

City of South San Francisco
Minutes of the Commission on Equity and Public Safety

Monday, July 18, 2022
Zoom Teleconference Meeting
6:00 pm

Committee Members:

Present: Krystle Cansino, Dr. Jasmin Flores, Nancy Garcia, Paula Claudine Hobson-Coard, Arnel Junio, Alan Perez, Carol Sanders
Absent: None

Staff Members:

Present: Amy Ferguson, Management Fellow
Maryjo Nuñez, Management Fellow

Guests: Mayor Mark Nagales, Vice Mayor Nicolas, City Manager Futrell,
Assistant City Manager Ranals, Police Chief Campbell, Fire Chief
Magallanes

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was called to order at 6:01pm.

AGENDA REVIEW

No changes to the agenda.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Vice Chair Junio presented the Land Acknowledgement to the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

MATTERS OF CONSIDERATIONS

1. Approval of Minutes from June 20, 2022

Commissioner Flores motioned and Commissioner Hobson-Coard seconded. The Commission voted to approve the minutes 7-0.

2. Discussion regarding use of pronouns and applicability to Commissioners

The Commissioners were invited to share their pronouns and encouraged fellow commissioners to ask any questions they may have.

There were no questions.

3. Equity Awareness Training to the Commission by Myra Jolivet, CenterFour Consulting, Inc.

Amy Ferguson introduced Myra Jolivet from CenterFour Consulting. AF shared that Myra Jolivet had worked with the previous commission and that the session purpose aimed to align with factual history to set a trajectory toward relevant recommendations.

MJ began her presentation with definitions and terminology, stating the difference between equity and equality. Equity was defined as meeting people where they are while equality was giving people the same thing.

MJ continued and defined racism. She stated that the word is itself often misused and defined racism as a belief system. She continued, saying, “once we understand this, then we ramp it up into systemic and structural racism: perpetuate group inequity and which manifests as discrimination.”

MJ then began to provide several examples as they relate to various oppressed groups:

a) Black Americans

MJ explained how Black Americans were excluded from the GI Bill, denied home loans, subjected to redlining, and denied voting rights. MJ also shared how this history manifests within South San Francisco.

Within South San Francisco schools, Black, Latino, and Pacific Islander students are disproportionately suspended compared to their enrollment rates. Black, Latino, and Pacific Islander students are also underrepresented in early children’s education.

MJ also mentioned that the National Association of Realtors admitted that they were against the FHA in 1968; they realized how they perpetuated structural racism and reveals just how baked into American society structural racism is.

Unfortunately, the link in the presentation did not work as intended, so MJ paraphrased its contents: Communities of color were deliberately subjected to ghettos, environmental issues, etc. which created a racial wealth gap and thus lessened their influence. This is why it’s important to lead with race, again sharing that race is baked into every system.

Commissioner Sanders shared how she recognizes the existence of structural racism within the tech industry, particularly in its lack of POC, specifically Black, leadership.

Chair Cansino shared how education exemplifies this inequity.

MJ underscored that the Commission must be familiar with intersectionality: that all oppression is linked.

MJ then moved onto the next example: discrimination and Womanhood.

b) Discrimination and Womanhood

MJ shared that the 19th Amendment Passed was in 1920; Equal Credit Opportunity Act passed in 1974
Today, women are paid less than men, and black and Latina women are often paid even less.

c) Indigenous Peoples

MJ shared the following instances as experiences Indigenous peoples have faced under structural racism:

- Indian Removal Act: 1830
- Forced Sterilization in 1930s
- Land Transfer in 2021: Apache was trying to prevent an Australian mining company from taking their land, but the mining company won

d) Colorism and Racism hand-in-hand with Latino community

MJ shared the following instances as experiences the Latino community have faced:

- Forced deportation
- Latino residents in SSF are more likely to get their loan/mortgage application denied
- used to say: "oh that's because their income didn't meet the requirement" → but this is like looking at the symptoms, not the cause

e) Ex: Asian Community

MJ shared the following instances as experiences that the Asian community have faced:

- Chinese Exclusion Act: 1912
- Japanese Internment: 1940s
- anti-miscegenation laws against Filipinos and marriage
- Asian hate crimes increased over 300% in 2021

f) LGBTQIA+

MJ shared the following as examples of what the queer community have faced:

- queer folks were not allowed to work for the government in 1950
- more than 250 anti-LGBT bills written in the past two years

g) Age

MJ shared the following as examples of age discrimination:

- it is legal for employers to ask how old you are
- and there are stereotypes about aging
- in 2009: Supreme Court made it harder to prevail in court against age discrimination

h) Disabled

Lastly, MJ shared the following for the disabled community:

- She explained how this groups is often called the "invisible" minority because of the assumptions of what disabled people can and cannot do which can creates an impoverished state
- experience attitude and structural barriers

However, to finish, MJ shared that there is progress!

Here are the following examples of progress:

- One in 50 black families are millionaires

-2015: same sex marriage required in all 50 states
-54% of Asian Americans have advanced degrees

Lastly, she explained that “the way we advance is by working together!”

MJ asked the following question to the Commissions: How can the Commission make positive changes? Commissioner Flores shared that the asking of age and when you graduated surprised her and asked if MJ could provide her sources so that the Commissioner may read and learn more to which MJ obliged.

Vice Chair Junio shared how he appreciated the definitions for equity and equality as he hadn’t realized they were not interchangeable and now knows the proper usage.

4. Recess - the Commission will take a short break of five minutes and return for the rest of the agenda.

The Commission took a short break beginning at 7:02pm and returned at 7:07pm.

5. Presentation on SSF Racial and Social Equity Action Plan

AF discussed the plan from 2020, going over the goals and strategies taken to accomplish said goal. AF recommended that Commissioners continue to get familiar with this Action Plan and for it to inform the work plan.

Goal 1

Accomplished: Hire fellows

In Progress: Training for Staff, hire DEI director

To Do: Listening tours, data from departments

Goal 2

Accomplished: Mental health clinician hired, MOU between City and County (few cities involved)

In Progress: Gardner center at Stanford will evaluate this program

To Do: Lead community conversations, draft bylaws with equity lens, examine public safety policies and services

Goal 3

Promotores Program

Accomplished: Hired, trained, and onboarded the Promotores

In Progress: Closing cases

To Do: Evaluation of program to come

Economic Opportunities

Accomplished: Opened the Economic Advancement Center (EAC), Guaranteed Income Program
In Progress: classes and services available for residents at EAC

Housing Insecurity

Accomplished: Renter assistance via YMA

Educational Resources

Accomplished: Acquired diverse books, internship programs, the Youth Advisory Committee developed into the Youth Commission

Goal 4

Land Use

Accomplished: Leverage land for affordable housing

Questions

Commissioner Hobson-Coard posed a question, asking what is an MOU?

AF responded that it is language between the City and San Mateo County as to buildout, payments, etc.

Dr. Flores asked if the clinician has been collecting data and what is Stanford Gardner's center?

AF responded that "yes, our clinician has been writing reports which she can provide, and the Gardner Center will evaluate mental health program."

The Commission indicated an interest in receiving a presentation from the Mental Health Clinician with data from the start of the program to now.

Dr. Flores asked if the CAHOOTS program is similar to our program?

City Manager Futrell answered that "we are inspired by CAHOOTS and are getting started to head in that direction... we do hope to get there eventually."

Dr. Flores mentioned that she would like to have someone from CAHOOTS come speak to us.

Dr. Flores asked about what youth in the criminal justice system means for this commission?

AF explained that it likely means juvenile delinquency prevention.

Dr. Flores asked what outreach via the Library entails?

AF explained that Library is a part of this by providing resources, displaying/showcasing accomplishments.

Dr. Flores gave a shoutout to the EAC and that "they are doing phenomenal things for the community."

Dr. Flores asked what exactly does affordable housing mean?

AF shared what the City defines as affordable housing.

Chair Cansino asked if the Youth Commission has the data about suspensions, etc. that informed MJ's presentation.

Assistant City Manager Ranals shared that the study for children's success came from the County and one of the things that they looked at is juvenile incarceration rates, and that SSF is overrepresented and thus labelled as a community of concern.

Chair Cansino shared that she would like to possibly collaborate with the Youth Commission on the recommendation to divert youth from the criminal justice system, and Maryjo Nuñez shared that she can provide the connection.

6. Discussion regarding draft Commission Work Plan

Dr. Flores stated that the Commission should include language to indicate SSF-specific locations.

Dr. Flores posed a question, saying that "we were asked what we would like to see as a commission, but would like to turn it back on city leaders: what are your top perceptions are priorities?"

Mayor Nagales interceded and explained that the City Manager will explain so as not to violate the Brown Act.

City Manager Futrell shared that the main priorities are: mental health, presenting information to the community in a transparent way, and an emergency response plan. This may include data from the Racial Identity Profiling Act and data on emergency calls.

Commissioner Garcia exclaimed that this is what [she] have been looking for: to do something about the mental health problems in the community and is happy to see the City prioritize mental health.

Chair Cansino shared that 988 has just gone live, so instead of calling the police, you would get linked to a suicide prevention and mental/behavioral health but asked, who would get linked after you call 988?

Assistant City Manager Ranals mentioned that the Commission could look at operational issues such as recruitment and what percentage of staff is representative of the community. The Commission could also provide public input on equitable programming and distribution of resources, and provided the following as an example: building a new pool, so we are not just looking at one focus group but many.

Vice Chair Junio stated that he is not sure where, but he probably thinks from one of the strategies, that he recalled reading something that as a commission we are to connect with community members via groups, etc., and that this implies to him that we will be out in the community, correct?

AF explained that by the fall, we will start to have more people in meetings and have more commissioners out in the community.

Assistant City Manager Ranals underscored that this Commission is not like any other commission that has a focus, so they are the conduit between Council and residents.

Commissioner Sanders posed a question, asking "is it appropriate for me to share that I am on the Equity Commission, if you have concerns, please talk to me?"

Assistant City Manager Ranals said that yes, it is appropriate to let them know that you are serving in this capacity and that the City can do outreach: newsletters via mail and email, etc. to inform the community. Assistant City Manager Ranals noted that any social media efforts should be done through staff.

Chair Cansino stated that there are things to do that was mentioned in the past and our positionality and nature will require us to interact with the community so interactions will be kill two birds with one stone.

It was suggested that the Commission could have a virtual open house or could otherwise engage the community.

Dr. Flores exclaimed that before talking to fellow residents, “we should have the confidence to know what we are doing, and this comes from prioritizing our to-do’s ... perhaps we create working groups to tackle the different 3 bullet points.”

Chair Cansino related that “our City Manager had brought that up... let’s go with those interests/passions already, but that [she] likes the idea of ad hoc committees to figure out what that work plan looks like for these bullet points. It’s been apparent that mental health is my thing, so I can start this conversation.”

Chair Cansino asked her fellow Commissioners, “How do people feel about this?”

Commissioner Hobson-Coard stated that this is a good idea, and Commissioner Sanders echoes this and shared that they think this is great, but don’t want to violate the brown act.

AF explained that quorum is 4, so a maximum of 3 people would have to be the limit for these ad hoc committees.

Assistant City Manager Ranals recommended that we agendaize formation of ad hoc committees for the August meeting.

AF told the Commission that someone from ECD could come to talk about housing; and that the Commission was invited to listen to the Public Arts Master Plan. The Commissioners expressed their agreement in listening to the Public Arts Master Plan.

7. Discussion and potential action on approving guiding language for Equity Commission

AF asked the Commission if they have any further edits on the guiding language and stated that they could continue to revise them in the future as a living document which would feed into the bylaws later. If people are ready, they will take a motion to vote and incorporate them.

Assistant City Manager Ranals added that it would be good to have the Commissioners’ buy-in.

Commissioner Hobson-Coard suggested that on the 3rd line, perhaps we should change it to promote “equity and equality.”

Vice Chair Junio concurred, sharing that especially after learning that equity and equality are different, “we should definitely include both.”

Dr. Flores suggested to eliminate comma after oppressions and “and” put “to” before “promote.”

Dr. Flores also suggested that in 3rd sentence, to cut down on the word count and remove all the words and remove equity there.

Dr. Flores asked why is training listed?

Chair Cansino clarified that it’s due to how the Commission wanted to have trainings be required and get that across via the language.

The training sentence could be moved to the Levers of Change Framework.

Dr. Flores suggested that in the 1st sentence, it should start with: to ensure that these oppressions, etc.; that the last sentence is repetitive and to remove it.

Dr. Flores stated that the plan in this way is boring to her as usually introduction is background, then mission and vision, etc.

Chair Cansino asked if there is room for being able to change these words, i.e., from levers of change framework to methodologies?

AF explained that the “levers of change framework” is common language within equity work.

Dr. Flores said that the language is lacking in that the word evaluation is absent: it should be “evaluate” instead of “address” impact as evaluate is a call to action.

Chair Cansino described that she thinks the Commission would still need something to acknowledge that we as a Commission will address things in different ways, so the word “address” present more of this interpersonal relationship aspect.

Assistant City Manager Ranals added that it’s fair to evaluate where discussion and evaluation is needed.

Commissioner Sanders asked if the Commission could we get training on evaluation.

Assistant City Manager Ranals clarified that this is probably something that the City would contract out, but the results could be something that the Commission would be interested in.

AF asked the Chair if the creation of a subcommittee to look and then edit as a small group is favorable, and that this group could have the edits presented at the next meeting?

Dr. Flores stated that she is interested; Commissioner Hobson-Coard is interested; Commissioner Sanders is also interested, and it was determined that these 3 will form this subcommittee.

8. Informational Update by Commission Chair on Interview with San Francisco Chronicle and Potential Photo Opportunity

Chair Cansino said that the Commission is getting a lot of notice, and that there had been an article in the Chronicle about the Commission. The Chair asked the Commissioners whether they would be interested in getting together for a group photo. The majority confirmed that they would want to do this.

9. Items from Commission

Hobson-Coard posed a question, asking what would items from commission entail—personal updates? Assistant City Manager Ranals explained that this Agenda Item is more so for things like if you have a training to share, etc.

10. Items from Staff

There were no items from Staff.

11. Adjournment

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.