that would be included in the application.

Continuing down the list of suggestions, the Committee asked the Mayor to consider changing the number of terms members sits on a Board or Commission to two terms, by limiting terms more people would have access to the positions.

A list of criteria points were presented that would be considered of each applicant including knowledge of the Board, passion of the topic, desire to shape the policy, ability to offer profession or personal skills, and willingness to engage the City population to form inclusive policies. The Committee admitted they were not requesting that the Mayor has to put someone with a disability on the Board, but have someone who has the willingness to engage that population to hear their needs. In being placed on a Board the appointee should have a list of expectations such as timely, familiar with issues, review back ground information, participate, open and responsive, engage with the public, participate in ethics and inclusion training, participate in the Open Meetings Act training, and generate an annual report to Council by February 1st of each year.

Mayor Schor acknowledged the Committee and admitted he himself had also been looking at some of the same items that were just listed. Regarding the expectations of the Board members, he was open to setting expectations, and will follow the Charter, however will also be looking into their own Mayoral expectations. One item that the Mayor has already been made

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aware of that is an issue is the concern on attendance to the meetings by Board Members, and he stated there are ways to address attendance.

Regarding a report due to Council by February 1st annually, the Charter already says December 31st to Council, Clerk and the Mayor, so it is already set. Mayor Schor then admitted he was going back and forth on the term limits, but might consider the ability to waive it. He noted that there are a lot of Boards where expertise is beneficial, and if you remove expertise. Mayor Schor was hesitant to enforce a hard 2 term limit, but could make it less formalized and look at each individual board case by case.

Mayor Schor then stated to all those present that he strongly supports diversity, but people need to apply. He confirmed he had already looked at the applications his office has, and these is not a lot of diversity applying. He encouraged all the groups present to go back to their organizations and encourage them to apply.

Council Member Wood asked for an ongoing updated list of vacancies, and posted on the website visible so anyone can check it. Mayor Schor stated the Clerk's office does maintain that, and Ms. Boak located the Boards and Commissions page on the City website for all present. <https://www.lansingmi.gov/153/Boards-Commissions>

Council Member Wood then asked each organization present to inform the Mayor of what they are interested in seeing happen.

Mr. Carpenter admitted he has told his constituents to make conscious effort to apply.

Ms. Lemmer, via phone, stated they too are trying to diverse at their location also. They are trying to encourage people to step outside their comfort zone, and looking at how to encourage involvement with older adults.

Ms. Harris asked for the Mayor to review the policy they proposed, because the policy will allow her group to do a lot of more civic education and be involved.

Ms. Wolfe stated that where she works, Peckham there are not a lot of people that live in the City, and she herself does not live in the City, however wants to have a role on a Board. She asked for a list of Boards non-residents can apply for.

Mayor Schor again encouraged the groups to approach the members of their groups and have them apply and be an advocate.

Mr. Rivers voiced a concern with the LPD, and his opinion on their lack of training, lack of diversity, and the process of recruiting. Mr. Rivers informed the Mayor he believed that there are no minorities working on the street, and there is a Captain with a PHD who needs to be on the streets not at a desk. His belief was that people of color need to see a person of color in a high ranking position on the street. Mr. Rivers continued with his opinion that the applicants are being scrutinized. Mayor Schor assured Mr. Rivers he had already spoken to the Police Chief and their programs. His belief would be to bring in recruits and approach them in high school where they can start making a difference. Mayor Schor added that the Police Chief had provided him with a list of his efforts to recruiting minorities, and speaks to people who could help with financial assistance and scholarships. Mr. Rivers opinion was that the department was recruiting in the wrong places. Mayor Schor assured Mr. Rivers that the LPD is recruiting even in other states, and recently at a Mayor's conference all the Mayors heard that the

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statistics show people do not want to work any further than 70 miles from where they were raised. The Chief is interested in the conversations and both are watching the numbers.

Mr. Carpenter asked if there would ever be a time when someone who may have a disability or be a minority, and be taken as a genuine interest for a vacancy. Council Member Wood answered that by stating some Boards and Commissions are put together by the Charter, which requires them to be Lansing residents. Mayor Schor told the group he is concerned with non-residents on the Boards because residents pay taxes, and someone who lives in a surrounding township, they are living there for some reason, whether it be property taxes, and then they make decisions that affect residents of the City of Lansing. Mr. Carpenter understood the statement, but again stated they want more people with disabilities, and wouldn't it be better to have a full board even if it meant going outside the City.

Council Member Wood suggested having a non-resident liaison on the Boards who wouldn't vote.

Mr. Brown spoke about hiring practices for the police and fire and acknowledged working with HR and the previous leadership. His opinion was that there have been hiring practices that made it difficult in hiring minorities when hiring in the police and fire. His organization is currently looking into a discovery to address those issues. Mr. Griffin admitted he has filed a FOIA on behalf of the NAACP. Mayor Schor was not aware of this concern or FOIA request and asked for a copy. Mr. Brown is asking the policy address a way to make sure employers are not missing something or creating a ceiling or barrier that employees are not aware of.

Mayor Schor acknowledged all the comments and made them aware that the challenge is to create a policy and conform to the Charter. They can create a policy and suggest the Boards do it, but each Board has to do it. His office will navigate and follow the law, but it is fair to say they should have something standardized.

Mr. Brown quickly referenced a list he submitted to the Mayor at another meeting, stated he wanted to provide him with an updated list.

Mayor Schor lastly informed the group his office will be creating task forces, and blue ribbon Committees that will be an advisory to the Mayor. These will not be official appointments and board but could be open to residents and non-residents. The proposed blue ribbon art culture task force will be Lansing residents. He stated again his desire will be to have the majority of Lansing residents on the boards because there is a lot of talent in the City.

Council Member Wood acknowledged the Mayor for attending and listening to their suggestions, and understands he will take his charge according to the Charter but they will navigate together. She then introduced to the Committee that the Mayor wants to start a Commission on Diversity and Inclusion and this Committee could come up with recommendations for him to consider. Mayor Schor welcomed the recommendations, and stated this Commission would be appointment recommendations from his Office and Council would confirm. He also encouraged recommendations from this Ad Hoc on membership. He is currently working on an executive order on the topic and it will be sent out to Council.

Other
Updates on Participants in the Committee

Adjourn

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Adjourn at 12:35 p.m.

Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager

Approved by Committee on February 20, 2018