



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AGENDA
Work Session “Reparations Commission”

Municipal Building & Virtual

This meeting will be held in-person and virtual.

**25 Crescent Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770**

OR

**Virtual Participation:
Join Zoom Webinar**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86045482882?pwd=S2NFdU9xVVBSQ0dCaCtNR3ljeXV2UT09>

Webinar ID: 860 4548 2882

Join By Phone: (301) 715-8592

Password (if needed): 213332

In advance, the hearing impaired is advised to use Video Relay Services (VRS) at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email banderson@greenbeltmd.gov.

**Wednesday, June 22, 2022
7:30 PM**

Work Session Packet

Work Session - Reparations Commission

Suggested Action:

Reference: Draft Reparations Commission Application

Work Session Minutes - March 9, 2022

Agenda

- Introductions
- Council Discussion
 - Application
 - What Manner Interviews will be conducted
 - How Applications would be publicized/promoted
- Questions and Answers
- Other Items

[Reparations Commission Application.pdf](#)

[Work Session Minutes - March 9, 2022.pdf](#)

City Council Work Session Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 22, 2022

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Work Session Item

Agenda Section: Work Session Packet

Subject:

Work Session - Reparations Commission

Suggested Action:

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Attachments:

[Reparations Commission Application.pdf](#)

[Work Session Minutes - March 9, 2022.pdf](#)



CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GREENBELT REPARATIONS COMMISSION

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____

In what area of Greenbelt do you reside?: Greenbelt West ____, Greenbelt Central ____,
Greenbelt East ____

Educational/Professional Background _____

Civic Experience/Volunteer Work/Membership in Organizations/Office Held _____

Are you employed by or under contract with the City of Greenbelt? (yes/no)

1. Do you support the City of Greenbelt's Reparations Resolution? (yes/no)

2. Have you been impacted personally by systemic racism in Greenbelt? (yes/no)

If yes, please describe your experience and understanding of systemic racism. _____

3. If you have not been impacted by systemic racism personally, please describe your
understanding of systemic racism. _____

4. Have you completed any cultural competency training programs? (yes/no)

If yes, please describe. _____

5. Why are you interested in serving on the Greenbelt Reparations Commission? _____

6. List any special knowledge, qualifications, training, and/or experience you will bring as a
member of the Greenbelt Reparations Commission: _____

7. What do you hope to achieve by serving on the Greenbelt Reparations Commission? _____

8. Are you aware of any potential conflicts of interest (i.e. property interest, business interest, etc.) that exist currently or may arise during your service on the Greenbelt Reparations Commission if appointed? (yes/no)

If yes, please explain: _____

9. Additional information or comments in support of your application: _____

Date _____ Signature _____

Thank you for your interest!

Please return to City Clerk, 25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770.

If you have questions, please call the City Clerk at 301-474-3870.

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, March 9, 2022, to discuss the Reparations Commission.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:01 p.m. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Colin A. Byrd, Judith F. Davis, Ric Gordon, Rodney M. Roberts, Kristen L. K. Weaver, and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan. Councilmember Silke I. Pope was absent.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Tim George, Acting City Manager; Molly Porter, Community Planner; and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Assistant to the City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Bill Orleans; Robert Goldberg-Strassler; Dr. Lois Rosado; others.

Mayor Jordan explained that tonight's work session discusses the Reparations Commission formation. He stated that it's essential to set the scope and composition of the commission and staff role.

Ms. Porter presented a PowerPoint presentation, which included an overview of the Referendum question, providing examples of Reparations efforts from Evanston, IL; Asheville, NC; Carrboro, NC; and Providence, RI. She noted that Asheville, NC was the closest in size to Greenbelt. Ms. Porter stated, in conclusion, the focus on fact-finding as the first step; engaging external entities for research; staff has an administrative responsibility; and acknowledgment of the limitations at the municipal level.

Mayor Jordan stated the variation in forms of government of each of the cities. He advised that Detroit had a Reparations Commission. Mayor Jordan noted the conversation tonight is how Greenbelt would take the first steps regarding the commission's composition and realistic timelines and defining the deliverables.

Ms. Davis stated that the City of College Park Reparations Commission Resolution would be helpful for Council to review. Ms. Porter said the staff was focused on reparations efforts that were more citywide and that the City of College Park Reparations Commission Resolution was explicitly addressing the Lakeland neighborhood. Ms. Davis suggested that the first steps of the commission should be fact-finding and education.

Mr. Byrd requested that Council receive a briefing on Detroit's Reparations Commission and the City of College Park's Resolution as supplementary materials. He stated it would be appropriate to not decide on the commission's content and programmatic issues. Mr. Byrd said he would like Council to focus on the composition and timeline matters and suggested that the commission members receive a stipend and have resources for research and personnel. Mr. Byrd also indicated that the compensation for the commission should be placed in the FY23 budget. Once the budget is passed, he requested that the advertisement for the Reparations Commission be placed on all forms of the City's social media and website for applications. He suggested that the interviews be held publicly and recorded along with the Reparations Commission meetings.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver agreed with Mr. Byrd regarding leaving the specifics up to the commission. She stated that part of the scope could be the short-medium-long term recommendations. Mayor Pro Tem Weaver questioned how long the commission would last and

identified the time commitment. She agreed that the commission should receive some compensation for their time.

Mr. Gordon agreed with Mr. Byrd and Mayor Pro Tem Weaver. He stated that Council should focus on the structure of the commission. Mr. Gordon felt that the commission should be compensated.

Mr. Roberts agreed with all the Council members, except about the commission receiving stipends. He stated the City never paid a board or committee in the past.

Based on a question asked by Mayor Jordan, Ms. Porter answered that the example commissions had either a two or three-step process, which included fact-finding, formation, and recommendations. She explained that the fact-finding was historical research about the enacted city policies that either upheld structural racism or were just discriminatory policies that the city passed. Mayor Jordan said that Greenbelt was managed by the Federal government until 1952 and would the commission would be reaching beyond 1952.

Mayor Jordan suggested that Council discuss the general framework of the commission and maybe appoint a group of residents from different demographics to make recommendations to Council.

Ms. Davis agreed with Mr. Roberts that the commission shouldn't receive a stipend but have money in the budget for resources. She suggested that the Reparation Commission could eventually be turned into a standing board/committee and reduce the number of members from 21 to 13. Ms. Davis also indicated that the first year on the timeline should be fact-finding.

Mr. Byrd stated that Council needed some flexibility in the commission's composition, and there needed to be representation from every part of the City. He suggested having experts on the commission who might not be Greenbelt residents. Mr. Byrd noted that the commission could do a lot in a year's timeframe other than fact-finding and could provide some initial short-term recommendations. He advised that he wasn't in favor of having the Reparations Commission be converted into a standing board/committee, but the City could appoint a standing racial equity committee.

Mayor Jordan suggested convening a smaller group of individuals to define some of the Council's broad questions and work on a timeline regarding the commission. He also indicated that a staff liaison is needed for the commission. An entity collecting information or a facilitator for some of the discussions would be needed.

Ms. Davis agreed with Mr. Byrd and stated that the commission shouldn't be limited to the City's actions in the past. Ms. Davis explained that the Federal government, County, the banks, mortgage companies, and local businesses affected limitations on the City.

Mr. Gordon advised that talking budget is not premature when discussing the Reparations Commission. He explained that reparations are more significant than just handing out a check. It's about education, it's about housing, and it is about the environment.

There was a discussion regarding the commission receiving a stipend. Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from

Konrad Herling, a Greenbelt resident. The latter stated that as part of the Reparation Commission's research, subsequent recommendations needed to be addressed about transportation and housing opportunities. The County is looking now at Redlining that has taken place, and the City's Reparation Commission should work with them.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Robert Goldberg-Strassler, a Greenbelt resident, that Council is presently involved in the budget process and probably needs to consider funding related to the commission.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Konrad Herling, a Greenbelt resident, that the commission makeup should include at least one person from each of the City's departments, Advisory Committees, various arts and athletic groups, and the religious community. In addition, the commission should reflect the demographic breakdown of the City.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Konrad Herling, a Greenbelt resident. The latter stated that the Council should review the Roosevelt Center Planning Charrette, which had about 90% of its makeup Greenbelt residents and 10% professional planners and architects. He advised that Jim Giese could provide additional background about that experience.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Dr. Lois Rosado, a Greenbelt resident, stating that the City voted for a commission that comes first, not a group to decide on the commission.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Bob Rand, a Greenbelt resident, who proposed that members of Council can serve on the commission and would especially like Councilmember Byrd, who initially proposed the commission, to serve if he so chose. He added that he finds Councilmember Byrd's perspective on reparations informative and essential.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from LaWann Stribling, a Greenbelt resident, who stated about a Rainbow Coalition and great points, Mr. Gordon. We're learning.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Dr. Lois Rosado, a Greenbelt resident, stating that the Council should decide on the structure of the commission. However, the commission can determine the timeline resources and research required.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Bob Rand, a Greenbelt resident, stating that some economic consequences might be meaningful.

Bill Orleans, a Greenbelt resident, stated that tonight's discussion should be about establishing the commission and not setting parameters for what the commission would decide. Mr. Orleans advised that the residents of Greenbelt voted on a 21-member commission, and that's what it should be. He suggested that members of the Community Relations Advisory Board (CRAB) and the Greenbelt Interfaith Leadership Association (GILA) make recommendations to the Council on the commission's composition. Mayor Jordan agreed that reaching out to CRAB and GILA

would be good resources for members of the commission.

Ms. Davis advised that Council needs to make sure there are funds in the budget and set up the commission's composition. She agreed with Mr. Byrd that the Reparations Commission meetings need to be recorded because this is historical.

Mayor Jordan read a comment from the Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Robert Goldberg-Strassler, a Greenbelt resident, stating that as a member of GILA, reparation representation has been discussed and the group is awaiting Council direction. Councilmember Byrd was present at the last meeting, where a dialogue took place.

Robert Goldberg-Strassler, a Greenbelt resident, explained about a discussion at the last GILA meeting. Councilmember Byrd provided some history on the referendum. During the Civil Rights Movement, he stated that the faith leaders usually took the lead and concluded that GILA was going to wait until the Council's decision regarding selecting the commission process.

There was a discussion regarding commission membership. Mr. Byrd requested a geographical representation and some members with expertise in certain areas, such as schools, housing, and transportation. Mr. Gordon suggested law enforcement expertise, too.

Mayor Jordan read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature. Bob Rand, a Greenbelt resident, stated it is essential that the commission has legitimacy with Greenbelt Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) residents. If a core group recommends other members and plans for the commission's work, it may be appropriate that they are only BIPOC residents from around the City to start.

Ms. Davis added that clergy and a local historian should be a part of the commission.

Dr. Lois Rosado, a Greenbelt resident, stated that the residents of Greenbelt voted for a 21-member Reparation Commission, and it is up to Council to decide the structure of the commission. She agreed with Mr. Byrd and Ms. Davis that the commission has to be representative of the City and include black and indigenous people of color to deal with some of the City's services and should also include faith organizations.

There was a discussion regarding advertising the commission. Mr. Roberts suggested that there should be a motion to start advertising the commission at the next Council Regular Meeting, and the Council could start working on the other aspects of the commission. Mayor Jordan stated that Council could start advertising for the commission to include geographical diversity, ethnic diversity, demographics in terms of age.

There was a discussion about whether the Council would ask the applicants if they supported the referendum question. Mayor Jordan stated no. Mr. Gordon noted that the residents who voted no to the referendum question should also be on the commission.

There was a discussion regarding the interview process. Mr. Gordon suggested that the interviews be extended, not 15 minutes before a work session. He also indicated that the interview should be open to the public.

Ms. Davis suggested that the commission makeup would consist of 12 members in a

geographical region, including diversity. Nine members would be experts, including business, clergy, or members of CRAB. She requested Council Action by the second Regular Meeting in March.

Ms. Davis suggested conducting group interviews on a Saturday and had issues with videotaping the interview process.

Mr. Byrd provided a timeline suggestion, which included advertising the commission in May and completing the search in June; he stated that interviews shouldn't exceed 20 minutes. He also suggested that staff assist Council with whittling down the list of applicants. The appointments should be completed by September, preliminary recommendations by February, and final recommendations by August.

Mayor Jordan agreed with Mr. Byrd. He stated that he expects the commission to allow public members to attend, comment, and participate.

Mayor Pro Tem Weaver read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Bob Rand, a Greenbelt resident, who placed a link to the City of Ashville's application to its Reparation Commission.

Ms. Davis suggested that once the whole commission is set, that it could start on July 1, the beginning of the new fiscal year. She stated that she would put together a Council Action Item background for the March 28 Council Regular Meeting Agenda.

There was additional discussion regarding interviews and time lengths.

Mayor Jordan read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Dr. Lois Rosado, a Greenbelt resident, asking that the Council outline the criteria for the applicants interested in the commission. She suggested that Council examine the Maryland Truth and Reconciliation Commission that HB307 established, and the City would gain ideas about organizing the commission.

Mayor Jordan read a comment from the Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from LaWann Stribling, a Greenbelt resident, who added the African Decent of Channel Slavery, and addressed Greenbelt's equity for the indigenous ADOS assist in curving the issues of crime in the future. Crimes are mostly committed out of necessity due to the decades of injustice in the communities.

Mr. Orleans stated he had no objections to open interviews and expressed his concerns regarding recorded interviews. He suggested that all of the Council's interviews be held in public sessions.

Mayor Jordan read a comment from Zoom's "Question and Answer" feature from Konrad Herling, a Greenbelt resident, who asked shouldn't the Latin American community be a part of the Reparations Commission discussion.

Mayor Jordan requested that the Reparations Commission be placed on the March 28 Council Regular Meeting Agenda with additional staff input.

Information Items:

Mr. George informed Council that the Prince George's County Declaration of State of Emergency on March 9, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. expired. He advised the City would lift its Declaration of State of Emergency on March 10, 2022. Mayor Jordan requested that the notification be in writing and presented at the next Council Regular Meeting.

Council thanked Ms. Porter for all her hard work with the City and wished her well in her new endeavors.

This weekend, there was a brief discussion regarding the National League of Cities Conference held in Washington, DC.

There was a brief discussion regarding meeting Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot on Thursday afternoon.

The meeting ended at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen
Assistant to the City Clerk