

PENDING COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Minutes

Special Committee on Racial Equity (SCRE) 8/18/2020

SCRE Member Attendance: R.Zavras, J.Townes, R.Fanuzzi, R. Bender, M. Della, J. Reyes, D. Jackson

Board Member Attendance: Laura Spalter, Margaret Donato, David Gellman, Rosemary Ginty

Community Member Attendance: Jacki Fish, Brittany Arboleda, Caesar Tobar-Acosta, Constance Barnes-Watson, Francisco Ramirez (Office of Gustavo Rivera), Jen Chau Fontan, Kirstie Miranda, Mariel De La Cruz (NYC Comptroller's Office), Pat Hill (Office of Councilmember Cohen), Raquel Reynoso, Sam Liedtka (Office of Assemblyman Dinowitz), Thomas Vorsteg

Chair Zavras, again, started meeting with the Special Committee's Agreements as parameters for discussion. Reference previous minutes for the Agreements.

Agenda

Minutes from previous meeting: Motion Daris/Second Bob Bender. None opposed.

Shortening of census timeline

Bob Bender emphasized that the Census is being shortened to 9/30 rather than 10/31. B. Bender recommended the Board encourage people to respond to Census as it dictates funding and representation for next 10 years and suggested a resolution condemning the last minute reduction in time to complete the Census. Bob Bender to lead draft with Daris Jackson and Rosalind Zavras.

Daris Jackson: Housing Committee is moving its meeting to 9/3 in order to emphasize importance of Census, demystify the process to complete, emphasize importance of self-response considering health concerns. Meeting held in concert with DOH and Census Field Organizer.

Laura Spalter: the Board Office will table in Marble Hill, other areas, will send out direct link in Spanish and English. Board will continue to consult the Hard to Count tracker: <https://www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us/?latlng=40.87927%2C-73.90217&z=14&promotedfeaturetype=censusTracts&baselayerstate=-1&layers=tribal%20lands%2Cmajor%20roads&infotab=info-contacttypes&filterQuery=false>

Building a report - Framework and Recommendations

Chair Zavras applauded Committee for quick and thorough work on draft SCRE report. She introduced discussion on how to suggest areas of work for each standing committee to distill information, work with SCRE and community, and be well-informed by diverse resources.

Bob Fanuzzi emphasized that we should be clear: 'How we do our work and who we interact with.' Process is as important as implementation.

Julie Reyes urged that all Chairs should be engaged to get thoughts on areas in RE where they may work in year ahead and that the SCRE should support them in process.

David Gellman suggested to encourage SCRE to reach out to Chairs to develop conversation to develop thoughts together. Not dictated by Chairs or Committee, rather collaborative check-in meetings.

L. Spalter cautioned that the timing of each committee racial equity objectives may be a challenge since Chairs will receive the SCRE report in September and we are potentially asking them to digest and turn around ideas in same month

Jyll Townes underscored that SCRE and committee engagement should be collaborative conversation as draft report articulates

Methodology:

Committee agrees that final report timeline should be May 2021, not June 2021 (as listed currently) as we will be pursuing Committee renewal

B. Fanuzzi requested coordination with City-wide and mayoral initiatives on RE, including request access to and review mayor's annual report on RE and borough president's report on diversity.

J. Townes underscored that NYC OEI is a resource for employment, but further clarity must be secured as we are not sure scope of its function now.

L. Spalter shared that NYC Council passed legislation to require City websites to track funding and how it is spent.

D. Jackson suggested to consider adding Civilian Complaint Review Board, Dept of Corrections, Law Dept as resources and collaborative partnerships.

Chair Zavras asked what are the resources to connect with community? J. Reyes suggested Mayor's office of faith based initiatives.

A question from the public inquired if there is a place in the draft report for advocacy groups, who to contact, where to go for more information? Could the Board manage?

J. Townes reminded the SCRE on this being a good place to segue to her idea on Community Ambassadors - How would we shape these positions differently than Committee members. Could we have 6 or 7 communities and represented in some way? Speak to what is going on in each neighborhood. It would help people feel more engaged with Board and that voices are heard.

J. Reyes emphasized that this is the role of Board members and we must emphasize for board members to get to, get involved in, and get to know every corner of the district.

Margaret Della suggested that Ambassadors could help catalyze J. Reyes' vision.

Public feedback

Ambassador engagement was well-received and suggested to be a positive avenue for participation without over participation. Additionally, it could serve as an Informal recruiting method for future board members, potentially. An open call with some intentionality behind it, Chair Zavras stated.

M. Della encouraged ambassador model could be considered comparative to volunteers of nonprofit board committees - roll up sleeves together in the work without additional board responsibilities.

New Business

Public comment stated that food access is an equity issue. B. Fanuzzi directed food networks, pantries, etc. to attend Board's Gallery session at the September meeting.

Motion to adjourn D. Jackson, Second J. Townes