

Council Business Meeting

July 20, 2021

Agenda Item	Social Equity and Racial Justice Resolution Council Discussion and Action Identification	
From	Adam Hanks	City Manager Pro Tem
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SUMMARY

This agenda item is also to discuss and give an update on the Social Equity and Racial Justice Resolution.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Resolution No. 2021-01

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION

[Resolution No. 2020-15](#) was discussed and approved by Council at the [July 7, 2020 Business Meeting](#). At the same meeting, Councilor Graham requested to place this item on reoccurring agendas and Council agreed. Resolution No. 2021-01 was approved and replaced Resolution No. 2020-15 at the [January 19, 2021 Business Meeting](#).

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On [July 7, 2020](#), [Resolution No. 2020-15](#) was approved establishing a formal commitment by the Council to recognize and take action to “move forward with purpose in order to provide immediate support for advocacy efforts while putting in place the elements necessary for long-term systemic change.” On August 4, 2020, Council discussed the items in Section 2 of Resolution No. 2020-15. Staff and Council assigned to each item and background, status and progress updates can be found in Attachment 1. On September 1, 2020, staff gave progress updates on assigned items.

On [January 19, 2021](#), the resolution was repealed and replaced by Resolution No. 2021-01. The new resolution added two items to Section 2: L. Periodically provide updates on local legal cases with social equity and racial justice implications and M. Review and update this resolution as necessary to ensure accurate and relevant objectives, policies and actions are defined and accomplished.

FISCAL IMPACTS

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the tracking list be reviewed, and some items reassigned to do staffing changes.

ACTIONS, OPTIONS & POTENTIAL MOTIONS

N/A

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Social Equity and Racial Justice Statement Tracking List (new items in green)

[Resolution No. 2021-01 A Resolution Declaring the City of Ashland's Commitment to Social Equity and Racial Justice and Repealing Resolution No. 2020-15](#)

**Resolution No. 2021-01 (formerly 2020-15) Social Equity and Racial Justice
Statement Tracking Sheet**



Item:	Assigned to:
<p>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.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	
<p>7/20/2021 Update: Juneteenth was declared a federal holiday on June 18, 2021. The City Council held a listening booth at the 2021 Juneteenth Celebration organized by BASE Southern Oregon.</p>	
<p>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 which have interactions with law enforcement.</p>	
<p>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 regularly reporting them back to Council. Simultaneously, a more formal process and timeline is underway that includes regular progress reports to the Council.</p>	
<p>Section 2.A. Support the Ashland Police Department is taking a more active role in on-campus conversations about racial justice at Southern Oregon University and developing engagement events to help residents understand APD's policies regarding the use of force and other relevant issues.</p>	<p>Tighe O'Meara, Police Chief</p>
<p>9/1/2020 Staff Progress Update: APD is in the middle of analyzing its community engagement effort. APD has routinely accepted the SOU Football Coach's invitation to meet with his student-athletes and will continue to do so. Chief O'Meara appears as a criminology guest speaker a few times a year, as requested by the professors. A community town hall is being planned for later in the year to engage BIPOC and concerned community members on how recent events and requests have informed APD policies.</p>	

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Item:	Assigned to:
Section 2.B. Strengthen our cultural competency and intrinsic bias training program for members of the City Council and City Staff.	Tina Gray, Human Resources Director
<p>1/12/2021 - Staff Progress Update:</p> <p>EDI Statement – The first step in creating change that will resonate in the organization is to adopt an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement. The statement will set the tone for our existing staff and inform those seeking employment or services with the City of our organization's values. The EDI statement will be prominently displayed on the City's website, HR Materials, and used internally to reinforce our workplace culture's inclusivity. Staff developed a draft statement and invited all employees to provide feedback and suggest edits to the EDI Statement. The collaboration resulted in the revised statement below:</p> <p><i>"The City of Ashland is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. We acknowledge, celebrate, and support our differences across all spectrums, including but not limited to gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, race, religion, ethnic origin, disability, or socioeconomic status. We will provide a work environment of respect that values diversity in background, opinions, and perspectives. We commit to furthering equity in our work and our community by continually challenging bias, eliminating structural racism, and actively recruiting and promoting a diverse workforce. We will become allies to those with less access and take responsibility for making changes that will help others be successful. Respect for one another is at the core of everything we do."</i></p> <p>Outreach & Engagement – The plan is to engage the community and our employees with a survey about how we can improve equity, diversion, and inclusion – Staff hopes to post the survey by the end of January or early February. Input from the survey will be reviewed and used to support internal initiatives.</p> <p>Staff will also request volunteer participation within the City organization to participate on an EDI Committee. The Committee will have a role in proactively advancing our EDI Statement and providing a venue to bring issues to the table that can be sensitive or uncomfortable to discuss. Many employees have expressed a desire to participate. There is a lot of internal expertise and willingness to force change within our employee population. Passionate employees can be internal champions that can create a shift in workplace culture rather than a top-down approach.</p> <p>Training/Policies/New Hire Orientation – This will include continually training staff and keeping equity at the forefront to permeate our organization at all levels. Managers and Supervisors will receive additional training, so they model EDI for those they supervise and to promote inclusive practices in their everyday work. Job Descriptions are being updated, making EDI an essential job function for all positions in the City. As time allows, City policies will be reviewed and updated with gender-neutral terminology. New hires need to start their career with the City clearly understanding and embracing EDI principles.</p> <p>Staff is planning a training and will invite voluntary Council participation in an interactive exercise called "Walk a mile in their shoes." Course Description Attached. We hope to schedule the training for</p>	

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Item:	Assigned to:
<p>April 2021 based on CIS staff availability. Additional training to educate staff will be provided throughout the year.</p> <p>Partnerships -Continue collaborative partnerships within the community and region that focus on EDI to help us learn and grow and bring back new ideas to the City for implementation.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>Bill Molnar, Community Development Director David Lohman, City Attorney Councilor Tonya Graham</p>
<p>9/1/2020 Staff Progress Update: Community Development Department staff coordinates permit requirements with Public Works to install signs on City-owned facilities/buildings. Existing building signage will need to be evaluated to ensure new sign installation complies with the size, location, and materials standards described in the City's Sign Code. Additionally, the City Attorney will advise on a legal framework to support the Council's desired signage content.</p>	
<p>10/6/2020 Staff Progress Update: Government-sanctioned displays or messages supporting particular public policies or viewpoints are allowed only in limited circumstances without also allowing displays or messages to support other, possibly opposing views. To respond to Sections 2.C and 2.H of Council's Resolution on Social Equity and Racial Justice in a way that fits within those limited circumstances, staff requests Council input on the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the displays referenced in Sections 2.C and 2.H envisioned intended to be temporary or permanent? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If temporary, what timeframe is intended? b. If temporary, are the referenced displays intended to be tied to a one-time event or a recurring event such as an annual celebration? 2. What steps should the City take to involve the community, including BIPOC members of the community, in planning such displays? 3. Could the referenced displays serve their intended purpose while also being an addition to the City's Public Art Collection (perhaps similar to the Peace Wall in front of the Ashland Public Library)? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Note: The process for making an addition to the Public Art Collection is prescribed in AMC 2.29; it generally includes a request for proposals, a Selection Panel distinct from the Public Arts Commission, and recommendations to the City Council from the Selection Panel and the Public Arts Commission based on artistic merit and the artist's experience in producing public art. 4. Is establishing the referenced displays feasible with existing staff and funding? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What should be the dollar limit for such an effort, and which budget funds should bear that expense? b. Might a private fundraising effort be feasible? Might a private donation (as occurred with the Guanajuato Mural along the Calle) be feasible? c. Should a project manager be designated to head up the effort? Could such a project manager be a volunteer from the community, as opposed to City staff? 	
<p>Section 2.D. Continue and enhance our support of the annual celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.</p>	

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Item:	Assigned to:
<p>Section 2.E. Connect with Southern Oregon University and its students to better understand all college students' experience, but particularly students of color, in the City of Ashland as a first step toward improving that experience. Through this process, the City will help all local college students understand the City's ideals and expectations regarding respect for all people.</p>	<p>Adam Hanks, City Manager Pro Tem</p>
<p>9/1/2020 Staff Progress Update: APD has routinely accepted the SOU Football Coach's invitation to meet with his student-athletes and will continue to do so. Chief O'Meara appears as a criminology guest speaker a few times a year, as requested by the professors.</p> <p>HR will continue collaborative partnerships within the community and region that focus on EDI to help us learn and grow and bring back new ideas to the City for implementation. 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.</p> <p>City Manager 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</p>	
<p>Section 2.F. Work with community partners to develop training, incident response, and community acknowledgment programs that help residents and business owners address the long-term, systemic root causes of inequality and racial injustice and celebrate progress.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>Tighe O'Meara, Police Chief Councilor Tonya Graham</p>
<p>9/1/2020 Staff Progress Update: APD hosted two crisis intervention (CI) workers from Jackson County Mental Health (JCMH) on August 12, 2020. The workers went on patrol with the downtown officers and made several contacts with community members who are chronically in need of mental health assistance. APD is starting to explore a possible relationship with JCMH to make available more robust CI resources. APD is also beginning to examine the feasibility of standing up its own 24/7 CI program using vetted and trained local practitioners.</p>	
<p>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 social equity and racial justice issues.</p>	<p>Bill Molnar, Community Development Director</p>
<p>9/1/2020 Staff Progress Update: Creation and installation of murals, visible from a public right-of-way, are subject to the process and guidelines established by Council Resolution 2016-29 - A RESOLUTION</p>	

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Item:	Assigned to:
<p>ADOPTING GUIDELINES FOR THE CREATION AND INSTALLATION OF MURALS. The Public Arts Commission (PAC) has established criteria for approval of wall murals, a list of information describing the mural design application, and a process for presentation and review, with final approval by the City Council. Staff will schedule this item on a future PAC agenda to get input on how best to proceed, including identifying and considering possible mural locations for Council consideration.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>Tighe O'Meara, Police Chief Councilor Tonya Graham</p>
<p>9/1/2020 Staff Progress Update: The Jackson County Deadly Force was revisited by the Jackson County District Attorney's office and approved by all municipalities and accepted by the State. The plan calls for maximum transparency and outside agency involvement to ensure 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 an outside agency to 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.</p>	
<p>Section 2.J. Review recruiting/hiring practices to address implicit bias with input from leaders of local diversity, equity, and inclusion programs.</p>	<p>Tina Gray, Human Resources Director</p>
<p>1/12/2021 Staff Progress Update: Recruitment & Selection – HR has implemented a blind application review feature for several recruitments successfully. We have removed fields in the application that could reveal irrelevant details about an applicant and/or socioeconomic status to reduce the opportunity for unconscious bias in application review. By eliminating unnecessary variables in the application process, we can focus on the specific knowledge, skills, and experience related to the minimum job qualifications. We have 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. Promotional Opportunities – HR is continuing work on internal promotional processes to ensure they are competitive and fair with transparent scoring.</p>	
<p>Section 2.K. Renew the effort with Indigenous leaders in the community to find a solution to Dead Indian Memorial Road's renaming.</p>	<p>Scott Fleury, Public Works Director Adam Hanks, City Manager Pro Tem</p>