



Racial Equity Committee Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2023, 7 – 8:00 pm, Zoom

Attended by:

Haile Sims, Chair	Carrie Paulette	Miel Castagna-Herrera
Emily Cramer	XavierComeaux	Diane Mora, Secretary

Committee Goals:

1. Develop economic and workforce opportunities for businesses and employees of color and identify any obstacles that exists
2. Establish that Roeland Park is an open and welcoming community to people of all races and backgrounds, where acting on racist beliefs is not tolerated.
3. Develop racial bias and equity education and outreach for city staff, elected/appointed officials and residents.
4. Create more community engagement activities that involve our Police Department to facilitate stronger relationships with the community.

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Haile Sims via Zoom.

A. Approve December/January/February minutes

Miel Herrera made a motion to approve the December 2022, January 2023, and February 2023 minutes. The motion was seconded by Emily Cramer and was unanimously approved.

B. Notes from the Chair – 5 mins, H. Sims

Haile is attending a 14 week Johnson County Government Academy and is learning a great deal about the operation of county government. He has also completed the City of Roeland Park Citizen's Academy and encouraged other REC committee members to attend similar academy's when the opportunity arises.

C. Introduction -- 5 mins, M. Herrera

Miel Castagna-Herrera is the new Ward 4 City Council member of the Roeland Park City Council. She and her husband, Curtis, are longtime residents of Roeland Park and business owners. Miel was motivated to join City Council in order to increase the racial and cultural diversity of the committee, and is committed to raising her voice to ensure better representation for all citizens. She is delighted to be a liaison between the REC and City Council, and will attend REC meetings as often as possible. She also offered Cafe Corazon as a place where the REC could hold its monthly meetings. The April meeting has been scheduled at Cafe Corazon - Westport.

D. April/May Meeting Schedule -- 5 mins, H. Sims

April 2023 meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 26, 7:00 p.m. Cafe Corazon, 1721 Westport Road. May 2023 meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, May 30, 7:00 p.m. at Roeland Park City Hall.

E. Contact Juliana with SM Post – 5 mins., H. Sims

Haile asked if anyone had contact information for Juliana Garcia, journalist for the Shawnee Mission Post. He would like us to have an update about what is happening with the Shawnee Indian Mission School in Fairway.

F. Education Series – 5 minutes, H. Sims

Goal 3: Develop racial bias and equity education and outreach for city staff, elected/appointed officials and residents.

If anyone is aware of pertinent events around the metro, Haile requested notifications be sent to him via email so he can update the community calendar. The ongoing education mission of the REC is to keep our community and residents aware of opportunities to expand their understanding and appreciate of self and others by attending events:

- April
- May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Appreciate month. Carrie will look for related events and notify.
- June could focus events around Juneteenth celebrations or educational events.
- July. Diane will check with Pete's Garden to see if we can receive meals to be distributed to Roeland Park residents at a scheduled time and place. Possibly at Boulevard Apartments. Miel suggested this might be an opportune time to recruit POC to vacant positions on the REC.
- August is when Swope Park hosts the International Festival.
- September the "Neighbors for a Better Roeland Park" will host a free concert at R Park featuring Latins and Indigenous artists.
- October REC partners with the Roeland Park Police Department for the annual city-wide event.

G. New Business/Questions

Emily asked if we will have a new City liaison since Erin Winn is no longer available to attend. Haile indicated he does not think Erin's position at the City has been filled yet.

Carrie Paulette made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Xavier Comeaux seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.