

AGENDA

**1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / ACCEPT OR MODIFY AGENDA /
ACCEPT OR MODIFY MINUTES / CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE**
6:30 PM

MEMBERS: JAMES FRIDAY, SUSAN WILMOT, KIAN ASHABI, BRENDA FANTROY-JOHNSON,
JANNA CHAN, SAVANNA ROVELSTAD. PEGGI ERICKSON

COUNCILMEMBER LIAISONS: JOE DEETS, RASHAM NASSAR

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS – 10 MIN

3. CITY COUNCIL PRESENTATION DEBRIEF

4. PROPOSAL TO EXTEND RETF FOR ANOTHER YEAR

5. "WELCOME" SIGNAGE UPDATE – NEXT STEPS?

6. EVENTS – ARE THERE ANY UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES?

**7. FARMER'S MARKET COLLATERAL UPDATE (WHERE IS THE COLLATERAL AND
HOW WE USE IT?)**

8. IDEAS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS – KIAN

9. MLK DAY CELEBRATION – PEGGI

10. AGENDA ITEMS FOR 12/5 MEETING (POTENTIAL FINAL RETF MEETING)

11. COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER – 5 MIN

12. ADJOURNMENT
8:00 PM

1. Develop a series of events through the end of the year designed to promote awareness and raise the community's level of engagement around race and to encourage a dialogue between Bainbridge Islanders and its elected officials on this topic.
2. Task Force will invite the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and the People's Institute Northwest to first come and meet with the task force and then we will have a study session discussion.
3. Task Force to provide a series of recommendations to City Council on ways in which the City can help the community become a more inclusive and responsive community when it comes to addressing racial inequities.



MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / ACCEPT OR MODIFY AGENDA / CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

6:30 PM

- a. Motion to accept the agenda as amended.

MEMBERS: JAMES FRIDAY, SUSAN WILMOT, KIAN ASHABI, BRENDA FANTROY-JOHNSON, JANNA CHAN, SAVANNA ROVELSTAD, PEGGI ERICKSON

COUNCILMEMBER LIAISONS: JOE DEETS, RASHAM NASSAR

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a. Deanna Martinez: Are city council meetings open to non-Bainbridge residents? There are many Latino/a people who work on the island but do not live on the island.
 - i. Janna: Yes, absolutely.
- b. Karen Vargas: I have lived on Bainbridge Island since 1992 and co-chair the Multicultural Advisory Committee for BISD. There are so many disparities and incidents that happen in our community and there is no place for the community to have conversations or address city leaders. What is this task force going to do to support communities of color? I have lived here for 25 years and the incidents I've witnessed are unspeakable. We can no longer sweep these incidents under the rug. People of color cannot separate themselves from everyone else. The health and wellness of the community is reflected by how well the city serves minority populations. We have entrusted you all to do this work for us.
 - i. Brenda: I've been reviewing the incidents you shared with me from 1991 when white supremacists were active on the island. The city organized a force to challenge this, but that force was not permanent.
 - ii. Deanna: Having the support of community is so important to this work. Things don't get done until the people say enough is enough.

3. ACCEPT OR MODIFY MINUTES

- a. Peggi: My comments about my conversation with Leslie was in reference to all committees and not just the RETF.
 - i. Correction: Human Rights Conference is Dec 6.
- b. Motion to accept the minutes as amended.

4. UPDATES FOR GARE PROPOSAL

- a. Conversations with city council members
 - i. James: My conversation with the Mayor at the farmers market seemed to be very positive. He said that there was no need to be at the farmers market anymore and that he fully supported our work. I was later taken by surprise when the Mayor sent an email saying the opposite of what I heard at the market.
 - ii. Council Member Deets: I forwarded the proposal to the entire council and the mayor let me know that he was disappointed in the proposal.



- iii. *Janna reads the mayor's emails aloud – copy provided at the end of the minutes*
- iv. Kian: It's so disappointing to hear this. We are here to make this island a better place for everyone.
- v. Peggi: Perhaps a way we could respond is to say that our proposal is a first step--before the city takes racial equity out into the community it first needs grounding. Mayor Medina may have a good understanding of this issue, but many others do not. First, we want to start from within then go out. Maybe that will help them to see the bigger picture.
- vi. Council Member Deets: I have spoken with the mayor and let him know that I'm a journey. To address this embedded systemic issue we have to get into the fabric of this organization. I said this a few different ways and he basically said, "I got it." We took this information and shared it with our contact at GARE for guidance.
- vii. Sue: We decided to go with GARE because we wanted to truly solve this issue versus apply a band-aid. We have since also had a conversation with Council Member Tirman and he feels confident that this will pass. He also made some suggestions that we broaden the vision to include other agencies on the island (Fire, Parks, BSD). We have been limited in our access to these agencies, though.
 - 1. Council Member Deets: Access to the other agencies is not unusual. This applies to all city activities. The problem here is time. It could take a year to get everyone on board. Start with the city and name that the intent is to open it up. GARE has a NW Cohort where different jurisdictions do this together. Can we have a Bainbridge cohort?
- viii. James: We are on a time-limited schedule. The proposal is crafted as it should be – it's all or nothing. This is a long-term plan.
- ix. Brenda: I think the idea of opening it up is a good idea.
- x. Council Member Nassar: Stick with what you have. Those were Council Member Tirman's opinions – but definitely research this with GARE. This is worth looking into, but this will create massive delays. This is a paradigm shift – mindset shifts. Institutional racism started with the institution. Whether people will allow themselves to comprehend the full meaning of this will be heard on November 5. There are a lot of shifts happening now – with climate, racial identity, and sexual identity.
 - 1. I also spoke directly with Mayor Medina. I let him know that he hurt a lot of people's feelings and people are upset. He was surprised. He said, "I was probing them and pushing them to do better." I told him that this is better. This package is the way to get to where you want to be. You cannot assume that this committee can sit here and flip through our code and integrate racial equity.
- xi. Sue: Council Member Tirman also said to present this as a win – we can be the first on the peninsula. He also said to have community support ready.
- xii. Peggi: Can we share the presentation with community members?
 - 1. Council Member Deets: Yes, everything is public.
- xiii. Council Member Deets: prior to the 11/5 meeting the RETF can encourage people to write their council members. There is no public comment at study sessions.
 - 1. Peggi: Let's have people publicly comment ahead of the study session
 - 2. Council Member Deets: Just make sure people specifically say they support the proposal.



- b. Identify a sub-committee to prep the presentation
 - i. Motion passed to assign James, Sue, and Janna to subcommittee
- c. Letters of support: endorsement of the proposal as written
 - i. Unions (Sue), MAC (Janna), IslandWood (Janna), Helpline House (James), Bainbridge Arts/Parks/Museum (Brenda), BI History Museum (Karen)
 - I. James: Make sure people know that this will be public record
- d. Meeting Date: Presentation during November 5 city council study session
- e. **Action Steps:**
 - i. Sub-committee: Have a conversation with GARE about a Bainbridge cohort and whether Nora can join us for the presentation.
 - ii. Janna: Draft a memo/talking points for supporters
 - iii. Janna: Send proposal to Roz to post to website + memo/talking points

5. RETF > PERMANENT COMMITTEE PROCESS

- a. Council Member Deets: The outcome of this proposal will likely dictate the fate of the task force. There will be a lot of work to be carried out if the proposal passes.
- b. Sue: Does this task force carry over or do seats open up again?
 - i. Council Member Deets: all current seats expire at the end of December
- c. Council Member Deets: We can bring this up, but I don't think the council has the appetite to make this permanent right now.
- d. Council Member Nassar: An extension would be easier. We just had a heated conversation about ending longstanding committees on the island.

6. COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

- a. Karen: You can come and speak to different organizations on the island. I want to know where the chamber stands on all this. We need to be strategic if we're going to organize efforts to bring everyone together.
- b. Deanna: I want to disagree with the Mayor's sentiment that the RETF no longer needs to be at the farmers market. You want to catch everyone. You need to have visibility. There's more work to be done on the mayor's part. I stand on my integrity – anything I say here I will say anywhere. You need to go beyond your discomfort.

7. ACTION STEPS:

- a. Peggi will reach out to the city's IT department to look into her issues with receiving emails.
- b. James: Pick some dates for additional farmers market presence

8. NEXT AGENDA:

- i. Proposal to extend RETF for another year
- ii. "Welcome" Signage update - next steps
- iii. Opportunities to engage the community (podcast, graphic design, outreach/lobbying)
- iv. Events - Are there any upcoming opportunities?
- v. Farmers Market Collateral Update

9. ADJOURNMENT

8:11 PM

Email correspondence read aloud at meeting:

From: Christine Brown <cbrown@bainbridgewa.gov>

Sent: Sunday, September 22, 2019 1:33 PM

To: City Council Distribution Group <CityCouncilDistributionGroup@bainbridgewa.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Proposal

Dear Councilmembers,

Please do not respond to me or write to me on this topic. I want to give you an update on what the RETF wants to do. They have presented to me and Morgan a proposal. The proposal is to hire GARE and spend \$40 to \$50K (roughly) to have GARE lead the City staff and Council through an educational process followed by a deep dive into the City's internal policies and procedures with the goal being to change those policies and procedures to make them more supportive of racial equity. I have attached their proposal and supporting materials (in the form provided to me a couple weeks ago).

I have spoken with James Friday, the Chair of RETF, and Council Member Deets Deets, one of our two liaisons to RETF, about this and explained how I believe it does not accomplish the job that we set out for RETF. However, they are insistent that we put this on an agenda and consider it. So this will be on the November 5th agenda.

Please see below for some indication of what I've been saying to Mr. Friday and how that conversation has gone.

Thank you,

Mayor Medina

Mayor Medina Medina

Bainbridge Island Mayor and Council Member

Position 2, North Ward

kmedina@bainbridgewa.gov

206-512-7155

From: Mayor Medina Medina <kmedina@bainbridgewa.gov>
Sent: Sunday, September 22, 2019 8:47 AM
To: James Friday <james.friday@cobicommittee.email>; Council Member Deets Deets <jdeets@bainbridgewa.gov>; Susan Wilmot <susan.wilmot@cobicommittee.email>
Cc: Morgan Smith <msmith@bainbridgewa.gov>; Council Member Nassar Council Member Nassar <rCouncilMemberNassar@bainbridgewa.gov>
Subject: RE: Proposal

Hi James,

Sorry to take so long to reply. I want to be very clear about what I've said to you, repeatedly, in all of our conversations.

RETF has the opportunity to do something big and meaningful here. When the Council formed the RETF, we very specifically said that we were NOT forming a body to take a look at the City's practices. None of the people who provided testimony at the Council meeting about racism on the Island were complaining about the City. They were complaining about racist people in our community who have mistreated them – they were complaining about our community. Therefore, the Council formed a Task Force to provide the City with recommendations on actions the City can take to advance race equity within our broader community.

You have a City Council that is ready to take action to impact our community. We are ready; you don't need to educate us on the issue. I don't support a proposal that focuses simply on reviewing the City's own internal policies. That will not accomplish anything of any great worth because the City's internal policies are not the problem. Might there be some small benefit from a deep dive into the City's policies? Sure. But that benefit will be miniscule compared to the benefit that we might be able to achieve from passing laws that impact the entire community or providing funding to efforts that impact the entire community.

My point here is that you are aiming low. Aim high instead. You already have a Council that is ready to do something. We are simply waiting for someone to give us recommendations on actions we can take in the community. To be very clear: I will not support simply hiring GARE because it does not do enough to address the concerns raised by those people who testified to the Council. Let me put this differently: I am not going to be part of simply greenlighting an internal workplan that results in a cute report that sits on a shelf and does nothing.

If there is something that I'm missing here, some explanation for how a focus solely on the City's internal practices will actually change our community, please educate me.

What I've also told you, repeatedly, is that I work on these issues in my daily life. I have a deep understanding of race equity issues and equity issues more generally. My critique of what you are proposing comes from this understanding. When I explained to people in the County whom I work with on these issues what RETF is proposing, they were very disappointed. They understand that RETF has a chance to do something big and important, something that could be an example for the rest of the County. Yet RETF is not doing it.

I also encourage you to stop the insinuations. You said this:

I deeply appreciate Mayor Medina's interest in the work of the Task Force and recognize that he, like many others, is on a journey to educate himself about racial inequities to make Bainbridge a more welcoming environment for marginalized communities. The work toward racial equity is an adaptive challenge and requires transformation - mindset shifts, structural changes, collaborative practices, and a long term vision

One way to take that statement is like this: You just made it personal and stated that I need education on this; that my lack of support for what you are proposing is due to my need to "educate" myself "about racial inequities." In short, you don't like what I'm saying, so you resort to personal attacks against me. I ask you to do better.

This item is on the Council's agenda for November 5th.

Thank you,

Mayor Medina

Mayor Medina Medina

Bainbridge Island Mayor and Council Member

Position 2, North Ward

kmedina@bainbridgewa.gov

206-512-7155

From: James Friday <james.friday@cobicommittee.email>

Sent: Saturday, September 14, 2019 9:12 AM

To: Mayor Medina Medina <kmedina@bainbridgewa.gov>; Council Member Deets Deets <jdeets@bainbridgewa.gov>; Susan Wilmot <susan.wilmot@cobicommittee.email>

Subject: Proposal

I'm writing today to acknowledge a misunderstanding regarding the meeting I had with Mayor Medina at last week's farmers market. I perceived Mayor Medina's response to the Race Equity Task Force's upcoming proposal to be affirmative, but I understand now that there are aspects of the proposal that may have been misconstrued or taken out of context.

I deeply appreciate Mayor Medina's interest in the work of the Task Force and recognize that he, like many others, is on a journey to educate himself about racial inequities to make Bainbridge a more welcoming environment for marginalized communities. The work toward racial equity is an adaptive challenge and requires transformation - mindset shifts, structural changes, collaborative practices, and a long term vision. That is what the Race Equity Task Force plans to propose to the city council in October.



CITY OF
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

RACE EQUITY TASK FORCE
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2019

I look forward to continuing these important conversations with the mayor, city manager, and city council members for as long as it takes to ensure that Bainbridge meets the goals of its comprehensive plan and addresses inequities head-on. There is no silver bullet to solving racism but, working together, we can make Bainbridge a better, more equitable city for future generations.

Thanks for the conversations,

James Friday

RETF

James Friday, Chair

11/07/19