

MINUTES OF THE MISSION FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

July 1, 2020

The Mission Finance & Administration Committee met virtually via ZOOM on Wednesday, July 1, 2020. The following committee members were present: Hillary Thomas, Trent Boultinghouse, Arcie Rothrock, Nick Schlossmacher, Debbie Kring, Kristin Inman, Sollie Flora and Ken Davis. Mayor Appletoft was also in attendance. Councilmember Kring called the meeting to order at 8:30 pm.

The following staff were present: City Administrator Laura Smith, Assistant City Administrator Brian Scott, City Clerk Audrey McClanahan, Assistant to the City Administrator Emily Randel, Public Works Director Celia Duran, Public Works Superintendent Brent Morton, Parks & Recreation Director Penn Almoney and Police Chief Ben Hadley.

Public Comments

Councilmember Kring explained that this meeting is being held virtually via Zoom and participants can make a comment through the chat feature.

There were no public comments.

Presentation from Mainstream Coalition on Voter to Voter Initiative

Mr. Michael Poppa, Executive Director from Mainstream Coalition, presented on the Voter to Voter initiative. The Coalition is a non-profit, non-partisan, group which aims to inform, engage and connect Kansas through voter education and turnouts. They are launching a Northeast Johnson County challenge called City to City which includes Mission, Roeland Park, Prairie Village and Westwood. Mr. Poppa explained that the problem is voter turnout is inconsistent and nearly fifty-percent of registered Kansas voters don't vote at all or don't vote regularly. While measures such as yard signs and mailers help, they do not motivate nonvoters. Also, due to COVID-19, door to door voter engagement is not easily implemented. The issue of voters not being active reflects in the electorate not accurately representing people causing policy decisions to be made without their input. Alternatively, people who vote are more likely to have positive health outcomes, be civically engaged, interact with their neighbors and volunteer in their community.

Mr. Poppa explained that through this initiative, they encourage people to form teams composed of volunteer ambassadors who each agree to make sure five to ten people vote. The teams can include already formed groups, such as book clubs or City Councils, with the ambassadors choosing which friends or family members to talk with about voting. They do not collect personal data on these voters or contact them. They have worked to build a voter to voter online tool which helps teams and ambassadors identify people they know who would benefit from these discussions incorporating public data, real-time results and concrete tasks. Other options to help

ambassadors be successful is staff support, accomplished through regular communication, online training, forums, social media graphics, scripts and printable handouts for reference. While COVID-19 has made vote-by-mail more relevant, many voters might feel uneasy about navigating the process, making this Initiative an important tool to support voters in understanding the procedures. On KSballot.org, voters can learn more about the candidates' positions, find social media links and election day polling locations, as well as create a sample ballot, make a plan to vote and sign up for reminders.

Councilmember Schlossmacher thanked Mr. Poppa for the presentation and asked about what type of engagement will be utilized for the local election cycles. Mr. Poppa explained that with the proposed tool they have seen successful voter increased participation and they hope that will continue to be the trend. Also, they hope to use the momentum from the Presidential election to encourage people to carry on voting on all levels of government.

Councilmember Boultinghouse thanked Mr. Poppa for the presentation and asked if the point system would mean the City would only get credit for the people in Mission. Mr. Poppa replied that that is correct and they want to keep the program city specific. Councilmember Boultinghouse commented that after the previously approved Voter Initiative Resolution, which encourages creativity in engaging voters to help expand access, that he would like to see the City explore this option with the Mainstream Coalition.

Councilmember Kring questioned what the City's next step should be with the Mainstream Coalition. Mr. Poppa explained that the City would first decide if they want to participate then in the third week in July there will be a team lead training with the following week as the City to City webinar kickoff. Councilmember Kring asked who would be the representatives for the Community, i.e. staff, Council, etc. Mr. Poppa replied that the City of Mission will include the Governing Body as the main team with the Mayor or appointed lead being the team leader. Then each of the Governing Body members would get five to ten people involved in voting.

Councilmember Rothrock recommended continuing to pursue the Voter to Voter Initiative, from the Mainstream Coalition.

Acceptance of the June 3, 2020
Finance and Administration Committee Minutes

Minutes of the June 3, 2020 Finance and Administration Committee Meetings were provided to the committee. There being no objections or corrections, the minutes were accepted as presented.

Surplus Property Resolution

Mr. Scott reported on the Resolution providing for the sale/disposal of surplus equipment from various Departments. City Council Policy No. 111 defines the process and procedure for the sale and disposal of real and personal property by the City of Mission, which is also outlined in

K.S.A. 12-101. Each Department, in consultation with the Finance Director, will be responsible for determining the best method for disposal in accordance with Council Policy and State law. The City will be declaring twenty-five (25) cloth covered chairs located in the lobby of City Hall as surplus. These chairs, which are nearly fifteen years old, are stained and difficult to keep clean which presents a particular concern in the COVID-19 environment. In addition, the size of the chairs makes it difficult to achieve appropriate social distancing requirements for seating as we begin to resume municipal court sessions in person. For now, extra chairs from the Council Chambers will be placed in the lobby and separated out to ensure social distancing can be maintained.

Councilmember Davis recommended the Resolution providing for the sale/disposal of surplus equipment from various Departments be forward to Council for approval. All on the Committee agreed, this will be on the consent agenda.

Racial Equity and Social Justice Council and Community Conversations

Ms. Smith reported that two weeks prior there had been a spirited discussion and debate regarding a Resolution on racial justice, equity and inclusion. Although the Resolution wasn't adopted at that meeting, she believes there is much more common ground around the substance of these crucial issues than what may have been presented. As such, it is important to try and reframe this conversation because of the relationships that are impacted among Council members, City employees and the entire community. Ms. Smith and the Mayor reflected on the past month's conversations as well as the action steps discussed internally and realized there could have been more proactive communication with this information to the entire Governing Body so as to avoid some of the concerns which were expressed..

As reflected in the public statement issued by Mayor Appletoft and Chief Hadley in the days following the death of George Floyd, this incident served as:

“a painful reminder that fighting against racial inequity and social injustice in our communities must continually be a high priority. As local government leaders and public safety professionals, we have a responsibility to the people in our city, not only to keep them safe, but also to keep the lines of communication open so that concerns and issues can be addressed in ways where all voices are heard and understood.”

The statement sought to acknowledge for residents and employees that there is an obligation to engage in this conversation and that the City is committed to doing so. However, recognizing the need to have the conversation was never intended to be a condemnation of or attack on the Mission Police Department. Rather, it is through these conversations that the City has the opportunity to educate ourselves and understand areas for improvement – it is a matter of accountability that we owe to ourselves and our community.

Through conversations with Council, their commitment to action on the substance of these issues is evident. Using the goals and objectives outlined in Councilmember Flora and Councilmember Thomas' Resolution, Ms. Smith presented a proposed action plan that is intended to preserve the values surrounding these issues, and the details of the proposed action plan were outlined as followed. The following details the next steps in the proposed action plan:

1. Create an opportunity for the entire Governing Body to join with the Mayor and the Chief in condemning both the actions - and inaction - of the Minneapolis police officers which resulted in the unnecessary death of George Floyd. Staff recommends that this opportunity be accomplished through a statement either adopted by the Governing Body as a whole with a formal vote, or simply made available for members of the Governing Body to sign at their individual discretion. A first draft of a statement is included below:

The recent protests and outcry in response to the senseless and unnecessary murder of George Floyd have highlighted the ongoing need for dialogue and action surrounding issues of race and inequity in our communities. We sadly must acknowledge that systemic racism remains an entrenched problem across the United States, including, but by no means limited to, in policing. As local elected leaders, it is incumbent upon us to stand with those demanding accountability, equity and respect, and to recognize the humanity and dignity of every person. As such, we state unequivocally that Black Lives Matter. We as Councilmembers join Mayor Appletoft and Chief Hadley in condemning the unjustified murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police, and further condemn all acts of racial profiling, use of excessive force, and any other means of racial violence, wherever and whenever they occur.

2. Initiate a Council conversation in August 2020 to enable better understanding of the current policies/practices and experiences of the Mission Police Department by Council and to provide greater visibility on these topics to the public.

On August 26, the Council will review and discuss Department policies related to use of force, transparency (e.g., right to film), racial profiling, duty to intervene, de-escalation, and others that have generated questions in recent weeks. At this meeting, we will also take the opportunity to share specific data on the Department's use of force, complaints received (including investigation process), and demographic statistics reflective of Department activity over the last ten (10 years). As part of this conversation, we will determine how the data and statistics will be reported to the Council and the public going forward with respect to frequency and format.

3. Outline for review by Council in September 2020, the existing processes, systems and structures which exist within the City, the County and the State to promote accountability and transparency in law enforcement and make information relating to the same more readily available to the public.

At the September 2nd Finance & Administration Committee meeting, Council and staff will review and discuss both the hiring processes and the training requirements for Mission's Police Officers. We will also review and discuss the various processes/systems designed to hold officers accountable, and to provide a mechanism for "flagging" officers who exhibit poor judgment in exercising their duties. Independent oversight and review boards are part of the larger conversation occurring around the subject of accountability. During the September meeting, we will present information on how other communities in the metro area are using this approach.

4. Be more effective as a city in engaging BIPOC in our community in conversations surrounding racial equity and social justice so as to build relationships and sustain dialogue into the future. Beginning with an October 2020 community forum with the purpose to open a dialogue surrounding attitudes and opinions concerning racial (in)equity issues in Mission as it relates to law enforcement, housing, education, access to services or other issues or concerns. The goal of the forum would be to listen to understand and to build relationships of trust with communities of color and other minority communities in our City.
5. Implement on-going training and education for our elected officials and all employees related to implicit bias, race and inequity as soon as possible, but no later than 1Q 2021.

Councilmember Davis asked for clarification on what BIPOC represents. Ms. Smith replied it is the acronym for 'Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.'

Councilmember Kring asked and it was confirmed that this information will be displayed on the City's website to educate the public on the action plan and timeline.

Mayor Appletoft reiterated Ms. Smith's comments regarding the previous debate on this issue, stating that while there might be divergent views, the Council is still heading in the same direction with the plan and the need to address these important conversations. He stated that the plan is positive in that it is comprehensive and outlines a philosophy for the organization that will help achieve the objectives. Councilmember Kring agreed, adding this is a great way to address this issue in an action oriented manner.

Councilmember Flora apologized to Councilmember Rothrock for not communicating with her during the drafting of the previous Resolution, adding that she values her perspective on any

issue. She stated she hopes everyone can move forward together on this conversation and reach an understanding about the accountability for the organization and that this is not meant to be an attack on the Police Department but a start of needed discussions. Councilmember Rockrock thanked Councilmember Flora and commented she is excited to go forward, agreeing that the plan is very comprehensive and would like to see these actions highlighted and presented to the public in order to raise awareness and recognition.

Councilmember Boultinghouse said he spoke with leaders of color locally and across the State and they are excited to see the City advance in these conversations, adding he is proud of the work that has been put into these developments and looks forward to making progress.

Chief Hadley commented that the Police Department serves the community and that they are excited to have these conversations and educate not only people in the community but also the surrounding cities as well as discuss areas for potential improvements. He added that the Council, Mayor and Ms. Smith have done a wonderful job compiling this information together and that he is appreciative of this action item going forward.

Councilmember Flora thanked Chief Hadley and appreciates his support with the action plan and believes that a statement, from the Council, would be beneficial and positive for the community. She recommended moving the statement forward as an item on behalf of the whole governing body. Councilmember Davis supported Councilmember Flora's statement suggestion and thanked everyone for their hard work and believes they should have pride in the fact that this is the beginning step in increasing sensitivity and self-awareness in relation to the community. Councilmember Rothrock agreed with the Council statement and wants to make sure that when the Council community forum is held that there are available opportunities to include and hear participants that may be uncomfortable speaking or sending in their comments. Councilmembers agreed on the drafted proposed statement for the whole governing body.

Councilmember Thomas thanked Ms. Smith for her work and ability to help everyone find common ground, reminding the group that there is more that unites than divides, adding she is grateful for this process.

Councilmember Flora recommended the statement adopted by the Governing Body and the review and discussion advancing the plan of action for education, review and action surrounding issues of racial justice, equity and inclusion be forward to Council for approval. All on the Committee agreed, this will be on the non-consent agenda.

Discussion Items

Discussion on Mandatory Mask Ordinance

Ms. Smith reported that there have been several members of the Community asking about the Council passing a mandatory mask ordinance. However, Governor Kelly will be issuing an executive order that will mandate the usage of masks statewide. The executive order will also be discussed by the Johnson County Board of Commissioners in a special meeting. This is continuing to evolve and the City's Incident Command Team will evaluate all incoming information and provide Council with an update on the situation and possible impacts for Mission specifically. There is the potential for the County to modify the executive order to be more or less restrictive. There also has not been a mask enforcement plan finalized, but the County has discussed creating a hotline to register complaints or violations.

Councilmember Davis commented that it might be better to work with Mission businesses with the knowledge that this is the expectation and that compliance and enforcement is incumbent upon the businesses. If there are issues then the police can be asked to intervene as necessary. There are many businesses that are not encouraging/requiring masks and that might be something the City addresses could consider addressing in terms of business licensing.

Councilmember Kring asked what the penalty would be if there was a violation. Chief Hadley replied that there is not a clear directive on enforcement yet, however, there is the possibility of the County hotline. The City has not had many issues with whether a business should remain open, in certain circumstances it was addressed with education and no citation. He added that a private business who encounters someone unwilling to wear a mask after being advised of the executive order does have the right to call police. If a person isn't willing to comply then this could become a trespassing issue. There will be more information after the order is released and the County meeting.

Councilmember Thomas asked if the Council wanted to consider a City mandatory mask ordinance if Johnson County decides not to participate in the Governor's executive order. Councilmember Flora commented that the Council needs to be prepared if the County doesn't support the executive order partially or in its entirety, adding that they should consider a mandatory mask ordinance for the City and coordinate with the surrounding areas.

Councilmember Schlossmacher supports drafting procedures and expectations for City facilities but doesn't support forcing Mission businesses to require this stipulation. Councilmember Inman agreed.

Councilmember Boultinghouse asked that staff coordinate with the NE Johnson County Chamber of Commerce for input if there was a document drafted that was City specific. He would like this ordinance to be consistent with other surrounding Cities' ordinances to help with

enforcement. From a public health perspective and for the safety of everyone he believes this is a very important issue to address.

Mayor Appletoft asked what options the City has if the County decides not to follow the executive order. Ms. Smith replied that we would have to evaluate if we still had the ability to follow/enforce the State order and what options the City could utilize going forward. A possible special meeting was decided for Monday, July 6, to discuss the mandatory mask requirements after the executive order issuance and Johnson County Board of Commissioners' meeting.

Councilmember Rothrock commented that with future discussion she hopes Chief Hadley or the command staff has the opportunity to provide details about resource availability and daily operational impacts.

OTHER

Department Updates

There were no departmental updates.

Meeting Close

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee adjourned at 9:31p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Audrey M. McClanahan
City Clerk