

EXECUTIVE BRIEF SPECIAL MEETING

AGENDA DATE: June 23, 2020

DEPARTMENT: Commission

TITLE:

Creating a Task Force to make recommendations to the City Commission on the issue of eradicating systemic racism in the City of Lake Worth Beach

SUMMARY:

At the June 16th meeting, the Commission discussed a proposal by Commissioner Robinson regarding the creation of a Task Force to address systemic racism in the City of Lake Worth Beach. After much discussion a motion was made to bring back additional information from the National League of Cities and the US Conference of Mayors for discussion on the best way to approach the process locally.

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION:

In an effort to discuss issues raised in the recent, senseless death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officers, Commissioner Robinson, at the June 2, 2020 Commission Meeting, requested a special meeting to discuss creating a task force to make recommendations to the City Commission on the issue of eradicating systemic racism in the City of Lake Worth Beach. Commissioner Maxwell made a motion that Commissioner Robinson bring back in writing an outline of how he would like to see a workshop on the issue conducted. In preparing for this meeting, Commissioner Robinson met with Commissioner Hardy at a "Sunshine Meeting" and discussed issues of concern, including reform to policing in the city and furthering racial equity in the city.

Subsequently, at the June 16th meeting the idea of the Task Force was discussed and a motion was approved by the Commission to direct staff to come back with what the National League of Cities or the U.S. Conference of Mayors has with regard to resources and guidance on how to establish a task force, Additionally, how to get the affected parties here in the City of LWB to be directly involved in the process in order to figure out what community is feeling, their needs, and how the City may address them going forward.

Leon T. Andrews, Jr., Director, and Rita Soler Ossolinski, Program Director of Race, Equity And Leadership (REAL), National League of Cities have been invited to participate in the meeting. In the wake of the 2014 unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, NLC created the REAL initiative to strengthen local leaders' knowledge and capacity to eliminate racial disparities, heal racial divisions and build more equitable communities. REAL offers tools and resources designed to help local elected leaders build safe places where people from all racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds thrive socially, economically, academically and physically.

Included below is the Task Force recommendation brought forth by Commissioner Robinson as part of the original June 16th item.

OUTLINE OF ISSUES TO DISCUSS RELATING TO THE CREATION OF A TASK FORCE:

Timeframe: Task Force members should be chosen in the next 30 days as time is of the essence.

Composition: The Task Force should consist of diverse community stakeholders in the city. May include 10-20 individuals, some of whom will represent organizations. The City Commission should discuss who those stakeholders will be, how many members will the Task Force include, and whether the Task Force should include commission members.

Scope of work: The Task Force will be empowered to make recommendations for eradicating systemic racism in the City of Lake Worth Beach. The scope should be addressed by five committees with deadlines being established for each part as shown below:

Police Committee to make recommendations on policing in Lake Worth Beach to reach the goal of eradicating systemic racism. The Task Force committee should be given 90 days to identify issues, research, review, and make written recommendations. The issues would include reviewing the current contract with PBSO and addressing the need for body cameras, enhanced and targeted training for officers including de-escalation tools, police accountability, etc.

Education Committee to make recommendations to the School District as it relates to its policies in education that lead to systemic racism in the school system. The Task Force would again identify issues, research, review, and make written recommendations within a specific timeframe.

Housing Committee to make recommendations about rental assistance for families who have fallen behind on their rent or for legal counsel for families facing eviction due to financial hardships.

Health and Human Services Committee to make recommendations on strategies and policies to deal with racial equity in the criminal justice system with a focus on how the City of Lake Worth Beach can contribute to the solutions.

Financial Security Committee to make recommendations on providing racial equity in banking and lending for minorities (personal and business lending practices), developing mechanisms to assist minorities in taking advantage of banking institutions newly established racial equity funds (e.g., Goldman Sachs), etc.

There are a myriad of important and necessary issues the Task Force Committees could address as illustrated by the above examples. Commissioner Robinson looks forward to having a constructive dialogue with his colleagues.

MOTION:

Motion to create a Task Force (with five committees) who will make recommendations to the City Commission on the issue of eradicating systemic racism in the City of Lake Worth Beach.

ATTACHMENT(S):

Fiscal Impact Analysis – N/A
NLC REAL documents