ASHLAND SOCIAL EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
August 1, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Simon called the meeting to order. Emily Simon was present via Zoom, and attending in-person were John Tyler, Tara Houston, Allison Mendel, Jeff Dahle, Gina DuQuenne, Kerrick Gooden, and guests: Kenyon, Victoria, and Holden

1. Land Acknowledgment - We acknowledge and honor the aboriginal people on whose ancestral homelands we work — the Ikirakutsum Band of the Shasta Nation, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities who make their home here today. We denounce the egregious acts of the colonizers and government and recognize the horrific impacts that still exist today. We honor the first stewards in the Rogue Valley and the lands we love and depend on: Tribes with ancestral lands in and surrounding the geography of the Ashland Watershed include the original past, present and future indigenous inhabitants of the Shasta, Takelma and Athabaskan people. We also recognize and acknowledge the Shasta village of K'wakhakha – "Where the Crow Lights" – that is now the Ashland City Plaza.

Tyler read the land acknowledgement

2. Labor acknowledgment - We also pause to recognize and acknowledge the labor upon which our country, state, and institutions are built. We remember that our country is built on the labor of enslaved people who were kidnapped and brought to the U.S. from the African continent and recognize the continued contribution of their survivors. We also acknowledge all immigrant labor, including voluntary, involuntary, trafficked, forced, and undocumented peoples who contributed to the building of the country and continue to serve within our labor force. We acknowledge all unpaid care-giving labor. To the people who contributed this immeasurable work and their descendants, we acknowledge their indelible mark on the space in which we gather today. It is our collective responsibility to critically examine these histories, to repair harm, and to honor, protect, and sustain their contribution to our society.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Before approval of minutes, DuQuenne addressed the committee introducing her guests: Kenyon, Holden, and Victoria. DuQuenne spoke of her appreciation of the new direction SERJAC is considering.

1. Approval of Minutes of the 6/6/2024 Regular Meeting

Houston/Tyler moved/seconded to approve the minutes of 6/6/2024.
Discussion: none
Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. Co-Chair vote (10 minutes)
   Emily is stepping down.
   Allison Mendel and Tara Houston have put their names forward as co-chairs.

Simon spoke of stepping down as co-chair and is looking forward to new leadership and continuing on to serve SERJAC as a committee member. Houston and Mendel both spoke of their roles as committee members and willingness to step up.

Simon/Tyler moved/seconded to step down as co-chair and for Mendel and Houston to replace Simon as co-chairs. Motion passed.

2. Meeting time change (10 minutes)
   To avoid a standing conflict Allison has, we need to shift our meeting earlier on Thursdays. If the meetings can start at 4:30pm, her conflict can be managed.

Houson spoke of the proposal to change the regular meeting time of SERJAC from 5pm to 4:30 on the first Thursdays of each month.

Tyler/Mendel motioned/seconded to change the regular meeting time to 4:30 on the first Thursdays of the month.
Discussion: Mendel mentioned needing this change to help manage other obligations if she will be able to co-chair.
Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

3. Bias incident reporting Hotline (5-10 minutes)
   Update from Simon and Councilor Dahle

Simon spoke of the Bias Incident Reporting Hotline as a state-run phone number and website run by the Oregon Department of Justice to give the opportunity for investigation into incidents that do not rise to the level of being a crime and to provide support to those individuals affected. Immediate funding and advocacy is available to assist those who need assistance. Simon spoke that the City of Ashland used to have this link posted on the front page of its website, but noticed after the new website conversion it is now only on the police department page. Simon advocated for a location for this link closer to the homepage.

Dahle spoke that he reached out to the City's Public Information Officer (PIO) about the link and found the current location of the link on the police page. Dahle also found that the link, ashlandoregon.gov/biascrimereport, came up first on the list when using the website search function with words such as 'bias' and 'reporting'. This link can also be used by SERJAC for inclusion in any materials, publications, or its web page. Dahle spoke that he is willing, per committee recommendation, to follow up with the police chief to see about moving the link up in it's list of links on its page, but felt otherwise encouraged that it could be easily found when searched.

Houston voiced concern that the link uses the term crime instead of incident and proposed change to reporting bias incidents. Dahle said this could be changed by the PIO to whatever the committee feels is best. Tyler agreed the term incident was more broad and Houston agreed the intent was to support people who have experienced incidents that may not have risen to level of crime. Dahle clarified with the group and agreed to recommend changing the name of the link to ashlandoregon.gov/biasincidentreport and to update the language on the police page as well.

Simon asked if the group had the energy to get the word out about this. DuQuenne offered to approach the Ashland Chamber of Commerce and reflected that students at SOU were present in the meeting. Victoria suggested a sticker for branding. Mendel found that the Oregon Department of Justice has images and suggestions on postings which could be utilized in social media or distributions. DuQuenne reflected the City has Instagram, Facebook, and Nextdoor accounts that could be utilized for promotion. Dahle asked if the committee had a top 10-15 organizations list to get such promotions out. Houston and Mendel reflected on a list in-process including Peace House, Ashland

Together, etc. Simon clarified with Dahle that he would follow up to promote this on City's social media, and that the committee will continue to curate the list of organizations for such communications.

Houston asked who would steward such a list and/or where such information would be held. Gooden reflected that such a list could be held by the staff liaison on an internal drive as administrative support. DuQuenne and Dahle reflected that other committees have utilized Google Drive to share documents internally as a working group and that the committee chairs may be best to administrate those accounts.

4. SERJAC structure change proposal (45 minutes)
   Discuss proposal that SERJAC change its structure to better support the work of all committees in the City of Ashland.

Houston reviewed the original charge of SERJAC, its current challenges, and the proposal as drafted (in the agenda packet). he proposal would be for SERJAC to meet quarterly instead of monthly and would attend other meetings as a 'SERJ Liason'. In this proposal, SERJ would be more of an advisory support to other committees rather than to the council. Houston explained the difference between voting and ex-officio members of those committees and expressed value in being able to vote. Mendel reflected on the responsibility of fully serving on other committees and the ex-officio status might allow the SERJ liason to simply offer the equity lens as needed. DuQuenne mentioned the barrier of other committees that may already be at their maximum number of members. Tyler suggested a trial of being ex-officio members first before attempting to be full members and agreed with Mendel. Dahle appreciated the intent of the proposal and spoke of committees that have invited other committees to attend to provide input. DuQuenne appreciated the notion of visiting other committees as SERJAC members have the equity lens to provide to other committees. Simon spoke that the ex-officio status might be the best way to proceed and that the City Council may be considering a review of the resolution that has set the charge for committees. Simon spoke that next steps could include talking to other committees as it is important to have buy-in, and for the co-chairs to continue to attend the Committee Chair Meetings that happen on the fourth Friday of the month - the next one being August 23, 2024.
Houston spoke of considering these visits to other committees as SERJ liaisons to other committees rather than as members. Dahle agreed and encouraged the attendance of co-chairs at the monthly meeting all committee chairs
DuQuenne spoke of new chairs in other committees that may need help to maintain social equity and racial justice lens.
Victoria asked about forming outcomes and objectives for the committee. Houston suggested using the next meeting for strategic planning. Simon stressed the need for Council and other committees buy-in on any direction SERJAC takes.
Dahle suggested that SERJAC consider its guiding document and update its objectives to develop a cohesive plan. To implement the proposal as presented would take changing the Ashland Municipal Code, but attending other committee meetings is already welcome and supported. Victoria spoke in support of creating a plan to refine the committee's work to include the liaison piece being discussed. Mendel spoke that Council would need to revise the charge.

Simon spoke of quarterly meetings as important in maintaining continuity while serving the City in attending other committees. DuQuenne spoke that meeting quarterly would help SERJAC be more robust when they do meet. Mendel suggested the time between this meeting and the next one in October will allow more work to be done in the interim. Houston suggested members consider what other committee meetings they would want to attend.

Simon stressed the importance of utilizing Gooden as staff liaison in communications to prevent an unnoticed serial meeting via e-mail. Houston and Mendel will both attend the Aug 23 committee chair meeting. Houston will draft a new version of the proposal.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

No meeting in September due to lack of quorum. Next meeting date: Thursday, October 3, 2024

Houston thanked the guests for their attendance and participation.
There is not quorum for meeting scheduled in September.
The next meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2024.
The meeting was adjourned.