Meeting with Geneva, IL DEI Task force Reps – 8/8/2022

Present:

Mera Johnson (City staff liaison)

Linda Schaefer

Renee Wilberg

Ben McCready (Assistant City Administrator)

Prior to launching the task force ----Strategic plan advisory committee (SPAC) looked into this for a year – they weren't prescriptive – initiated this based on the awareness that "we're not experts in what all of Geneva's underlying issues might be but we have a common belief about how our community can be more inclusive" – this was their focus

<u>They put out a call to community for a 2-year task force for the city and the community</u> –

Same challenges as in Stoughton re: parameters of membership/what to address – schools, library, parks? Etc.- what were the parameters going to be?

Many have school issues – bullying – wanted this addressed.

Determining membership:

It was difficult to determine membership – decided you have to live in the city – OR if you are employed FT or PT in the city –

9 members – staff liaison and SPAC liaison –

Someone who is a business owner should be represented –

Student pop – they have a student member

Came up with a list of community organizations who might be interested – school, business - - "not in our purview as the city)

Generating interest – created a list of minority – owned/women- owned businesses – SPAC did this – looked at tri-city area /greater fox valley – Kane and DuPage

counties – churches, synagogues, temples, etc. – NAACP chapters, Hispanic commerce chamber, Google search, maps, talked to other non-profits and asked who they interact with and then targeted invitations to them

50 applied for the 9 spots- had an interview -0 3 Nights- SPAC volunteers di the interviews -

3-5 intro Q's- designed to be 15 min interviews –

Committee then decided – 10 not eligible – not live there, work there, go to school - 50 candidates met criteria – then they established the 9 and 3 back ups

After establishing who was on the task force they began - LISTENING to the community – had various members of the community come in and share what they've been doing through a DEI lens –

Chief of police, Sherriff, Housing, Historic society/museum –(history of DEI in Geneva– what did that look like?)

Sent invitation to listening session to various community groups –

Geneva's Agendas are on TV – we can watch the listening session if we want to

40 ppl came – *did a press release prior to listening session* - - then they came up with priority areas – final goal is to report to city council this October 2022

What comes next?

Established parameters – after 1 year report back – to city – go for another year and after that they can come with recommendations – temporary – a more permanent group? An inter-governmental committee to be developed? Or just volunteers? But also, not create a group that just stands by – want it to be active

Working on finding a facilitator – RFP for a facilitator to come up with a plan – take the 12 items they have listed and identify priorities –

Examples – Implicit bias, Language access, DEI staff member

Facilitator, get plan and then update each year

Open meetings – was a problem – so now meet 2 or so at a time – and bring back to the entire group –

School approached them – create a sticker to put on bathrooms in businesses for gender neutral stickers – members of the task force can do personally and on own time – but city can't take this on

They are considering creating an inter-governmental committee board (parks, library) ?

They had quorum issues too --Send agenda out 48 hours before - - - all members appointed by city council – all open meetings –

- SPAC wrote into the bylaws – if you don't show up for 2 meetings you can be asked off - -consider it a resignation and move on

Advice: Be patient – can only do so much in 12 months –

Mission Statement - 2 members wrote that –

- Invited from whole group- what words come to mind re: DEI – did this during a meeting

Mayor passionate about this - lead a book group ---library director shared her expertise so they partnered w/the library and got a list of recommended readings – selected one and the mayor did a book discussion – lead a Q/A session –

Did this BEFORE the comm started –

IMP having someone on staff

Other resources/recommendations:

Beaverton, OH – Lake Oswego – resources posted in city council meetings

Metropolitan Mayors Conference – different DEI committees

Public Administration at UW Madison – Take this on as a project?

Portland state univ did their plan