



## CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

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2175 Cherry Avenue ♦ Signal Hill, CA 90755-3799

July 28, 2020

### **AGENDA ITEM**

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: HANNAH SHIN-HEYDORN  
CITY MANAGER**

**SUBJECT: RACE AND EQUITY FRAMEWORK**

#### **Summary:**

In the wake of George Floyd's murder and protests for racial justice across the United States, the City of Signal Hill seeks to identify, understand, and address current issues surrounding racial justice, systemic inequities, and structural racism within our community. Recent events have illuminated that certain public practices and policies have created inequities and wide disparities in opportunities related to education, employment, housing, health care, public safety, and wealth for Black people and other persons of color.

The City of Signal Hill seeks to engage the community and dialogue on various aspects of race and equity. The proposed Race and Equity Framework is an evolving effort to address systemic racism and bias in the policies and practices of municipal government. Tonight the City Council will consider approving the proposed Race and Equity Framework and authorizing the City Manager to procure professional consulting services to support development, facilitation, and implementation activities.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Provide staff with direction on the proposed Race and Equity Framework, including formation of the Diversity Coalition Committee.
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute a small dollar Contract Services Agreement for a not-to-exceed cost of \$25,000 and a term of 12 months for professional consulting services to support development, facilitation, and implementation activities related to the Race and Equity Framework, in a form approved by the City Attorney.
3. Authorize the City Manager to purchase a membership for the Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) at a cost of \$1,000.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

Based on staff recommendations, the total required funding amount is \$26,000. Staff recommends reallocating funding from Police Services Contract Services (Account No. 100-74-5400) and Community Services Legal Services (Account No. 100-82-5410) as follows:

Account	Account No.	Amount
<b>Police Services Contract Services</b>	100-74-5400	\$10,000
<b>Community Services Legal Services</b>	100-82-5410	\$16,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$26,000</b>

Staff is requesting the City Council transfer a total of \$26,000 in funds as follows:

Account	Account No.	Amount
<b>Community Services Dues &amp; Memberships</b>	100-82-5310	\$1,000
<b>Community Services Contract Services</b>	100-82-5400	\$25,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$26,000</b>

### **Strategic Plan Objectives:**

Goal No. 5: Ensure an enhanced quality of life for residents.

Goal No. 6: Promote a transparent and open government.

### **Background:**

At its meeting of July 14, 2020, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2020-07-6576, which affirmed the following:

**Section 1.** *That the City Council of the City of Signal Hill believes in **Liberty** and **Justice** for **All**.*

**Section 2.** *That Signal Hill affirms its commitment to foster a culture in which **ALL** members of the community, (1) feel safe, respected and valued; (2) are invited to participate fully, sharing their unique gifts, talents and backgrounds; (3) increasingly recognize the value of perspectives that differ from their own; and (4) understand that diversity and inclusion are key priorities of the City's success.*

**Section 3.** *That the Signal Hill City Council calls upon all elected, appointed and Administrative staff, the residents and business community to come together to identify, assess, revise, and eliminate areas that promote or uphold anti-Blackness, systemic racism, and the role that we and our communities play in upholding systems of systemic racism.*

**Section 4.** *That the responsibility falls on each one of us, regardless of the color of our skin or socioeconomic status, to work together to create a "new normal" in which the legacy of bigotry and unequal treatment no longer infects our institutions, systems, and values.*

**Section 5.** *That City of Signal Hill shall create a Diversity Coalition Committee to examine the current policies as it relates to city policing, city operations and city-related events.*

**Section 6.** *That "Black Lives Matter."*

This resolution followed upon statements issued by both Mayor Robert Copeland on behalf of the City Council and Chief of Police Chris Nunley condemning the actions of the police involved in George Floyd's murder and recognizing that we have a significant opportunity to affect real and lasting change within our community.

### **Analysis:**

The City Council's previous actions were the first steps in a community dialogue to review existing practices, policies, and procedures; to engage stakeholders in important conversations; to report on the outcomes of this engagement; and to improve where needed. This process is intended to be a thoughtful, deliberate approach to a broader review of the City as both an organization and a regional presence with community-wide impact, committed to addressing systemic inequities beyond policing. This work will require sustained action involving community partners representing a spectrum of constituencies. Recognizing the magnitude and complexity of the work required, it is important that the Council approve a framework that proceeds with urgency, thoughtful

evaluation, and engagement with stakeholders while ensuring transparency, accessibility, and accountability.

### Diversity Coalition Committee

The City Council committed to the formation of a Diversity Coalition Committee (DCC). The DCC is envisioned to include various stakeholders from the community. Diversity, as understood and advanced by the DCC, will be defined as the entire range of human differences that includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, and national origin.

The proposed goals of the DCC are focused on three specific areas: education, facilitation, and continuous improvement.

#### **Education**

- Serve as a resource for City government and the community by providing information, education, and communication that facilitates a better understanding and celebrates our differences.
- Provide education regarding the community's overall diversity.
- Work with City departments to assist with events and activities.

#### **Facilitation**

- Engage the community as Diversity and Inclusion Ambassadors to solicit feedback and information to be provided back to the City.
- Expand community participation and engagement.
- Host community listening sessions.
- Assist the City in supporting and working with all areas of government and the community to eliminate and prevent discrimination, hate, or bias.

#### **Continuous Improvement**

- Provide recommendations and information to the City Council that identify opportunities to address issues of diversity, promote diversity programs, and/or provide guidance to create a more equitable, accessible, safe, welcoming and inclusive government and community.
- Advise the City Council on best practices for conducting outreach to a diverse community.
- Make recommendations to the City Council on new events and activities that are appropriate and relevant for the Signal Hill community.

## **Areas of Focus**

- Prioritize racially-just policing.
- Ensure the availability of diverse and affordable housing options.
- Cultivate a welcoming and inclusive retail environment.
- Maximize the use of public spaces.

The DCC is envisioned to be the nucleus that drives the process and should model the kind of relationships and openness that the City Council hopes to see in the overall effort.

## **DCC Formation**

Staff is proposing the following in regards to the formation of the DCC:

- Conduct an open recruitment for interested residents and business representatives.
  - A key factor to the success of the DCC will be the diversity of its membership, representing our community as a whole.
- Report back to the City Council on the number of applicants.
  - Based on the number of applicants, the City Council will decide whether to allow all applicants to sit on the Committee, or to identify a selection process. Regardless of composition, everyone interested will be able to participate in the DCC meetings.
- Allow the DCC to elect leadership from among its membership.
- Initially meetings will be held monthly.
- Every six (6) months the DCC will be charged to review a set of practices and policies, and will submit a final written report and recommendations to the City Council regarding areas for improvement within those practices and policies.
- While the DCC will initially focus on the realm of policing, in subsequent phases the DCC should examine other City systems, policies and structures.

## Professional Services

To lead the work efforts required in this significant undertaking, staff recommends the City Council authorize the City Manager to bring on a community facilitator to support development, facilitation, and implementation activities related to the Race and Equity Framework. A good facilitator will be important for long-term success. The ideal facilitator will be someone who has a proven track-record of engagement in the community working to improve race relations and has practical, hands-on experience.

The facilitator's role will be to support the DCC. The facilitator will:

- Act as a neutral, unbiased third-party, and establish ground rules for an effective process wherein no one individual or group is permitted to dominate a discussion or hold special privilege.
- Ensure civility and effective communications by encouraging participation and sharing of information, making sure everyone has input and ensuring that everyone feels that they are in a safe and comfortable environment.
- Focus matters on the task at hand and take ownership to make sure members of the group are working together and help the group work toward their goals, without bias.
- Bring fresh perspectives and new questions to the discussion.
- Ask difficult questions and confront assumptions; move the group forward when dealing with difficult or controversial issues.

The facilitator will work closely with the City Manager and Deputy City Manager and ensure the goals and objectives of the City Council are met. It is envisioned that the facilitator will provide an update for City Council discussion every 60 days. Regular reporting will reinforce the City Council's ongoing engagement and attention to the issues involved.

#### Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE)

GARE is a national network of government agencies working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. GARE is a strategic affiliate of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) that specifically focuses on advancing equity and inclusion in local government as well as helping local governments develop and implement equity and inclusion strategies.

GARE provides resources and support to jurisdictions committed to advancing racial equity through six strategies: (1) using a racial equity framework that clearly articulates racial equity, implicit and explicit bias, and individual, institutional, and structural racism; (2) building organizational capacity so that actions are sustainable; (3) implementing racial equity tools to change policies, programs, and practices; (4) being data-driven to measure the success of specific programmatic and policy changes and to develop baselines, set goals, and measure progress; (5) partnering with other communities to achieve meaningful results; and (6) operating with urgency and accountability.

As a core member of GARE, the City would have access to tools, resources, and training opportunities to support internal efforts. The proposed framework in the next section has been informed by, and reflects, the principles articulated by GARE.

#### Proposed Framework

The proposed framework (Attachment A) includes suggested elements to guide next steps. Some of this work, such as responding to the "8 Can't Wait" campaign or Obama's Mayor's Pledge, have already been addressed or can be addressed relatively

quickly with staff-initiated actions. Other work, such as identifying and reducing bias in the workplace, must be addressed through analysis of existing practices and policies, goal setting, and monitoring and reporting. Finally, elements such as applying a racial equity lens to policy decisions will require foundational discussion, awareness training, and organizational development for staff, the City Council, and community stakeholders.

The proposed framework is intended to be an organic document that may evolve and transform during this journey. It recognizes that each step in this journey will be informed and affected by the steps that come before. The work involved is certain to raise sensitivities by challenging long-held practices and principles, such that the pace and sequence of the work ahead must be flexible while persistent.

This is accomplished through four stages across a variety of elements. The four stages are 1) review, 2) engage, 3) report, and 4) take immediate or near-term action, which may take the form of framing recommendations for future improvements. While there is an undeniable urgency to confronting systemic and institutional racism, it will require a sustained effort to affect lasting change.

**Review:** Existing policies, procedures, documentation, and practices in the organization, as well as emerging best practices from other jurisdictions and advisory groups, will be examined to identify areas of improvement and focus in the review stage.

**Engage:** In the engage stage, various stakeholders will be convened to discuss those potential improvements and to offer additional feedback and options.

**Report:** The report stage will synthesize the earlier two stages and include recommendations for immediate and near-term actions to the City Council.

**Take Action:** The fourth stage will be the implementation and ongoing evaluation of those improvements. The work of progressing towards a more equitable community will not be achieved when the framework is complete. The City must continue to diligently evaluate whether it is reaching the outcomes it hoped to achieve and evolve its framework accordingly. This last stage acknowledges that the outcomes of the work should be the focus, not just the efforts put in.

### Immediate Recommended Review and Actions by the DCC

An immediate review of the Police Department's policies and practices represents a necessary element of addressing inequities in Signal Hill. The initial framework draft provides some thought on expanding concepts that could have urgent and lasting change within the community and is meant to provide something for the City Council to consider as a springboard for the work ahead.

As indicated in the initial framework, staff recommends convening the DCC to quickly review, solicit community input, and develop recommendations to address the eight

specific police use of force issues identified in the Obama Foundation Mayor's Pledge and 8 Can't Wait campaigns. While Police Department staff has completed an initial comparison (Attachment B), an independent review including public input will help ensure the City addresses these issues comprehensively.

### Conclusion

The City's vision to be open, inclusive, and welcoming to all is an aspiration that is not easy for any community to achieve. City staff and City Council do not have all the answers needed to address this important challenge. The City, as both an institution and a community, will need to engage, communicate, and collaborate in order to recognize longstanding inequities and make lasting progress to remove the barriers of systemic racism. As partners in this journey, we must all commit to self-reflection, intentional conversations, and ongoing action.

### Attachments