



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2020

FROM: HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: INSTITUTING A WORKSHOP ON REDESIGNING CULTURAL CAPACITY FOR CITY COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE CITY STAFF, AND SELECTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS WITH THE GOAL OF DEVELOPING A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR ALL CITY EMPLOYEES WITH INPUT FROM LOCAL PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN THE COMMUNITY

ISSUE:

Consider a recommendation from the Human Relations Commission for the City Council to mandate participation in a workshop on Redesigning Cultural Capacity for City Council members, executive level city staff, and select boards and commissions, and direct city staff to work towards establishing and integrating an ongoing Trauma Informed Cultural Sensitivity training as part of the training that stems from the City Council's declaration of racism as a public health crisis.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Receive a recommendation from the Human Relations Commission to direct city staff to work with identified local community experts to coordinate and execute a pilot Workshop on Redesigning Cultural Capacity for City Council members, executive level city staff, and select boards and commissions.
2. Direct staff to work towards implementing mandatory Trauma Informed Cultural Sensitivity Training for City Council members, executive level city staff and selected boards and commissions.
3. Direct staff to coordinate logistics regarding the location and timing of the seminar or integration of Trauma Informed Cultural Sensitivity training with input from local trainers to trainings currently being developed by the City's Human Resources Department in response to the Resolution of the City Council of the City of Riverside, California, finding that racism is a public health crisis.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

On July 23, 2020, the Human Relations Commission met to consider a recommendation from a small group of Human Relations Commissioners and local professionals to implement mandatory Trauma Informed Cultural Sensitivity Training. Following discussion, a motion was made by

Commissioner Rooths and seconded by Commissioner Stancil recommending that City Council implement mandatory Trauma Informed Cultural Sensitivity Training for City Council members, executive level city staff and selected boards and commissions. The motion carried unanimously with all Commissioners present.

BACKGROUND:

In August of 2019, a small working group was formed consisting of Human Relations Commissioners and local professionals to discuss how to best carry out initiatives that promote inclusivity in Riverside. Various ideas were explored, many of which were events-based, and it was decided that Riverside's community organizations are doing an excellent job of creating events that bring people together. The group decided that building cross cultural understanding while acknowledging trauma and its effects on our community would be an appropriate first step in bringing the group's discussions to those that make decisions but weren't at the table to hear the diverse perspectives offered.

On September 23, 2020, Human Relations Commissioner Janice Rooths and Human Resources Director Rene Goldman met to discuss the implementation of the Trauma Informed Cultural Sensitivity training. Rene Goldman informed Janice Rooths that the Cultural Sensitivity aspect of the proposed training is addressed in current trainings and will be further conveyed in the training modules that stem from the declaration of Racism as a public health crisis. However, the Trauma Informed aspect of the proposed training is not currently a part of any present training or future training stemming from the City Council's declaration of racism as a public health crisis.

DISCUSSION:

The working group created a day-long interactive workshop that could be offered to city leadership to inform on various cultural perspectives of the constituents they serve. A draft of the workshop "Redesigning Cultural Capacity: Transforming community trauma to yield greater social awareness, organizational performance, and opportunities for continued growth," recommends that it be led by highly qualified professionals from our community. (Attachment A)

Considering the COVID-19 pandemic and the ramifications imposed on in person meetings, a virtual implementation of the trainings with input by local professionals, Shor Denny and Shirley Coates, is recommended with urgency to aid city leaders in the understanding of the diverse individuals they serve.

Suggested Local Professionals

The small group consisted of and identified local professionals, Shor Denny and Shirley Coates, that have been working in our community to lead this effort. Supported by Human Relations Commissioners Janice Rooths and Vivian Stancil in the small group, these local professionals have been instrumental in constructing this seminar in its many forms.

Shor Denny is the Founder and CEO of Community Now, a California based nonprofit focused on providing mental wellness programming to the community. Using her Masters in Mental Health with an emphasis in Prevention from Grand Canyon University, Shor advocates for community prevention and wellness strategies that can improve the lives of everyone in the community at work, school and in their personal lives. This year, Shor was inducted into the Grand Canyon

Universities Alumni Hall of Fame for the impact of her dynamic programs.

Shirley Coates is the founder and president of Society of Extraordinary Women Inc. whose mission is to “empower women and girls to discover their extraordinary selves through education, and mentorship for a lifetime.” Ms. Coates’ life work is exemplified in her current role as founder and Executive Director of the Ignite Leadership Academy for Girls. In response to studies showing that 30% of minority teens in the Inland Empire were failing to graduate from high school and finding that a rising number of teenage girls were also falling through this achievement gap, The Society of Extraordinary Women developed a curriculum designed to improve this outcome. Ms. Coates has received national, state, and local awards for her work in the community, and the impact she has made in the lives of women and girls. Ms. Coates is a member of the Riverside Chamber of Commerce, Rotary International Eastside Chapter, Mapping Black California Initiative, and currently serves on the Magnolia Center Business Council. She is a past graduate of Leadership Riverside.

Goals and Outcomes Desired

- Reconnect with humanity and others humanity when dealing with diverse peoples.
- Understand adverse childhood experiences and traumas, and their effects to our daily life and decisions.
- Understand historic contexts of group trauma and oppression in modern America
- Build cross cultural understanding while acknowledging trauma and its effects on our community here in Riverside.
- Understanding the differences between promoting diversity and inclusivity.
- Understanding and identifying privilege.

In light of recent inflammatory national unrest and systemic injustices stemming from the death of George Floyd, and social media posts by Riverside students that included symbols of white nationalism, the HRC is submitting this recommendation, with urgency, to the City Council, so that the City can support their denouncements of hate speech with action.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Fiscal Impact will be \$4,000. Sufficient funds are available in General Fund Non-Departmental Fiscal Management account 7211200-450247.

Prepared by: Xavier Sanchez, Assistant to the Mayor, Office of the Mayor

Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager

Certified as to

Availability of Funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

Approved as to form: Kristi J. Smith, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Shor Denny Bio
3. Shirley Coates Bio
4. Minutes
5. Presentation