



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: 9/23/2021

From: Staff EPIC (Equity Plus Inclusion Committee)

Subject: Creation of a Brisbane Equity and Diversity Committee

Community Goal/Result

Community Building

Purpose

Increase participation in the community from underrepresented groups.

Recommendation

Approve the creation of a City Equity and Diversity Committee, creation of a Brisbane 101 Community learning event, and direct staff to hold a city-wide listening program around the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Background

On March 1, 2021, the City Council's Liaison to EPIC met and requested a report back on what other communities around the State and the country were doing related to citywide diversity committees. The liaisons' met with staff on August 2, 2021 to discuss the findings and work on making recommendations regarding a City Equity and Diversity Committee.

Discussion

Proposed City Equity and Diversity Committee

Staff reviewed twelve different citywide equity and inclusion committees. These were from: Elk Grove, Turlock, El Segundo (California), Wenatchee, Federal Way, Shoreline, Renton (Washington), Happy Valley, Wilsonville (Oregon), Scottsdale (Arizona), Northborough (Massachusetts), and Dover (New Hampshire). The majority of these were created within the past 2-3 years. All of them had some common components that staff believes would be beneficial here, assuming the City Council supports creating a similar committee in Brisbane. The Committee reviewed the information with staff and is making the following recommendations for the creation of an Equity and Diversity Committee.

Purpose of the Committee – the committee would define what Diversity and Inclusion means for the City. It would also be an ambassador for the City to various aspects of the community, and it would provide insight and feedback to the City Council on issues related to diversity and

inclusion. This is similar to the beginning of the Open Space and Ecology Committee when it defined the needs of the City as it related to Open Space in the Brisbane Acres and then took on the role of providing the City feedback on issues related to Open Space and Sustainability.

Name of Committee – IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accountability) – The Subcommittee wanted to make sure the new committee dealt with the full range of issues facing underrepresented individuals.

Membership of the Committee – 7-11 members. The subcommittee wanted to ensure there were enough people on the committee that it could have a full range of representation but it was not so large that all of the members would not be able to fully contribute. (Committees that are too large often rely on a few people to provide input.) Members would be selected by Council appointment. The subcommittee did not want to define eligibility for the committee beyond residents and people who worked in Brisbane. The subcommittee thought it was important that people who work in town could be represented on this committee which could broaden the perspectives on this new committee. The subcommittee recommends the following question be added to the application for this committee “what diverse perspective will you bring to this committee?” This will allow applicants to self-define their own identity and allow the Council a broad ability to ensure diverse opinions and backgrounds are represented on the committee.

Meeting Dates & Times – The subcommittee thinks the new committee should meet monthly, similar to our existing committees, but that the committee members should be able to determine the day and time of their meetings. This may allow for people who are not normally able to serve on committees due to time constraints to find a better day and time than if the date was preset.

Proposed Leadership Academy

EPIC also discussed the possibility of creating a Leadership Academy for the residents of Brisbane to help enlarge the pool of people willing to apply for Commissions and Committees.

Proposed Learning Event

The subcommittee reviewed the idea of creating a learning event with the goal of reaching out to underrepresented members of our community to assist them in learning about the community and how the City and committees function. The subcommittee thought by doing this it might encourage a more diverse applicant pool to all of the City’s committees and commissions. The subcommittee asked staff to develop a program that would achieve this purpose.

Staff recommends the following program to achieve this.

A half-day session on Saturday November 6th called Brisbane 101. The session would be planned at Mission Blue so if needed it could be held outside or inside. Participants would

apply by October 22nd and it would be open to residents only. There would be a maximum of 20 participants to ensure robust discussion and allow people to get to know each other. The program would focus on the City Council's adopted goals: Fiscally Prudent, Safe Community, Community Building, Ecological Sustainability, and Economic Development. The topics covered in each session would be reflective of issues the City is working on in those areas and the committees and commissions which have a role to play. The sessions would last from 30 to 40 minutes each. The program would begin with a welcome from the Mayor, an icebreaker exercise so the participants can learn a little about each other, and an overview of the City by the City Manager.

In order to try and reach out to non-traditional participants in city events staff recommends broadening our outreach methods. This would include working with existing non-profits like the Mothers of Brisbane, asking the school district to send information to the parents in town, tabling at the Farmers' Market, contacting individuals who have participated in city events or have indicated on the citywide survey they would be interested in participating in events like this, and putting flyers in businesses that are frequented in town. Staff is also recommending that the flyers should be translated into various languages.

Staff anticipates this to start at 9:45 for sign-ins and coffee, and pastries and end around 2:30. Lunch would be provided.

Proposed Listening Event

The subcommittee proposes having a City-wide listening event to begin the conversation around the issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accountability. The subcommittee recommends a City-wide event in hopes that the full diversity of our community is represented. The subcommittee suggests that an outside facilitator be used to conduct this meeting. This would be similar to the Home for All meetings held previously. The subcommittee would recommend the City use someone like the Chief Equity Officer of San Mateo County as the facilitator to reduce the cost of the event.

Fiscal Impact

The cost of the November 6th session is not anticipated to be too great since there would be a limited number of people participating. The cost of the new committee would depend on what issues they would like to discuss and how much staff time is needed.

Measure of Success

The City becomes a more inclusive community for groups that have had lower representation than in the past.