

Town Council and the Racial Equity and Social Justice Committee (“RESJ”)

Special Joint Meeting Minutes
Via teleconference due to COVID-19
Wednesday, **June 16, 2021**

Mayor Ackerman called the Special Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Call to Order/Roll Call:

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Bruce Ackerman, Mayor
Barbara Coler
Chance Cutrano
Renee Goddard
Stephanie Hellman

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT Alexandra Rosen (Chair)
Lisel Blash
Veronica Geretz
Tayu Neogy

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Serena Campbell
Sophia Martin

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Garrett Toy, Town Manager
Michele Gardner, Town Clerk
Janet Coleson, Town Attorney

Approval of Agenda and Affidavit of Posting

M/S, Cutrano/Goddard, Motion to approve the affidavit of posting and the agenda as submitted.
AYES: Coler, Cutrano, Goddard, Hellman, Mayor Ackerman

Regular Agenda

1. Conduct a Joint Study Session with the Racial Equity and Social Justice (“RESJ”) to discuss budgetary issues, operational issues, and requests regarding the structure of the committee and subcommittee subject to the Brown Act- Town Manager

The Town Council and the RESJ conducted a study session. The Mayor noted that he and Councilmember Cutrano are the Council liaisons to the RESJ.

The RESJ budget allocation of \$50,000 for Fiscal Year 2021-22 was discussed. The RESJ had submitted funding requests as follows: 1) \$65,000 for facilitation; 2) \$5,000 for survey of residents by the Police Practices Committee on policing; 3) RESJ Policy Subcommittee asked for a \$22,500 grant program for small business owner of color; 4) RESJ Community Education and Outreach Subcommittee asked for \$4,320 for materials and speakers for events; 5) \$20,000 for property owners to search deeds for illegal covenants. The RESJ was ready to engage in fundraising for the committee.

The Council noted that they were waiting to see what the County would do regarding the racial covenant work before allocating money to that program.

The RESJ raised the idea of paying people of color for their perspectives and experiences was raised, both in terms of the RESJ members and paying speakers at events.

The RESJ Community Engagement Subcommittee was planning fundraising efforts to replenish the budget.

The RESJ requested that PPPSA Subcommittee be removed from the requirements of the Brown Act because of the harm and the controversy it is causing. The PPPSA would report out at RESJ meetings, which are subject to the Brown Act. The goal is for the PPPSA to be more effective and efficient.

Town Attorney Coleson referred to the Government Code and stated that the PPPSA is not subject to the Brown Act unless the Council wants it to be. She noted the recording issue is separate and not part of the Brown Act.

Mayor Ackerman opened the meeting to public comments.

George (Geo) Taylor supported conversations in public and having a facilitator.

Patrece Bryan expressed concerned at the committee's lack of progress.

Mimi Newton supported stronger direction from the Council as to what both committees need to accomplish.

Ling-Shien Bell supported the comments of Patrece Bryan.

Mark Bell stated the last RESJ meeting did not allow for proper public comments.

Joe McGarry supported RESJ and their budget requests. The PPPSA should not be subject to the Brown Act.

Eva Chrysanthe stated she would rather see the Police Budget lowered rather than used as a justification for something that should be a volunteer effort.

Jane Richardson Mack was concerned that the Council supports the RESJ's requests. The PPPSA should be subject to the Brown Act.

Richard Applebaum supported the RESJ. He suggested the committee's Mission Statement and Goals be posted on the website.

Frank Egger, Meadow Way, supported the PPPSA Subcommittee being subject to the Brown Act.

Mayor Ackerman closed the meeting to public comments.

Councilmember Coler suggested the Council add this discussion to the July meeting agenda so they could make decisions.

Chair Rosen stated she was resigning from the PPPSA.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Michele Gardner, Town Clerk