

**MINUTES
THE CITY OF ST CHARLES
EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 5:00 PM
2 EAST MAIN STREET
DENS A & B, SECOND FLOOR**

1. Call to Order

Chair Nichol called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2. Roll Call

Present: Trudy Nichol, Susan Sanders, Cris Anderson, Michael Castro, Mary Kruse, Lisa Macaione, Samantha Newman (joined at 5:04 pm), Erica Johnson

Others present: Heather McGuire, Lisa Stricker, Chris Sanchez

Absent: John Fitzgerald

Ms. McGuire informed the Commission that Mr. Fitzgerald has resigned.

3. Approval of the November 16, 2023, Equity & Inclusion Meeting Minutes.

Motion by Macaione, second by Anderson to approve the November 16, 2023 meeting minutes.

Voice Vote: Ayes: Sanders, Anderson, Castro, Kruse, Macaione, Johnson. Nays: None.

Absent: Newman. Nichol did not vote as Chair. **Motion Carried.**

Chair Nichol reversed the order of items 4 & 5 on the agenda.

5. Report on Ekwebet Statue Update.

Ms. Macaione provided an update regarding her meeting with Eric Krupa. They discussed putting together a timeline and fundraising options. Mr. Krupa will need to seek approval from the History Museum as to whether or not this will be a museum project. The Commission is there to represent the City in regards to enhancing and supporting the equitable and inclusive elements of this project so they can help support Mr. Krupa as he presents this to the City.

The initial focus will be on the statue. The plaque is the item that is considered offensive to the tribe. Ms. Macaione felt the E&I Commission would definitely want to support this.

Chair Nichol said the best thing to do is to work with Mr. Krupa and provide information if

they can. Then when he is ready ask him to come in to meet with the Commission.

Ms. Stricker suggested the group focus on the outward facing pieces that they can actually do something with and advise Mr. Krupa of this so he understands what the Commission can do and what his responsibility will be.

Ms. Sanders asked if the hope is to change the plaque with non-offensive verbiage.

That is correct. The Prairie Band is going to take the lead on writing the actual plaque. This will ensure they have a representative from within their culture doing the writing themselves.

4. Discuss Equity & Inclusion Commission 2024 goals.

Ms. Stricker categorized items discussed at the previous meeting as follows:

Buckets:

- Removing barriers
- Identifying & removing biases
- Serving as a resource for underrepresented groups
- Showcasing the need & results of our work

Populations:

- Those requiring physical accommodations
- Those requiring mental accommodations
- Immigrant populations
- LGBTQIA+ community

A suggestion was made to include someone under the age of 18 to provide for a more diverse group.

Mr. Castro provided information regarding his personal experience with biases when dealing with the City and schools.

Ms. Newman felt it would be a good idea to get out in the community and start collecting stories from community members as a way to identify what issues exist. Ms. Stricker said collecting stories can help show a need for their work. Some people do not understand why equity & inclusion needs to exist at this time and by having these stories/information available, it can help them see these issues are actually happening here.

Ms. Stricker said they will pick a bucket item and identify the 4-5 action items for the year. Each bucket will have a leader and a support group. The leader will help determine how to collect the stories. She noted the groups and leaders will be selected at the next meeting.

Ms. Macaione expressed concern over a school board issue regarding a change to the grade school levels and its impact on the free and reduced lunch program. She asked if there would be anything the Commission could do as far as equity and inclusion. Ms. Stricker said they could write a letter stating the Commission's position with the understanding that they cannot take any action since they do not have any influence there. Ms. McGuire made it clear that it would not be the City, by way of the City Council, taking a position on this.

6. Public Comment

None

7. Adjourn

Motion by Macaione, second by Kruse to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 pm.

Voice Vote: Ayes: Sanders, Anderson, Castro, Kruse, Macaione, Newman, Johnson. Nays: None. Absent: None. Nichol did not vote as chair. **Motion Carried.**

:CS