



Diversity and Inclusion Commission Agenda

Monday, August 8, 2022 5:30 PM

City Hall Board Room

The Diversity & Inclusion Commission will meet in person as well as via telephone or video conference. Members of the public interested in this meeting are encouraged to join the meeting via the following link -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81121299227?pwd=NTJjK1RsdkU2UEJxVitoWGFLek9aQT09> or call (312) 626-6799 , Webinar ID: 811 2129 9227, Passcode: 799964 - rather than appear at City Hall (note: occupancy will be limited).

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Roll was called by Jeffery Rhodes, Asst. to the City Administrator.

Members present were:

Amy Barr

Rhonda Weimer

Rondale Dunn

Absent with prior notice were:

Mahnaz Shabbir

Dr. Vincent Carlisle

Brian Whitley (Liaison)

A quorum of the Board was present.

Jeffrey Rhodes, Assistant to the City Administrator, and Alexa Barton, City Administrator were present on behalf of the City.

Angela Hagenbach from the Weston Chapter of the Black Ancestors Awareness Club was present

Lisa Wittmeyer from the Platte County Historical Society was present

Dr. Timothy Westcott from Park University was present

The meeting was called to order at 05:41 PM on August 8, 2022.

2. Action Items

A. Approve minutes of the July 11, 2022 regular meeting

ACTION: It was moved by Alderman Rhonda Weimer and seconded by Alderman Amy Barr to approve the minutes from the July 11, 2022 meeting

RESULT: Motion passed 3-0.

AYES: Rondale Dunn, Amy Barr, Rhonda Weimer

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

3. Non-Action Items

A. Discussion of Parkville history and historical signage

Rondale Dunn welcomed our guests to meeting and introduced the topic for how to address the topic at hand - historical markers, and history of the signage in Parkville.

Alexa Barton - City Administrator - walked the commission through the history of the signage and how we got to this point. This issue was addressed about two years ago.

Ald. Whitley - talked about the informal commission that was formed two years ago and summarized the situation about the signs and history of the City. He then outlined the major history milestones for Parkville from indigenous people to today - tell the story from multiple perspectives, not just the colonial history of the community.

Angela Hagenbach - great to have history but it's not a complete history. We need to share this history and their contributions to this community. I moved here in the 90s and could find no black history in this area. I found out about my mother's family history in Weston. I've put all of my energy there. I love this area. I want to share the history of this area through all people, including my people.

I know this history is here. It might be hard to find but it's here. We can start to tell a more cohesive story and make it about the people - the human beings - who helped build this town, how are an integral part of this community's history.

Lisa Wittmeyer - great context for this conversation. We need to talk about the context of the sign if we're going to resurrect the sign. How do we put up this sign in the correct way?

Hagenbach - do these signs live in a museum? I think it's not a good idea to put up this sign. We should put up a new sign.

Whitley - sons of the confederation sign was put up in 2009

Dr. Timothy Westcott - the PCHS sign was put up in the 1950-60s.

Mr. Washington was a free man, his wife was an enslaved person, by George Park. I am an historian and have found no evidence that there was a slave market here in Parkville. I've heard about this but have not found any evidence - the Sheriff would have to sign for the sales and those have not been found. The markets were in Platte City - we have the newspaper ads for that in the record.

We need to update the writing and think about the location - the fountain, the park, where? We have the ordinances from the city council in 1853-1855s about the sale of enslaved people in Parkville

Whitley - there is still an ordinance on the books from 1950s about how the aldermen could make arrests during civil unrest

Barton - was there a port here?

Westcott - it was a landing / English Landing

Hagenbach - Where there any underground railroad sites in Parkville

Westcott - I have found no underground railroad sites in Parkville. There are three in Weston

Barton - do we return the sign to PCHS - make that recommendation?

And we are reopening the conversation about how to include an inclusive record of history here in our community.

Weimer - how do we find the balanced, inclusive story about this history?

How do we find and tell the story about the people that were enslaved and trafficked as part of this history?

Is it a walking tour - go from one sign to the next?

Barton - we can't rewrite history. We have the sign and we keep the history but provide context and clarification about the full history

Weimer - we can even look at the two cemeteries in town. One was nicer, one was less taken care of. A lot of folks don't know that, haven't seen that and don't understand the full context. We need the education piece.

Westcott - I would advocate not to reinstall the signs - especially the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Let's start fresh. Let's work with our partners. We decided in 2020 to disposition the signs and should move forward to rewrite the signs and create a full, inclusive history. The goal has to be the full truth - it won't be comfortable - but we have to tell it. How has the community grown and changed throughout history?

We see the same thing with the history of Park University. Our classes have been inclusive since the founding - except we did not accept black students until the 1950s. The school employed black folks, but never enrolled their children to receive an education.

Whitley - We have a great opportunity to share this history throughout the city - at Park, in the parks, in other parts of the City.

We can connect all of these communities and our histories - how do we expand the story in Parkville and Platte County.

Wittmeyer - this is exciting. History is dynamic. I learned new things tonight. There is a lot to learn from this conversation and we have an opportunity to tell it.

Dunn - are there things that are unknown about the Civil War history of this area/City?

Westcott - the first three county Sheriffs in Parkville were slave owners. Not large, plantation style but they owned slaves on their property.

The first Sheriff went to LeCompton to represent the pro-slavery side on the statehood discussion in KS.

We need a more balanced approach. There are three sides to this story - MO/Pro, KS/anti-slavery, Border ruffians (fighting across the border with statehood and the confederate/union balance before statehood.

Whitley - what are the next steps with telling this story - multiple perspectives, comprehensive? What history should we tell? How long do we share - the complete history from the first human inhabitants to this area.
Do folks want to get involved with this? Who else should we include?
Banneker School...

Westcott - I do all of the markers on campus. It costs up \$2,000 per marker. There are ways to fund these sorts of things.

Barton - Angela, how has your work in Weston gone? What can we learn from you? Would you be able to participate with us on this project?

Hagenbach - I'm interested, don't have a lot of bandwidth. I don't have a ton of recommendations, but I have a lot of information. I'm interested in learning more but have had a hard time finding details. I will dig deeper.
I can envision a tour in Platte County, Parkville, other cities in NW MO.

Dunn - what is the concrete action for us to take to make a recommendation to the board?

Whitley - can we move tonight for next month and I recommend opening up the next meeting for citizen input before we make a recommendation to the board. Where are the other two signs?

Barton - clarification on the procedure for a motion to consider action to make recommendations. We can do both - make the motion, and then open the public comment.

Whitley - I think we should slow down to speed up. We need to let folks comment on this. Let's do our due diligence.
We can make a motion to a recommendation and recommend a resolution for the next meeting - with the public present.

Weimer - recommendations for the signage and updates to the policies for City signage - what we accept, how we handle that, and what to do for these sorts of signs

Whitley - the default is an administrative action from the City Admin, with guidance from the board.

Barton - we will get additional clarification on that from the City Attorney on how we address 1st amendment rights and language that can be accepted into public spaces.

Westcott - we need to state where the signs are going to go, in our resolution.

Wassmer - giving the sign back will raise tough questions.

Dunn - 4 takeaways from this meeting

1. Draft a resolution for the BOA
2. Invite the public
3. PCHS next steps with their sign
4. How do we keep the momentum and get the Ad Hoc group going - Rondale and

Rhonda
5. Policy decisions about signage (input from Rich)

Next Steps / Action Items - quick break and then next steps.

Weimer - my idea is out of order, maybe. Let's make a motion to draft the resolution for next meeting - to address the signs

Whitley - direct staff to draft the resolution, get the info out there.

Dunn - let's capture the stakeholders and figure out next steps

4. Other Business

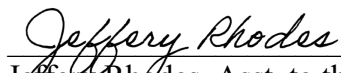
A. Next Meeting - Monday, September 12, 2022 @ 5:30 PM

1. [Springfield Inclusiveness Survey](#)

5. Adjourn

Chairman Dunn declared the meeting adjourned at 07:02 PM.

The minutes for August 8, 2022, having been read and considered by the Diversity and Inclusion Commission, were approved on this the 12th day of September 2022



Jeffery Rhodes, Asst. to the City Administrator

September 12, 2022
Approval date