

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL
Held Wednesday, December 18, 2024

Discussion: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Audit Phase II with Tribesy

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 7:30 pm., held in the Council Chambers and via Zoom.

In attendance: Councilmembers Amy E. Knesel, Danielle P. McKinney, Jenni A. Pompei, Silke I. Pope, Rodney M. Roberts, Kristen L.K. Weaver and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.

City Staff: Josué Salmerón, City Manager; Tyra Smith, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer; and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Deputy City Clerk.

Others present: Gil Watts, Jumoke Warritary and Maya Tietz, Tribesy Consultants and others.

Mr. Salmerón announced that the Pool Deck Repair Project had been approved by the Board of Public Works, allowing \$1.5 million to be shifted from the APRA Fund to the Program Open Space account. He also mentioned that staff would brief the Council on the project's details and prepare for public messaging campaigns in January.

Ms. Smith presented an update on the Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Audit Phase II, which included the creation of a JEDI Action Team, training for employees, and the development of a draft JEDI Vision Statement. The JEDI Action Team will break into subcommittees to target recommendations from the Phase I Audit.

Greenbelt Community Assessment and Engagement

Ms. Watts presented a PowerPoint Presentation to discuss the ongoing process of assessing the City of Greenbelt, emphasizing the importance of capturing the community's story and experiences. She highlighted the City's journey towards becoming healthier and infusing concepts of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion into its Strategic Plan. Ms. Watts also mentioned the importance of transparency and community engagement. Ms. Tietz and Ms. Smith provided context on the demographics of the community members they spoke with during focus groups and the locations chosen for these discussions. They also outlined the topics covered during these conversations. Ms. Watts said they conducted drive-by talks with residents in various places, including a karaoke night at Hook and Real. The team emphasized that the assessments are not linear and ongoing.

Greenbelt City Assessment and Gaps

Ms. Watts discussed the Community Assessment of the City of Greenbelt, highlighting its strengths and gaps. She noted that the City's small-town feel, services for seniors, community policing, and City events were appreciated. However, communication strategies were deemed ineffective and the City's events were exclusive to certain parts of town. Ms. Watts also pointed

out gaps in recreation opportunities and affordability. She suggested opportunities for community engagement, improved communication, and more inclusive City events. Threats included the City's divisions, perceived disengagement from the City Council, and perceived service inequity. Ms. Watts recommended a Community Engagement Coordinator, a more robust communication strategy, modified town halls, departmental evaluations based on community impact, and equity in City programs.

Greenbelt Community Healing and Principles

Ms. Watts and Ms. Tietz presented the findings of the Phase II report of the City of Greenbelt community healing and seven-generation principles project. They highlighted the importance of community engagement, cultural relevance, and the need for a collaborative process to address the historical exclusion and disconnection felt by many community members. The report also identified the need for improved communication methods to better connect with the City's diverse demographics. Councilmembers provided feedback and asked questions about the demographics of the survey sample, the length of time respondents had lived in Greenbelt, and the breakdown of responses by geographic area. Ms. Watts and Ms. Tietz agreed to provide more detailed information. The Council and Mr. Salmerón thanked Tribesy for all their work.

The meeting ended at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

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Deputy City Clerk