
Council Request Memorandum

To: Connie Schroeder, Mayor of the City of Bastrop, and Council

From: Cheryl Lee, Bastrop City Council Member Place 1

CC: Paul Hoffman, City Manager and Trey Job, Assistant City Manager

Date: July 19, 2022

Subject: Adopt a resolution to establish of a Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Board for the City of Bastrop

Purpose: To facilitate the development of a strategic plan to assess the current state of diversity and inclusion in the City of Bastrop in city services, community engagement, employment opportunities, and community partnerships, to promote inclusion and engagement for all community residents.

Background

In February 2021, several residents began meeting with the City Manager to discuss disparities in city services and community engagement in minority communities. After several months of discussion, a Diversity and Inclusion Task Force Committee was formed under the City Manager to address and the first meeting was held on July 21, 2021, with the following residents of the City of Bastrop:

Paul Hoffman, City Manager
Ann Franklin, City Secretary
Tanya Cantrell, HR Director
Clint Nagy, Chief of Police
Curtis Hancock, Director of Public Works
Sheila Lowe, City Resident
Cheryl Lee, City Resident
Joseph Thompson, City Resident
Sumai Lokumbe, City Resident; and
Catina Higgins, City Resident

This Memorandum serves as an overview and update on the progress of that committee to date, and a request to Mayor and Council to transition the committee into a permanent standing advisory board whose purpose shall be to assess the current state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the City of Bastrop.

Focus Areas of the Committee

1. Understanding the cities current Communication Framework: It's Communication & Messaging Foundation and 9 Focus Areas.
2. Improved Recruiting, Evaluation of Applications, and Interview Process
3. Inclusivity in all messaging, engagement, and programming
4. Diverse Input into the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
5. City Staff Leadership Development

Milestones

1. Defined the Purpose Statement, Mission Statement, and Goals of the Committee
2. Improved marketing to include multi-ethnic culture and printed materials in Spanish
3. Connected with Alumni Associations of Historically Black Colleges, Local Churches, and City of Bastrop Police Chaplains and increased use of social media and the municipal channel to improve public awareness of job opportunities.
4. Job listings were posted in African American Career World Magazine, and Hispanic Career World Magazine to increase diversity in job applicants.
5. Incorporation of an Executive Leadership Training Program for City Staff, focused on leadership effectiveness, overcoming challenges and conflict, cultural competency, unconscious Bias/Microaggressions, and Stereotypes/Discrimination/Oppression.
6. Established Procedure Changes in the Hiring Process to ensure all qualified applicants have equal opportunity for an interview:
 - a. Directors and department heads now review every completed application and meets with every candidate prior to a conditional offer.
 - b. Candidates will no longer be rejected for being overqualified

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- c. Candidates will be advised on how interviews will be conducted

Desired Outcome

The Diversity Task Force Committee with the support of Council Member Lee, request that the Mayor and Council approve the transition of the Diversity Task Force Committee, amending the Municipal Code of Ordinance, to add a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Board to the list of Boards & Commissions for the City of Bastrop, appointing the following city residents as members of the board who will lead and guide the city's diversity and inclusion efforts:

Sheila Lowe
Sumai Lokumbe
Carly Bartee
Arthur Banks
Christopher Higgins
Aimee Cook
Jennifer (Jennie) Olsen McEwan

I am so excited to have this Board established; so are the members who will serve, and many residents in our community. Community engagement builds relationships and trust in our city across the board, and just makes the world a better place to live.

Thank you for your consideration. If more information is needed, please let me know.

Cheryl Lee
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