

COMMITTEE ON CITIZEN
ENGAGEMENT MINUTES
Feb. 4, 2020

After determining that a quorum was present, the Committee on Citizen Engagement convened in a meeting on Feb. 4, 2020 at 10:30 a.m. in the City Hall Conference Room at City Hall, 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas.

PRESENT: Council Member Keely Briggs, Council Member Paul Meltzer, and Council Member Armintor (arrived at 10:35 a.m.)

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Kuechler, Ryan Adams, Sara Hensley, Stuart Birdseye, Amy Cunningham, Sarah Fullwood, Justin Harmon, Rachel Mendoza, Victoria Nakamura, Gabrielle Tilley, Stephanie Yates

A. Consider approval of the minutes of December 3, 2019.

Council Member Meltzer motioned, and Council Member Briggs seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding the 2020 Denton Citizens Academy.

Amy Cunningham gave a report on the upcoming 2020 Citizen Academy and presented possible changes to the schedule.

Council Member Armintor suggested that she would like to see both a fall and summer Citizen Academy. She would like for City Council to be treated as a department, with options for asking council questions and possibly shadowing a council member for a day.

Council Member Meltzer also thought both seasons might be nice

Council Member Briggs liked the idea of offering both programs, but wanted to know if attendance was a problem in the summer. Amy explained that attendance was sometimes an issue as the program progressed and there is also concern that the commitment of attending all the sessions may be deterring people from signing up if they have other commitments during the summer. Council Member Briggs voiced concern about people being able to attend during the week. She thought Saturdays would be better for most people. Sarah Kuechler brought up concerns about attendance by college students; it is possible that more college students could attend a program in the fall. A possible schedule change to the fall, to include weeknight evenings and Saturdays might draw a broader demographic than those who have been able to attend in the past.

After discussion of demographics and the evening schedule, Council Member Briggs said she would be open to trying a fall program to provide the opportunity to compare attendance data from the two options. Council Member Meltzer agreed.

C. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding the Denton 2020 Census Complete Count Committee.

Ryan Adams gave an overview of the Complete Count Committee and how the City is partnering with representatives from local nonprofit organizations to encourage completion of the Census. The committee will target populations who have historically been underrepresented in the Census. There is no state or federal funding available, so the committee must operate on a constrained budget and leverage community stakeholders, existing City communications, digital resources, and social media to amplify the message and encourage census participation.

Council Member Meltzer asked for clarification of the Census process and how the Census will be executed this year. Ryan gave a summary of methods used by the federal government to notify people of the Census- this is initially done by mail.

Council Member Armintor said she was in favor of the idea of involving businesses in a way that would benefit them. She suggested partnering with businesses to offer discounts or free items for people who have completed the Census. To incentivize students to take the Census, she suggested reaching out to local universities and asking them to find a way to encourage students to participate, either through extra credit or other programs available at the universities.

Council Member Briggs asked how many people are in the Complete Count Committee. Ryan said about 15 to 25 members, depending on who is available to attend meetings. Council Member Briggs voiced concerns that the LGBTQ community was not mentioned and that Outreach Denton wasn't mentioned as a group who was part of the committee. Ryan said he would reach out to invite them to participate.

Council Member Briggs asked if there could be a DTV clip about the Census that could be shared on social media. Ryan confirmed that a short, impactful video is in the works.

Council Member Briggs suggested involving the Chamber of Commerce and asking them to distribute fliers to businesses to remind employees of the Census. She also suggested using PeachJar to reach DISD parents.

Council Member Meltzer suggested including social services agencies to reach people who may not be reached through other avenues. He also suggested that the Spanish versions of the Census handouts he has seen don't mention privacy and how the Census helps non-English speakers. Ryan said there are Census handouts that share that message, which will be shared in addition to the City's handouts.

Council Member Briggs asked if valid ID is needed, or what happens if a person does not have a residence. Ryan explained that IDs are not needed and said he would find more information on

how the Census counts people experiencing homelessness.

Council Member Meltzer asked if churches were included in the outreach groups. Ryan confirmed that churches are an important part of the outreach group.

D. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding citizen engagement, communications, and transparency initiatives.

Sarah Kuechler gave an overview of print communication updates, including recently updated designs to the Resident Update, Citizen Connection, and Construction Guide to improve readability. Council Member Meltzer asked if recycled paper was an option for some of the print materials. Ryan said he would reach out to the printer to determine the options and cost of recycled paper.

Sarah gave an overview of the recent State of the City event. Ryan highlighted the data collected on video-recorded meetings that are available online. Council Member Briggs asked if there are more people watching the meetings than there used to be in the past. She asked if increasing the number of meetings that are recorded was part of the upcoming budget discussion. Sarah confirmed that it is.

Sarah and Ryan gave an overview of the new "Did You Know?" video series produced by DTV to highlight resources. They asked for feedback and suggestions for other topics that should be included in the series. Council Member Briggs suggested playing the videos at the senior centers. Council Member Armintor suggested including solid waste topics, such as electronics recycling and chemical recycling.

Council Member Briggs commented about the neighborhood watch process and voiced appreciation for how the process has been outlined.

Set Future Meeting Dates and Topics.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

The next scheduled committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.



DEB ARMINTOR
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS

RECORDING SECRETARY
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS