

**RACE EQUITY TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 25, 2020**

1. CALL TO ORDER 5:08 PM

Attendees: James Friday, Sue Wilmot, Brenda Fantroy-Jones, Savanna Rovelstad, Peggi Erickson, Rasham Nassar, and Joe Deets.

Motion and discussion to remove Agenda Item 4. Vote does not pass. Item 4 stays on the agenda.

2. SUQUAMISH ANCESTRAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - Sue

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Sal DeRosalia - The City Council's appointment of Ashley Mathews is abuse of power. They used race equity as an option. I would like equal opportunity for the seat.

Ron Peltier - Thank you to the City council for tentatively approving Ashley Mathews. She was interviewed previously as a City Council candidate.

Ashley Mathews - Song and poem "I wasn't meant to thrive, but I didn't give up." There was no back-room conspiracy. I emailed the council about having a voice. I look forward to serving on the Planning Commission.

Deanna Martinez - We need tools that will help everybody in understanding white supremacy culture and the ways we participate in anti-blackness. We have to address paternalism and either/or thinking. We need creative solutions. We have to focus on those most oppressed. We all make mistakes. We need to acknowledge them and move on.

Pascal Schumacher - I am an emergency manager. Due process is important. We need permanent change not one time. We should consider adding more members to the RETF. We should not have a rushed situation without due process.

4. ADDING AN EQUITY LENS TO CITY ADVISORY APPOINTMENTS

James - It is inexcusable to add an item to our agenda without all of our input. The RETF should have the opportunity to have a say in committee appointments. We need to bring a lens of equity within all the processes of Bainbridge Island.

Rasham - At the Tuesday June 22 City Council meeting, I made a motion to appoint Ashley Mathews to one of the two open seats on the Planning Commission. The City Council voted 6-1 for her tentative approval. There were no violations of process. The mayor brings recommendations and the CC votes to approve or not. This challenges tradition. Tradition does not favor equity. This is my personal opinion not that of the City Council. It is unorthodox but it challenges the current structure. We need to heed the call for change. We care enough to give a person of color access to city hall. The time is now for change. I am grateful to Ashley Mathews for showing up to be the change.

Joe - The City Council meeting shows the current struggle that is happening when the system is faulty. We have to do better.

Brenda - You can go to committees and see that equity was not built into the process. This is age old racism-pitting one group against another. It is patronizing to bring us in after the process.

Peggi - The City Council needs to bring a race equity lens to committees.

James - There must be a uniform process to go through that is fair and just. I am not going to play the race card. This candidate was not qualified because the application process was closed. It should be equal for all. This was reverse racism. The committees should follow through with equal opportunity.

Sue - This was the City Council's decision. I am offended that it was brought to us after the fact. I just started doing the agenda. I did not know the different rules for special meetings. I did not know that items could not be added after it is published.

Savanna - This was a surprise attack. It feels like a pat on the head and the RETF is being used to legitimize the choice. The RETF has been told that we can only make recommendations to the City Council not make decisions. The added item to our agenda without talking to us seems like institutional racism. I feel like we are being used here.

Brenda - We would love to be part of the process. Coming in at the end of this is not where we should be.

Rasham - We have a work-plan meeting with the RETF and City Council on July 7.

5. RETF OFFICERS DISCUSSION/VOTE

Brenda Fantroy-Jones is nominated by Sue, seconded by Savanna, and elected by unanimous vote as Vice-Chair of the committee.

6. WELCOMING SIGN STATUS

Joe - Some work has been done by the city. We can include this on our meeting with RETF and City Council on July 7.

Brenda - Joe emailed information about this. We can put it on our next agenda to discuss options and implementation.

James - Our meetings should be on the first and third Thursday at 6PM. When we get back to in person meetings, we need to consider space for participants,

Sue - We should make them accessible online still.

7. GARE PLAN

Brenda - We may be starting from the beginning. Is technical assistance still available?

Joe - Communication with GARE has slowed down. We are looking at being part of the Northwest Cohorts. We need to look at the online offerings and decide if we want to choose from them. Our July 2 meeting will focus on GARE.

Peggi - GARE has an introductory session on the first Tuesday at 12:30 PM.

8. COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLAN

A. Farmers' Market

How soon can we start? Joe will check.

B. Social Media Update

Peggi - We can give info to our Community partners. We cannot participate on the social media pages. Thank you to community members who have volunteered to help. There are some pages that say Race Equity Task Force that can be confused as being us.

Sue - People are free to do that. We cannot stop them. It is up to the reader to check the sources.

Savanna - We can put on our page that we do not have a Facebook page and we can ask the public members to make it clear that it is not our official page.

C. New Events

James - I would like a Youth event. Speak Your Truth. An outdoor venue with social distancing. With a public microphone, band, and food. We need a committee to develop this. Possibly partner with the school district? Use the stadium? We need to know when our hands are untied to move forward. Phase 3 only allows 50 people and we will be over that. We could combine the Poetry Slam and Speak Your Truth.

7. BUDGET COMMITTEE

Peggi – Shared the budget document. New Quarter 4 event partnering with BIMA in October. Speaker is Marilyn Wandry; the granddaughter of Julia Jacobs - “The Black Woman of the Suquamish Tribe”. The City of Bremerton is considering a RETF. Peggi is composing a letter in support, RETF and City Council can sign.

Joe will take it to Bainbridge Island Mayor for signing.

8. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Sue - How soon can we get our open RETF seats filled?

Rasham - Applications due July 31. August is interviews. September 1st at the soonest.

Joe - I apologize that I got ahead of myself. I did not intend to dump work on the Task Force. I am sorry. I should have checked with you first.

Next meetings: July 2 at 6 PM regular meeting), July 7 (City Council joint meeting), and July 16 at 6 PM (special meeting).

9. ADJOURNMENT

7:28 PM

James Friday 7/2/20

Chair

Date