

CITY OF McMinnville
MINUTES OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Kent Taylor Civic Hall and online via Zoom,
McMinnville, Oregon

Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 4:30 p.m.

Presiding: Committee Co-Chair Larry Miller & Committee Co-Chair Abby Thomas

Recording Secretary: Noelle Amaya, Communications & Engagement

Manager

Committee Members: Present

Absence

Larry Miller
Abby Thomas
Christine Bader
Caitlin Nemeth
Dianne Rhee
Katherine Martin
Tony Lai
Efrain Arredondo
Zack Geary

Dianne Rhee
Karina Alcantara

Others in attendance: Elly Schaefer & Jon Pheanis, MIG Consulting; Susan Muir, Parks & Recreation Director

- 1) CALL TO ORDER: Committee Co-Chair Larry called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.
- 2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Christine Bader MOVED to approve the April 13th, 2023 minutes. Efrain Arredondo SECONDS. Motion PASSES unanimously.
- 3) PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no public comments.
- 4) PARKS & OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN: Susan Muir introduces herself. She reminds the committee of the bus tour before the public engagement component began and prefaces the presentation with an introduction into what her group has learned through the engagement process. Susan introduces Jon and Elly to begin their presentation.

Jon introduces Elly Schaefer and MIG. Jon begins with an overview of the general goal of the meeting. The project began with trying to identify McMinnville's park inventory, to document the needs of the park system, to identify the community's goals, and to make recommendations for a 20-year vision for Parks, recreation, and open spaces. The project team is asking themselves along the way – what is achievable and what is realistic?

Sports fields, playgrounds, recreation facilities, open spaces / undeveloped parks, programs, trails, are all elements of the park system. He updates the group on the phase the project is in

currently which is the “Assessment” phase. Jon recaps the prior work the group did in August of 2022 which included identifying the challenges, opportunities, and ways to conduct outreach. The DEIAC’s initial perceptions were very close to what they heard from the larger community outreach effort.

The presentation transitions to the overview of the engagement process which included over 2k responses. They evaluated the condition and capacity and the public’s access to developed parks. Folks in the higher density north/central part of McMinnville are not in walkable distance to parks or open space; those areas are also considered high density housing areas.

Elly presents the key themes that emerged from the community engagement process. The community shows a high level of interest in parks that are for all people, ages, abilities, incomes, and cultures. McMinnville residents also felt like addressing aging parks and facilities was highly important. Not knowing how or where to participate is the biggest barrier to participation for many residents. Increasing safety and cleanliness was also highly important.

Jon states that halfway through the survey portion, the McMinnville staff team targeted the areas where they weren’t seeing much feedback. Committee member Christine Bader asks how we knew which people were participating. Jon states that respondents were asked to drop a pin on the map of where they live or work. Katherine Martin asks how we targeted the people who weren’t participating. Susan states that we went door to door in some places and handed out QR codes.

Christine asks if the turnout for this project was considered good for a City of this size. Jon states this is great compared to what they’ve seen and that he feels positive about the quality of responses that we received. Jon believes they are a good representation of residents’ perceptions in McMinnville. Christine asks how this project information compares to the Planning for Equity project. Susan states that this project team overlaid the data we collected from this project over the census tracks for the Planning for Equity project. That information has been delivered to the consultant team for that project.

Efrain raises the issue about how some of the information about covered spaces might be skewed based on accessibility and the intended use and there is a problem regarding the unavailability of school facilities. He raises the issues of new parks being put in new developments versus aging parks in older developments. Folks who are lower income typically end up in older neighborhoods because that is what they can afford so there is inequity there. Efrain also states that the perception of safety is different for some people, and we need to be aware of that when we look at the data and ideas around ‘safety.’ How the community uses these spaces – and the cultural aspect of how we interact with these spaces should be noted and emphasized.

Jon asks the group to refer to their packet and the vision and goals exercise beginning with the key needs and vision from 1999. Jon begins the group exercise.

Group discussion follows as they work through the exercise.

Jon and Elly thank the group for their time and leave the meeting.

- 5) ARPA: Committee Co-Chair Larry Miller introduces the topic beginning with the grant program which carried over from last meeting. There might be some challenges associated with administering a grant program and it would be beneficial if we can have Jennifer Cuellar, Finance Director, join the meeting to help us sort through what we're able to do versus what we are not.

Larry calls for questions or comments. Zack asks if there is anything we can do to prep Jennifer for that conversation before the June meeting. Noelle states that she and Jennifer have already talked about this subject and states that Jennifer suggested that we learn about the MESO partnership that the Community Development Department has underway. The group would like to invite staff from the Community Development to the next meeting to learn more.

Noelle reports that through her conversation with Jennifer, she also learned that the City has the capability to restrict some of the ARPA funding. The committee would need to have a defined purpose for those funds and City Manager's approval to do so. The group agrees that this idea seems feasible and that they would like to discuss this more at length. Christine asks if the other models we've talked about are helpful to this discussion or should they be abandoned altogether until we hear more from Jennifer.

Efrain reminds the group that no matter how we think of these ideas, there are still going to be human costs in administration, and we need to make sure we understand what those are and how they relate to the overall costs or design of the programs we chose. The group discusses how the structure, application, deadline, and other details might work.

Noelle reminds the group to be realistic in terms of how much time this committee has to dedicate to partnering with outside organizations. Abby states that she is ready to put the effort in for doing the actual work versus sitting in a room and talking about it. Efrain states that there is 'exciting work' and 'not-exciting work' and we have to realize that someone has to do the 'not-exciting work' to make progress – the tracking, the spending, etc.

Christine states that we don't even know what are doing. As a group, we have been putting things down on paper and then we don't discuss the paper until we have another meeting about it. The committee needs to start producing. Larry agrees. The committee needs members to interact with the work, each piece as it comes and provide feedback on a timely basis.

Zack wants to dedicate time to get into the details about what the grant program will entail and hopes we can do that next meeting.

Group discussion on how to share documents for working feedback. Noelle will check with the City Recorder on public records requirements and using google documents.

Christine introduces the topic of the scope of work for the DEI assessment. She asks the group to review the current draft and to comment on it – Christine asks the group to review what's there and if what we've gathered at this stage is appropriate for what will go out in an RFP. The group agrees on timing for providing feedback.

The group decides to continue the conversation on the cultural calendar to the next meeting.

6) ADJOURNMENT at 6:43 pm.

s/s Noelle Amaya
Noelle Amaya,
Communications & Engagement Manager

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