

**Equity Committee Tuesday, August 10, 2021 – 7:00 PM
Special Videoconference Meeting via Zoom**

1. Call to Order — 7:00 pm

2. Roll Call –

Committee members: Ali Aalaei, Kim Marinucci (Acker), Patt Baenen, Johnathan Clark (joined at 7:26), Judith Murphy, Lucy Neely, Andrew Pierce, Gwendolyn Stritter

Council Liaisons: Maryann Derwin and John Richards

Members of the Public: Kristi Corley, Betsy Morganthaler

3. Oral Communications — None

4. Approve Meeting Minutes for July 13, 2021 — J Murphy mentions that in new business, part D, things not requiring committee action could be mentioned in oral communications. Also notes that convention is to use last names for minutes.

5. Old Business

a. Building an effective committee team:

i. How do I want to feel as a member of this team?

Marinucci: That opinion is respected and valued. That we respect other people whose opinions are different than ours. There is patience for the things that I am learning and not yet skilled in.

Murphy: I would like to feel respected and listened to. Feel understood to have a tendency to be pragmatic and practical. Want to keep the process moving along.

Baenen: Being listened to. Respecting everyone. Keeping our eyes on the prize, feeling like we're accomplishing things.

Pierce: Prefers pragmatic approach. What can we do in the real world? Wants to feel like we got something done.

Aalaei: Respected. Like there is a civil discourse within the committee.

Neely: Safe. Heard. Challenged.

Stritter: like people are really good listeners, trying to understand where other people are coming from. Work together and come to compromises. Would like to not take a huge amount of time to navigate issues of interpersonal.

Richards: Committee is a microcosm of how we deal with each other. Good to acknowledge the challenge so as to be able to focus on reality.

Derwin: would like to see us be able to work successfully through conflict. This is tough work/uncharted territory.

Morganthaler: Safety and building of container is important. Go slow is the way to build the trust to have the challenging conversations.

Corley: feeling safe and having trust. How to educate residents and make everyone feel important and listened to.

ii. What are some ground rules we'd like to see for working together?

Marinucci: asks group to share individually what they think would be helpful ground rules for the group working together.

Murphy: wants to feel challenged. Holding one another's feet to the fire. Here we have a mandate from the council to accomplish things, shouldn't spend too much time on how we feel about something.

Marinnucci: how do we want to deal with disagreement and conflict?

(Johnathan Clark joins at 7:26)

Stritter: if somebody feels like they are disrespected, they have to speak up. Provide a safe place for people to be able to speak up.

Marinnucci: suggests maybe having a signal. For example when someone says 'I'm uncomfortable'.

Clark: we're not going to be able to prevent all forms of disagreement, just like we won't be able to cover all forms of equity. Clarifies that he is not interested in being the only voice of color.

Pierce: try to avoid ad hominem arguments. Don't talk about other people by name (unless there is a super good reason). Important to listen -- people don't like to be mischaracterized. Nobody likes to be caricaturized. Careful in quoting or attributing things to other people.

Marinnucci: sounds like 'check understanding'

Baenen: don't interrupt people, but be able to cut people off respectfully. Need to be aware of time.

Neely: Had an uncomfortable experience via email. Prefer to do challenging communication in person. To step away from email when anyone is upset.

Aalaei: certain level of professionalism that should be part of the group. Going to have people that are not professionals, don't want to have barriers to entry.

Marinnucci: would like to see people give feedback when we feel like there isn't respect. If there is interpersonal disagreement, come off zoom/email to at least phone or in person.

Aalaei: notes that context of disagreements is important.

Marinnucci: reiterates agreement about stepping away from electronic communication when there is conflict.

iii. Special meeting: In-person, outside comfort

Marinnucci: would group be open to meeting in person, outside, as a special meeting to get to know each other outside of the zoom box?

Takes survey of group. Group is supportive. Would need to be agenda-ized as a meeting.

iv. Length of monthly meeting

Marinnucci: how long do we want meetings to be?

Group agrees 1.5-2 hr max (except in circumstances where there is particularly engaging topic) and that over two hours is too long.

b. Charter v.1.5:

Marinnucci: thanks the subcommittee for their work. Suggests that if the committee thinks the charter needs more work, then another small group can struggle with it, a subcommittee with different members.

Murphy: expresses concern that this would be invalidating for existing subcommittee's work. (Each committee member asked to share their perspective on charter draft)

Pierce: Thinks the background part needs some work, maybe fact checking.

Stritter: Likes the background section. Thinks overall it's fine. Thanks subcommittee

Murphy: Would take background out. Otherwise charter is 95% there.

Baenen: would take background out

Clark: would take out background.

Neely: likes background concept and addition in general, and would improve it. Would generally like to improve language after all.

Aalaei: is okay with the whole thing, would take out the background statement

Marinnucci: would like to wrestle more with the document. Likes the background but would like to reword it. Wonders if there is another idea missing in the mission statement: holding

space for difficult conversations. Vision feels to polyanna but that can be fixed in the language. Likes the part about visitor and resident. Reports a conversation with Cara Silver where they discussed the possibility of EC not being a Brown Act Committee; would be able to advise Town Manager as opposed to Town Council.

Clark: the mission mentions 'race and equity', the vision mentions all kinds of equity, and background only mentions race. Maybe we want to add more diversity in background?

Morganthaler: 'educate' and 'inform' sound arrogant and at odds with the values we were describing previously.

Marinucci: asks if anyone from the subcommittee could present the current slide shown in the slideshow?

Murphy: the subcommittee synthesized feedback from last meeting. Lucy had a lot of opinions and words about how the work was being done and about the charter itself, much of which was included in this draft.

Pierce: would prefer to be Equity in an inclusive way vs racial equity

Clark: what brought us here is racial justice. I would prefer to work on racial justice

Corley: would encourage committee to stick with the Brown Act. Curious about how will we include equity in elections and committee appointments? Is that in the current charter?

Neely: important for us to figure out whether we are a committee focused on Equity inclusively or Race and Equity specifically.

Murphy: important that we stay a Brown Act committee. Notes that elections and committee are included in charter. Makes a motion to approve the charter as is except the Background statement.

Neely: discusses the motion, says the document is better considered as a whole and it feels like forcing it to approve just part.

Baenen: agrees with Lucy.

Murphy: withdraws motion.

6. New Business

a. PV Live Revive/Town Picnic

Marinucci: Town is having town picnic again on October 9, Equity Committee may have a table. Is there interest in having a table at the event?

Group is supportive of having a table at PVLive on October 9.

b. Budget development and decision making

Marinucci: we could talk about this during our special in person meeting. Judy suggests deferring til next formal meeting.

c. Form Subcommittee to review Town's laws and bylaws for inequities

Stritter: volunteers and would like to have legal support. Andrew is happy to be on the subcommittee. Gwen volunteers Andrew as leader and Andrew says to expect emails.

Murphy volunteers to lead subcommittee on budget. Aalaei joins.

Neely: asks about special in person meeting. Kim says there is a possibility of outside facilitation and stay tuned, possibly occurring before the meeting one month from now.

Meeting adjourned 8:56