

**DRAFT MINUTES
ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
Tuesday, January 19, 2021**

Held Electronically; View on Channel 9 or Channels 180 and 181 (Charter Communications) or live stream via rvtv.sou.edu select RVTV Prime.

Written and oral testimony will be accepted for public input. For written testimony, email public-testimony@ashland.or.us using the subject line: January 19 Business Meeting Testimony.

For oral testimony, fill out a Speaker Request Form at ashland.or.us/speakerrequest and return it to the City Recorder. The deadline for submitting written testimony or speaker request forms will be on Tuesday, January 19 (due to Monday being a holiday) at 10 a.m. and must comply with Council Rules to be accepted.

Note: Items on the Agenda not considered due to time constraints are automatically continued to the next regularly scheduled Council meeting [AMC 2.04.030.E.]

5:30 PM EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council will hold an Executive Session before the regular business meeting to conduct deliberations with persons designated to negotiate real property transactions and to consult with the City attorney regarding legal rights and duties in regard to current litigation or litigation that is more likely than not to be filed; pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(e) and ORS 192.660(2)(h), respectively.

The Executive Session was called to order at 5:30 PM.

The Executive Session was adjourned at 5:55 PM.

6:00 PM REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Akins called the Business Meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Councilors' Hyatt, Graham, Moran, Seffinger, DuQuenne and Jensen were present.

IV. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Belinda Brown and Tonia Red Eagle Gonzales spoke regarding land acknowledgment.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Study Session of January 4, 2021
2. Business Meeting of January 5, 2021

Hyatt spoke to add the minutes that the Food and Beverage item be stated “will be on a future Council Meeting.”

Hyatt/DuQuenne moved to approve the minutes with the amendment. Discussion:

DuQuenne spoke that she would like to see the Food and Beverage Item on the February 2nd Agenda. **All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.**

VI. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS & AWARDS

1. State of the City Celebration

Mayor Akins presented Council with the State of the City (*see attached*).

2. James M. Ragland “Volunteer Spirit” and Alan C. Bates Public Service Award Announcements

Graham presented Paul Collins with the award. Collins spoke in honor to receive this award. He spoke that more information can be found at: ashlandcert.org.

Seffinger and Rich Rosenthal presented John Stromberg with the Alan C. Bates award.

3. 2020 Year in Review

Mayor Akins gave presented Council with an overview.

VII. MINUTES OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

[Airport](#)

[Budget](#)

[Conservation](#)

[Historic](#)

[Housing and Human Svcs.](#)

[Parks & Recreation](#)

[Forest Lands](#)

[Climate Policy](#)

[Cost Review](#)

[Planning](#)

[Public Arts](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Tree](#)

[Wildfire Mitigation](#)

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM

Business from the audience not included on the agenda. The Mayor will set time limits to enable all people wishing to speak to complete their testimony. [15 minutes maximum]

See note above for how to submit testimony for Public Forum.

See attached submissions

Patrick Bovine spoke regarding a traffic ticket (*see attached*).

Emily Simon spoke regarding Racial Justice and Social Equity.

IX. CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Pro Tem Adam Hanks gave the City Manager report (*see attached*).

X. CONSENT AGENDA

Moran/Graham moved to approve items 1 & 6. Discussion: None. Motion passed

unanimously.

1. Extension of COVID-19 Emergency Declaration
2. Approval of a Construction Contract with Insituform Technologies, for the Wastewater Collection Rehabilitation

Moran pulled this item. Moran questioned what items go on the Consent Agenda. He spoke regarding the importance of transparency. He questioned cost escalation.

Public Works Director Scott Fleury gave a staff report.

Hyatt/Moran moved to approve Item #2. Discussion: None. All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of a Contract Specific Sole Source Procurement of Electric Meters

Moran pulled this item. Moran questioned if there are ways to get the cost down. Hanks explained the bidding process. Director of Electric explained the technology of this item.

Jensen/Hyatt moved to approve Item #3. Discussion: None. All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Letter of Intent to Explore an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Talent Supply with Police Services

Graham pulled this item. Police Chief Tighe O'Meara gave a Staff report.

Graham/DuQuenne moved to approve Item #4. Discussion: None. All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Council Liaison Appointments

Jensen pulled this item. Council discussed that that there needs to be more discussion on this item.

Jensen/Graham moved to bring this item back to a future Council Meeting. Discussion: None. All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Approval of Liquor License for Beaux, LLC.

XI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Persons wishing to speak are to submit a "speaker request form" prior to the commencement of the public hearing. Public hearings conclude at 8:00 p.m. and are continued to a future date to be set by the Council, unless the Council, by a two-thirds vote of those present, extends the hearing(s) until up to 9:30 p.m. at which time the Council shall set a date for continuance and shall proceed with the balance of the agenda.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. City Manager Recruitment Process and Job Description Discussion

Human Resources Director gave a Staff report. Council discussed all options and cost.

Council discussed the timeline of this process.

Seffinger/Graham moved to direct staff to move forward with the City Manager recruitment utilizing option 1; a full scope recruitment with the support of a professional

recruitment firm. Discussion: Council discussed the importance of transparency. Roll Call Vote: Graham, DuQuenne, Jensen, Seffinger, Hyatt and Moran: YES. Motion passed unanimously.

XIII. NEW AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

1. Update on Homeless Services Programs, Funding, and Opportunities

Public Input:

Joseph Gibson – Ashland – Spoke regarding homeless issues. He spoke regarding options and suggested camp grounds.

Community Development Director Bill Molnar gave a brief Staff report.

Housing Program Specialist Linda Reid discussed housing needs and gave an update on the work that the City has been doing.

Council discussed shelter location options.

Council discussed funding options.

Council discussed urban campground options.

Council directed Staff to bring more information regarding grant options and location options to a future Council Meeting.

XIV. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND CONTRACTS

1. Update to Resolution 2020-15 Declaring the City of Ashland's Commitment to Social Equity and Racial Justice

Hanks gave a brief Staff report.

Graham went over the Resolution (*see attached*).

Graham/Seffinger moved to repeal Resolution 2020-15 and approve 2021-02. Discussion: None. Roll Call Vote: Graham, Seffinger, Jensen, Moran, Hyatt and DuQuenne: YES. Motion passed unanimously.

XV. OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS/REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISONS

XVI. ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING

The Business Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

City Recorder Melissa Huhtala

Attest:

Mayor Akins

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Manager's office at (541) 488-6002 (TTY phone number 1-800-735-2900). Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

Good evening.

The state of the city of ashland--how does one fully speak to it? Ashland is a place unified by its love. Our mountains and streams, our architecture and engagement, our parks and people.

But, we are also divided by our separate and real experiences of life--here in Ashland, the Rogue Valley, Oregon and the nation.

We have been through a period of great stress, some might say trauma. We've lost people we've loved to a pandemic which we've been largely left on our own to figure out, this has created a rip in our fabric. People have lost jobs, businesses have died while others barely hang on. Homeowners and renters have worried if they can keep the basic need for a door that locks and roof to keep the rain away. We have not been able to gather, to hug, to enjoy the sunshine of each other's smiles. Live music, a play, a glass of our outstanding wine--none of this have we had to comfort ourselves.

It's been so hard.

Now add to it a fire which ripped through our valley and decimated our neighbors to the north. I cannot drive down highway 99 past the homes lost without a tear pooling in my eyes. I think of the book store in Talent and the times I took my granddaughter there, how its gentle owner handed her a book, "Keep it. Enjoy" he said, never knowing he would months later lose everything. I, too, have friends who barely escaped with their lives and who still try to understand the depth of their grief--our shared grief--at such loss.

And then January 6th. An attempted violent overthrow of our nation. Our elected leaders on the floor desperately fearing they might die as an angry mob broke through the doors of the People's House, disrespectfully battering our democracy--the same democracy for which many of our friends and families sacrificed. I think of my own father and uncles, cousins and brothers and now my daughter who proudly wear the uniform. I am reminded of going to the city council with that same dad who told me that it doesn't matter how much money you have or status in this country--you have the right to redress and to speak truth to your elected representatives. He was so proud of this fact he would every now and then practice his testimony with me. I am sorry he is not here to see this tonight but also relieved he did not have to see what happened on January 6th. His heart would have broken beyond repair. Sometimes I think my heart will never heal too.

But that's what I'm here, really to say as we ponder the State of our City. We are in need of healing, of the comfort of each other, of knowing that despite our differences we are not defined by that. We are instead defined by something else---a one word mantra:

Hope.

We will address our economy, our housing, our need for living wage jobs, our businesses who need our help and climate change.

Hope as steady as the need we share to deliberate together about how to best combat the steady march of climate change. Many who are here, joining me on this council and in this community have devoted their work and their knowledge to this cause and we will not fail to listen. We are lucky to be so graced. Let us not forget. Climate change and yes the risk of fire weigh heavy upon us and we are engaged in the serious work of preparation. We will be hearing your voices in February about this. We will be seeking best practices and employing them. We will support our firefighters and police in this effort of keeping our town and its residents informed and safe.

We share hope too in supporting our businesses who have gone all in to stick it out through this hard time so that when one great day when we are able to be together again they can do what they do best. These businesses are also what make Ashland what it is and we will stand by them, assist them, listen to them.

We hope, too, to be the kind of town where our university students graduate and stay. We will work for living wage jobs and the kind of housing where a family starting out can afford to be here. Taking care of the planet and taking care of each other are intertwined. We want our walkable streets to be used for working people on their way to their jobs rather than commuting from towns which require a car.

To do this we must build affordable housing.

We will support our builders and collaborators in creating housing that is dignified and affordable for everyone.

And, we will bring in those people who are Ashlanders through and through who need to come in from the cold. There is no reason why we cannot house the unhoused. No one benefits from the continued trauma of homelessness. We will bring hope where there was once fear.

In this hope we will reach out to living wage employers and support those who are already here. I think of Organic Alcohol who switched production to care for people in the pandemic shipping hundreds of gallons of hand sanitizer around the nation--with special care toward those with fewer resources. That's but one of many Ashland employers hiring people at living wages while giving back. There are more and they need us to stand behind them as they've stood behind us.

Next year when I speak to you about the State of the City, I will report back on how we're doing . It will move from hope to reality with your help. Yes, I am setting an aspiration based on the many hours over the years you and I have spoken together, but it is more than a dream or a vision--it is about achievable goals.

And remember this is not me. And it never will be, it is US together effecting the change we want to see in our town.

Bring your engagement, your skills, your voice. Hold us accountable to uphold this hope. This is your city and tonight we gladly serve at your will and upon your wishes.

Thank you for bestowing upon us your trust. Hold fast to your faith. We've made it through some dark days but soon we will be standing together smiling on a sunny day in our Ashland watching our children and grandchildren playing in the creek and being glad we kept our love alive even when we weren't sure how.

Public Testimony #1

It is winter. It is cold outside. It is usually rainy and wet during this time of year. Houseless people need shelter and at this time of year especially this is an emergency that requires the council to take immediate action. We need long-term solutions and we need to continue working on long-term permanent solutions. But this is also an emergency situation that requires emergency action immediately.

The City has an obligation to make sure that houseless people have shelter and have a place to sleep comfortably. This obligation must be fulfilled immediately.

Proposals have been made and they need to be acted on immediately. One such proposal is to use the Hagardine Garage. I cannot think of a single reason for Council to not approve this immediately.

And I also urge Council to speed-up other actions to meet this need in our community.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Ben-Baruch

Public Testimony #2

Although this subject is fraught with complications (funding, volunteers and shelter buildings) I believe that this issue needs attention as soon as possible. I believe I represent many in Ashland who feel that emergency shelters should be open when the thermometer reads 35 degrees. Eric Navickas' recommendations for enacting a luxury tax on homes over 2,500 square feet to fund homeless services should be considered. Citations for camping should never involve a financial citation. If campers have nowhere to sleep, they obviously don't have money and to have this on their record is really a punitive action. I know Covid 19 really complicates everything. However, if we have one death due to exposure, that will be one too many. Sleeping is a human need. In naiveté,

Wendy Eppinger

Public Testimony #3

Attached please find the request to speak at the council meeting on January 19, 2021. I would greatly appreciate an acknowledgment that this form has been received in a timely fashion and that I will be able to speak. I would also appreciate this email being made part of the public record in support of my testimony.

On behalf of lawyers for justice, On this day after Martin Luther King day, I would like to be heard on issues relating to racial equity, and The council's efforts to address the systemic racism that exists in Ashland. I see that the agenda includes an update to resolution 2020-15 declaring the city of Ashland's commitment to social equity and racial justice. At Council's meeting on December 15, 2020 In addressing Our racial issues in the context of Aidan Ellison's murder, I requested that as Resolution 2020-15 had a regularly reoccurring date on the agenda, and that the citizens of Ashland needed to hear from the City Council as to what the City was doing on an ongoing basis to specifically address Aidan's murder and the systemic racism that fostered it, that this issue be appended to the existing resolution to assure that it was addressed by the new council as quickly in the new year as possible.

This concern seemed to be addressed when at the last meeting, The Council unanimously passed an ordinance authorizing the racial and social equity commission. I am Hopeful that an update on the status of the commission will soon be on the agenda.

At this point, I am not sure if the Resolution and the commission will be considered separately by council, or merged into one agenda item. The important thing is that the racial issues in Ashland are addressed in a cohesive, and meaningful way.

As indicated above, it does not matter to me, what the procedural mechanism is by which this issue is raised, be it a commission or a resolution, as long as this issue does not go away. The citizens of Ashland need to hear from the city Council on a regular and periodic basis the results and progress of this community's deeply needed work and reparations on racial issues.

I am glad to testify during either the public forum or the discussion regarding the resolution which ever you feel is more appropriate

Thank you again for considering my testimony and please do not hesitate to contact me at the phone number below if there are any aspects of these issues that you would like to discuss in advance of the meeting.

I broke my right wrist, so this email was dictated. Therefore, please forgive any errors.

Emily Simon

Public Testimony #4

Southern Oregon Climate Action Now



Confronting Climate Change

To: Ashland City Council
From: SOCAN-Ashland Climate Action Project
Date: January 19, 2021
Re: Requests for Council Action and to Work Together in 2021 for Climate Action Progress

The [Ashland Climate Action Project of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now](#) is a community-based organization of local residents engaged in advocacy, education, and community organizing to support the full and timely implementation of Ashland's Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP) in city operations and in the community at large. As you know, the plan was approved unanimously by the City Council in 2017, and city Ordinance 9.40 states that "Achievement of the Climate Recovery Goals for city Operations...shall be part of the goals for city Operations."

We wish to communicate several items to the City Council. Three items are requests for Council action, and two items are advisory only.

- I. **Council Action Requested: Formally Recognize February 4, 2021, as Transit Equity Day**
Held annually on Rosa Parks' birthday, Transit Equity Day highlights the rights of all people to high-quality public transportation run on clean renewable energy. We urge the City Council to adopt a resolution recognizing Transit Equity Day. Recommended language for the resolution:
 - Whereas:** February 4, 2021, is the fourth annual Transit Equity Day; and
 - Whereas:** Transit Equity Day is celebrated on February 4 because it marks the 108th birthday of Rosa Parks; and
 - Whereas:** Rosa Parks helped to lead a movement to oppose injustice in the Montgomery bus system; and
 - Whereas:** Work continues today to ensure that public transportation is accessible and affordable to all; and
 - Whereas:** Transit Equity Day calls attention to disparities in transit access and air quality; and
 - Whereas:** Transit Equity Day in Ashland is hosted by the Ashland Climate Action Project of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now;**—NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED—** That the Mayor and City Council do hereby recognize February 4, 2021, as Transit Equity Day in the City of Ashland.

II. Council Action Requested: Include climate plan development and implementation as a required qualifications for Ashland City Manager

As we look out to the next decade, scientists and policymakers have advised that climate action work must intensify as we approach critical goals and thresholds that must be attained by 2030 to avert irreversible catastrophic conditions. ([This Union of Concerned Scientists blog from April 2020 explains, in understandable terms, why 2030 targets are so significant.](#)) Ashland's new City Manager will be responsible for providing leadership for a wide range of issues, including reducing our city's greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change, building community resilience, and positioning Ashland to be at the leading edge of economic development spurred on by innovations in climate mitigation and adaptation. It is critically important that we recruit candidates for City Manager who have had significant participation in the development and implementation of climate action plans.

III. Council Action Requested: Take Steps to Ensure Ongoing Engagement of Public Commissions in Climate Action

The CEAP provides important guidance for every sector of our city operations and our community, including every Ashland public commission. We ask the City Council to consider the following recommendations designed to increase the level of awareness of and accountability to the CEAP and the integration of climate action into the work of all Ashland public commissions:

1. **Build Climate Awareness.** Commissions shall fully acquaint themselves with the CEAP, and review of the CEAP shall be incorporated into the orientation process for new commission appointees. Consider developing a standardized orientation presentation for all commissions (and city staff, if appropriate) on the CEAP and how to think about climate impact.
2. **Commit to Action and Accountability.** Review the CEAP to identify the specific strategies of the plan that are relevant to the work of the commission. Determine how the commission can support achievement of these strategies. Incorporate these steps into commission projects, processes, and planning. Incorporate CEAP goals and relevant strategies into the official charter of the commission. Include an update on CEAP efforts, considerations and climate impact in every report of the commission to the city council.
3. **Coordinate and Collaborate.** Create a mechanism for communicating, collaborating, and tracking CEAP-related work of the commissions and others into a common resource that supports this work and that residents can follow. Encourage commissions to report progress and future plans in coordination with the planned Fall 2021 update of the CEAP, which will be guided by the Climate Policy Commission.

IV. FYI Only: Update on our 2021 programs

We welcome the opportunity to work together to advance local climate action. **Here are some specific projects that might be of interest to the Council.**

- **2021 Community Survey.** You may be familiar with our Summer 2020 survey, “Lessons Learned from Recent COVID Restrictions: Imagining the Future of Ashland.” [Here is a link to the final report on our findings](#). We will be conducting another community survey in 2021 in partnership with SOU’s Office of Sustainability, and will be forming an expert panel and sending out an invitation to submit proposed topics and suggestions in the coming weeks. Our goals for this year are to increase community engagement and enhance our survey methodology and its strategic value to Ashland’s climate work.
- **Spotlight in the *Ashland Tidings*.** We now have a biweekly column on local climate action in the *Ashland Tidings* called “Spotlight.” As a sample, check out “[City staff connect the dots on climate action](#),” from January 4, 2021. If you know of people and programs focused on climate that you feel may be newsworthy, or a climate education topic of high importance, please contact us at ACAPSpotlight@gmail.com.
- **Zoom Spotlight Conversations.** In 2021, we are hosting a series of Zoom Conversations to spotlight local climate issues and spark ongoing dialogue and community-based action. Our January program was “Spotlight on Local Food: A Zoom Conversation,” focused on issues and challenges facing local growers and how we can further strengthen our locally grown food network. The recorded program will be available in the coming days. Upcoming Programs:
 - **Thursday, January 28, 7-8:30pm via zoom. “Other Side of the Hill”: Bridging Oregon’s Rural-Urban Divide.** Living in a deeply divided country, we are all feeling the wounds and grief of bitter partisanship. These divisions have led us to fear and dehumanize each other and close off communications. How can we write a new chapter to this story--right here in Oregon? To help us along this journey, we are hosting a repeat screening of “[Other Side of the Hill](#),” a 2020 film spotlighting Eastern Oregon communities that have embraced renewable energy projects, defying stereotypes about climate change attitudes in conservative rural Oregon. Following the 30-minute film, community leaders featured in the film will join us for a discussion facilitated by [Titus Tomlinson, Program Director of the Resource Assistance for Rural Environments \(RARE\) program at the University of Oregon’s Institute for Policy Research and Engagement](#). [Watch the trailer](#), or [click here to register](#).
 - **Thursday February 4, 7-8:30pm via zoom. Transit Equity Day 2021: State of Transit Equity in Oregon and the Rogue Valley.** The program will be moderated by Tonia Moro, Chair of the Rogue Valley Transportation District Board. Panelists include RVTB rider Stacy Matern; Linda Peterson Adams, Chair, City of Ashland Transportation Commission; Sara Wright, Transportation Program Director for Oregon Environmental Council; Paige West, Associate Planner, RVTB; Karyn C. Criswell, ODOT Public Transportation Division Administrator; and Amanda Peitz, Manager, ODOT Climate Office. [Click here to register](#)!

V. FYI Only: Our 2021 strategic plan

- **Goal 1: ADVOCACY.** We will work with the city to increase climate funding and climate action progress in Ashland's 2021-2023 biennial budget, city master plans, updates to the climate plan, and matters coming before the City Council.
- **Goal 2: EDUCATION.** Through Spotlight in the *Ashland Tidings*, Zoom Spotlight Conversations, and a community survey on local climate action and attitudes, we will provide education and information on local climate issues and opportunities for action. When appropriate, we will provide education, information, and advocacy to complement the climate priorities of the city, the Climate Policy Commission, and the Conservation and Climate Outreach Commission, and others.
- **Goal 3: ORGANIZATION.** We will support development of local working groups focused on important local climate issues. We will form an Action Team of those interested in participating in local climate advocacy opportunities.

Please feel free to contact ACAP Chair Lorrie Kaplan at lorrie@socan.eco or 240-676-0040 to discuss how we can best work together to achieve the goals and strategies for city operations, public commissions, and the community at large, as laid out in the Ashland Climate and Energy Action Plan.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continued climate progress in 2021.

#

Social Equity and Racial Justice Resolution

ACTION ITEM TRACKING – UPDATED JANUARY 19, 2021

Section 1.B. Proclaim Juneteenth as an annual day of municipal commemoration and partner with communities of color and other local organizations to celebrate African American/Black culture on this day annually.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Adam Hanks (City Manager Pro Tem), Councilors DuQuenne, Hyatt, and Seffinger (art community)

Updates:

Council revisited this in January of 2021. Councilors are reaching out to organizers in the community to see what is being planned so that the City can determine the best way to support those efforts.

Next Steps:

Councilors to bring back information from community conversations so that the Council can determine the best role for the City

Section 1.C. Advocate at the state and federal levels for policy reform that includes: a searchable database of officers sanctioned for excessive use of force and other misconduct; a national data collection program to determine the number of people killed or injured by police officers tracked by race, gender, age, and other demographic characteristics; limiting the transfer of military equipment to local jurisdictions; providing more extensive training for police officers regarding de-escalation, intrinsic bias, and procedural justice; and assisting people with mental health or addiction issues who have interactions with law enforcement.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Councilor Graham

Updates:

Last fall, Councilor Graham checked in with State Representative Pam Marsh, and district staff for Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley to determine what legislation is coming before those bodies related to this item. All advised that nothing was moving until the next Congress/State Legislature cycle. She reached out and checked again in the new year and was advised that there will be several bills moving forward in the Oregon Legislature and to stay tuned for ways the City of Ashland can support those efforts.

Next Steps:

Councilor Graham will stay up to date with those efforts and bring forward information as it is available.

Section 2.A. Support the Ashland Police Department in taking a more active role in on-campus conversations about racial justice at Southern Oregon University and in developing engagement events to help local residents understand APD's policies regarding use of force and other relevant issues.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Tighe O'Meara (Police Chief)

Updates:

Chief O'Meara has participated in three community forums hosted by BASE (Black Alliance and Social Empowerment)

He has accepted an invitation to meet with SOU students from the BIPOC community – it is being scheduled

Next Steps:

A community town hall will be planned to engage BIPOC and concerned members of the community on how APD policies have been informed by recent events and requests. The annual report to Council on topics including use of force issues is coming up in May.

Section 2.B. Strengthen our cultural competency and intrinsic bias training program for members of the City Council and City Staff.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Tina Gray (Human Resources Director)

Updates:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement has been revised with input from a staff survey

HR is working on training, policies, and new hire orientation

Job descriptions are being updated in hiring processes, policies are being updated with gender-neutral terminology

Next Steps:

Community/City employee survey regarding improving EDI in the City system (survey in Jan/Feb)

Staff is planning a training in the spring (aiming at April) and will invite Council participation in an interactive exercise called "Walk a mile in their shoes." Additional training to educate staff will be provided throughout the year.

Internal City committee is being formed to advance EDI work within the City system

Continue collaborative partnerships within the community and region that focus on EDI

Section 2.J. Review recruiting/hiring practices to address implicit bias with input from leaders of local diversity, equity, and inclusion programs.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Tina Gray (Human Resources Director)

Updates:

HR has implemented a blind application review feature for several recruitments successfully.

HR has removed fields in the application that could reveal irrelevant details about an applicant and/or socioeconomic status to reduce the opportunity for unconscious bias

HR is working to improve our internal promotional processes to ensure they are competitive and fair by utilizing panelists with specific training about implicit bias and implementing transparent scoring.

HR has established pre-requisite training required for anyone serving on an interview panel for the City. The training is available on-line and speaks to the many positives of having a diverse workforce while educating panelists about bias and how it can unconsciously influence hiring decisions.

Section 2.C. Display Black Lives Matter signs at City-owned locations to offer visible and immediate support for racial justice advocates in our community.

Section 2.H. Determine the feasibility of a mural project to provide a mode of artistic expression of our community's commitment to making meaningful, visible, and ongoing progress on issues of social equity and racial justice.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Bill Molnar (Community Development Director), David Lohman (City Attorney), Councilor Jensen

Updates:

Government-sanctioned displays or messages in support of particular public policies or viewpoints are allowed only limited circumstances without also allowing displays or messages in support of other, possibly opposing viewpoints.

Public Arts Commission has expressed support to Council for this project and is ready to help move it forward.

Next Steps: Staff will schedule this item on a future PAC agenda in order get input on how best to proceed, including the identification and consideration of possible mural locations for Council consideration.

Section 2.D. Continue and enhance our support of the annual celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.

Councilors/Staff Assigned:

Updates:

The City of Ashland was a financial supporter of the celebration hosted yesterday by BASE (Black Alliance and Social Empowerment), shared information via our website and social media, and hung the banner across Main Street announcing the online event.

Next Steps:

Maintain this support annually.

Section 2.E. Connect with Southern Oregon University and its students to better understand the experience of all college students, but particularly students of color, in the City of Ashland as a first step toward improving that experience.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Adam Hanks (City Manager Pro Tem), Tina Grey (HR Director)

Updates:

City Administrator meets with SOU President monthly through the Ashland Coalition and will engage President Schott on this concept in upcoming meetings and provide additional information as available.

HR is participating on a Committee with SOU, but COVID-19 impacted activities on that commission. When meetings resume, staff will continue to hold a seat and represent the City of Ashland on the Committee and report progress back to the Council.

Next Steps:

Staff to report back on SOU's social equity and racial justice survey, engagement with President Schott, and the SOU Committee's work

Section 2.F. Work with community partners to develop training, incident response, and community acknowledgement programs that help residents and business owners address the long-term, systemic root causes of inequality and racial injustice and celebrate progress.

Councilors/Staff Assigned:

Updates:

COVID-19 has limited the capacity of the City and community partners to take this on at this time.

Next Steps:

Continue to re-visit this action item monthly until such time that the City and community partners have the capacity to move this forward.

Determine whether this might be part of the set of initial goals for the new Racial Justice and Social Equity commission that is being formed

Section 2.G. Work with Jackson County and neighboring communities to develop a program that will provide trained mental health professionals for instances where the Ashland Police Department is called upon to serve the needs of people who are suffering from mental health issues and/or addiction.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Tighe O'Meara (Chief of Police), Councilor Graham

Updates:

Chief O'Meara and Councilors Graham, Hyatt, and DuQuenne participated in a listening session hosted by NAMI-Southern Oregon (National Alliance on Mental Illness) regarding need.

Councilor Graham met with representatives of Jackson Care Connect – a local coordinated care organization (CCO) that is actively engaged in these local conversations.

Jackson County has announced that it will convene a working group to move the effort forward.

Next Steps:

Chief O'Meara will participate in the county's working group with Councilor Graham's assistance as needed.

Section 2L: Periodically provide updates on local legal cases with social equity and racial justice implications

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Chief O'Meara

Updates:

Tasks that have been completed or are in a holding pattern

Section 2.K. Renew the effort with Indigenous leaders in the community to find a solution to the renaming of Dead Indian Memorial Road.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Scott Fleury (Public Works Director), Adam Hanks (City Manager Pro Tem), Councilors Jensen and Graham

Updates:

Holding Pattern: Councilor Graham reached out to local Indigenous leaders and communicated that the City stands ready to assist with their efforts to change the name when they are ready to move forward with a new name that is supported by the local Indigenous community. Further action is held off until those leaders reach out to the City indicating they are ready to move forward and request the City's support.

Section 2.I. Request a proactive review of the policies that pertain to the standard process of investigating incidents where deadly force is used in Jackson County.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Tighe O'Meara (Police Chief), Councilor Graham

Updates:

Complete for now.

The Jackson County Deadly Force was recently revisited by the Jackson County District Attorney's office and has been approved by all municipalities and accepted by the State. The plan calls for maximum transparency and outside agency involvement to make sure all aspects of a deadly force encounter are scrutinized. There is likely limited ability to impact change on this. If APD officers were involved in a deadly force incident, best practices would mandate that an outside agency handle the investigation. All other agencies in Jackson County have signed on to this plan, as has APD, so even if we reviewed it and wanted change, the other agencies would still adhere to the plan as currently presented. When it comes up for review again, APD will take an active role in the process as it has done in the past.

Section 1.D. Work in the near term as a “Committee of the Whole” to move these efforts forward by assigning tasks outlined in this resolution to individual staff and councilors and reporting back to Council on a regular basis while a more formal process and timeline is developed that includes regular progress reports to Council.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Adam Hanks (City Manager Pro Tem)

Updates:

Completed/ongoing

This has been put in place with the standard practice of revisiting these action items on a monthly basis since the resolution was passed.

Item Section 1.A. Designate Social Equity and Racial Justice as a Value Service in the City of Ashland's strategic planning process, which will provide an opportunity for focused and sustained attention within the City's planning, management, and policy structure.

Councilors/Staff Assigned: Adam Hanks (City Manager Pro Tem)

Updates: Completed