



## **Beyond Apology Commission**

Special Meeting | November 8, 2024 | 1:00 – 2:30 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

### **Meeting Minutes**

Commissioners Present: TheRese Anderson Aduni, Phil Armstrong, Jacqueline Evans, Vanessa Hall-Harper, Keith Mayes, D'Marria Monday, Tim Newton, Greg Taylor, Kristi Williams, Corinice Wilson, Damali Wilson

Commissioner Listening via Phone: Mattece Mason

Commissioners Absent: none

#### **I. Call to Order and Introductions**

- a. Lexi called meeting to order at 1:03 and reviewed housekeeping items, especially noting the Beyond Apology Commission Dropbox that has been created to compile resources given to and requested by the Commission.

#### **II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- a. Lexi entertained a motion to approve the November 1 meeting minutes.
  - i. Commissioner Armstrong made a motion, Commissioner Mayes seconded.
  - ii. Aye: 10, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
    1. Tim Newton was not present in the meeting at this time.

- b. Motion passes, minutes approved.

#### **III. Election of Commission Chair/Vice Chair**

- a. In the November 1 meeting, Commissioner Corinice Wilson and Commissioner Williams were nominated for Chair. Lexi opened the floor for additional nominations, and none were made.
  - i. Each nominee shared why they are a good fit for Chair, and the Commission held a democratic election on paper ballots.
  - ii. Commissioner Williams was elected Chair.
- b. In the November 1 meeting, Commissioner Mason was nominated for Vice Chair. Lexi opened the floor for additional nominations and Commissioner Corinice Wilson was nominated.
  - i. Each nominee shared why they are a good fit for Vice Chair (Lexi read an emailed statement from Commissioner Mason). The commission held a democratic election on paper ballots.
  - ii. The vote for Vice Chair was a tie.
  - iii. The Commissioner came to a consensus to hold another vote for Vice Chair at the next meeting.

#### **IV. Guest Speaker: Greg Robinson, Beyond Apology Report**

- a. Chairwoman Williams invited Greg Robinson from the public audience to speak about the Beyond Apology Report as someone who was integral to the process.
- b. Greg shared a summary of the intent of the report and highlighted some sections. Encouraged commission to ground themselves in the report and to pay special attention to recommendations section.
  - i. Mandate for housing and other priority areas
  - ii. Wholistically addressing the issue



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- c. Some things have been done as a city to acknowledge; a lot hasn't been done yet.
- d. During the report creation process, the group brought in national reparations experts like FirstRepair and infused with local context.
- e. Commissioner Armstrong: Do you see the commission as part of the work identified in the report or separate from?
  - i. Greg: The line between good policy and reparations is very tight. Equitable policy is not a substitute for reparations.
- f. Greg encouraged the Commission to study, but not over study. Pick what you will base your work on. For example, Evanston chose a particular data set to base their work on.
- g. Commissioner Corinice Wilson encouraged the Commission to review data the City of Tulsa provided in response to questions at the last meeting as homework.
- h. Commissioner Taylor asked about the legal requirement to focus programs on geographical locations rather than race.
  - i. Greg Robinson noted that the mandate in the report is the harm done in the race massacre & ongoing harm. Need to know what exists and know what has happened in recent years. Part of what has been so challenging is ambiguity and years of silence.
- i. Commissioner Corinice Wilson: Do we have folks who are conducting research or capturing ongoing loss in housing?
  - i. Commissioner Armstrong: Some data is kept, then data collection stops at a certain point. There is a gap in information.

**V. Guest Speaker: Robin Rue Simmons, FirstRepair**

- a. Robin Rue Simmons with FirstRepair joined virtually to speak about FirstRepair as an organization, share about the reparations work ongoing in Evanston, IL, and provide advice to the Commission.
- b. FirstRepair supports housing as first form of redress in reparations. Defining a narrowly tailored path for reparations is most effective.
- c. In Evanston, FirstRepair worked to provide a \$25,000 direct benefit to residents who lived in Evanston during period of harm and their direct descendants. Eligibility is based on if you were harmed, not lineage (ie descended from enslaved individuals). Just so happened that it was the Black community who was directly harmed.
  - i. Reparations committee continuing to fight for additional funding.
  - ii. Recipients as young as mid-20s, oldest is 102.
  - iii. Inter-faith community raised an additional million dollars to support, committed to supporting community fund in perpetuity.
- d. Robin shared that she tells folks that Black Wall Street/Tulsa is an example for local reparations.
- e. Commissioner Q&A
  - i. Commissioner Corinice Wilson: how are you addressing legal challenges?
    - 1. Robin: Federal suit after funds had begun dispersing. As there has not been an injunction, they are continuing to disperse funds. Have outside legal counsel, legal support is necessary, City legal will need to contribute.
  - ii. Commissioner Armstrong: In reference to the reparations book given to the Commission, if you could go back and do something differently what would it be? Anything that can help this commission?
    - 1. Robin: Have more organized community engagement process, Councilor Hall Harper and Greg Robinson did this during the report development process.
  - iii. Councilor Hall Harper: Is the legal framework a public document?
    - 1. Robin: Yes, on FirstRepair's website.
- f. Robin advises the Commission to have City staff co-lead early on.



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- i. Process racism is rooted in government, and there is distrust between community and government, so it's important to have that involvement.
- ii. Municipal government is not solely responsible – universities, school board, hospitals, insurance, banking are all industries that must address this.
- iii. Also need to prioritize ongoing public education so the community understands the process and goals.

**VI. Guest Speakers: Tulsa Housing Programs and Initiatives**

a. Each presenter's full slides are available in the Commission's Dropbox folder.

**b. Cameron Walker: Green Country Habitat for Humanity**

- i. To begin, Cameron noted critique that Habitat for Humanity has encountered as they re-enter north Tulsa as a focus area. He stressed the importance of, under his leadership, designing homes that north Tulsans will be proud to live in and building household wealth.
- ii. Habitat for Humanity programming's edibility is based on income.
- iii. 2020, Habitat adopted an advocacy position to advance Black homeownership opportunities on a national level.
  1. North Tulsa initiative goals:
    - a. Build 250 new homes (going to surpass goal)
    - b. Create more pathways for homeownership in n Tul
    - c. Increase household wealth of n Tul residents
  2. Black Wall Street Square is co-developed with a Black-owned housing development company.
  3. Trying to be mindful of gentrification from a racial and economic perspective.
- iv. Anti-displacement tax relief fund will cap taxes and insurance, fund pays overage based on income. Helps mitigate houses that appraise for higher than Habitat wants to sell them for.
- v. Challenges:
  1. Infrastructure: 100+ years old in north Tulsa. Things are either falling apart, too small, or not in the proper location to build on.
  2. Household income: down payment assistance is critical as we become a city and nation of renters.
- vi. Additional information is available in the slide deck from Habitat for Humanity, located in the Commission Dropbox.

**c. Kandy Whitley-White: Be Well CDC, North Tulsa Forward**

- i. The program's goal is eliminating housing as a contributing factor to poor health. Created to support potential and existing homeowners with navigating the lifecycle of the homeownership process. Aimed to eliminate as many barriers and thresholds as possible.
- ii. Have supported 57 families purchased a home in north Tulsa in under 2.5 years. 95% of these families identify as BIPOC.
- iii. Families can utilize this funding alongside other sources.
- iv. Challenge: Expanded funding sources required min home purchase price and there is a shortage of available housing stock and qualified applicants.
- v. Additional information is available in the slide deck from Be Well CDC, located in the Commission Dropbox.

**d. Dion'Trae Hayes: Met Cares Foundation, Growing Greenwood**

- i. Dion'Trae began her presentation with a shout out to Chairwoman Williams for laying foundation of the initiative that Growing Greenwood grew from.



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- ii. Growing Greenwood was designed to address significant wealth gap in the north Tulsa community, and homeownership is a primary way to grow wealth. It supports efforts to restore Greenwood back to a state of prominence.
- iii. Challenges: Housing stock, residency stipulations, credible realtors/financial institutions not being familiar with local programming, favorable loan rates.
- iv. Recommendations: Higher down payment assistance, partner with banking institutions, lender education – ensuring lenders are familiar with downpayment assistance programs so they can recommend to clients, expand geographic area, and eliminate income restrictions.
- v. Additional information is available in the slide deck from Met Cares, located in the Commission Dropbox.
- e. Travis Hulse: City of Tulsa, Emergency Repair and Rehab Loan Programs**
  - i. Both are long-existing programs, required to be a homeowner to receive funds.
  - ii. Emergency Repair Program: Up to \$7,500 grant to repair a specific health/safety issue and make home livable.
    - 1. 150 households served every year.
    - 2. Program does not have geographic focus, but could in the future, eligibility is based on income.
  - iii. Home Rehabilitation Program: Forgivable loan up to \$4,500 to return a home to a livable standard.
    - 1. 10 households served per year due to funding constraints, there is a 200-household waitlist currently.
    - 2. Provides lead testing for homes build prior to 1978.
    - 3. Title 55 City Ordinance defines livable standard.
  - iv. Challenges: requires home ownership and a clear title.
    - 1. Many folks have a clouded title, so an area for opportunity is providing legal assistance to support folks with their titles so they can stay in their homes.
  - v. Additional information is available in the slide deck from City of Tulsa, located in the Commission Dropbox.
  - vi. Commissioner Damali Wilson: What are the common challenges from individuals who are applying that keep them from receiving assistance?
    - 1. Travis: Title issues, properties can't be located in flood plane, lead.

## **VII. Adjournment**

- a. At the close of the meeting, Commissioner Armstrong proposed officially making the next meeting two hours instead of 1.5 hours. Chairwoman Williams agreed, and consensus was reached in the Commission to make this change.
- b. Lexi entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
  - i. Commissioner Armstrong made a motion, Commissioner Corinice Wilson seconded.
  - ii. Aye: 11, Nay: 0
- c. Motion passed, meeting adjourned at 2:46 pm.