

**GOVERNANCE CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
JUNE 30, 2020 at 2:00 PM  
VIDEOCONFERENCE**

Committee Present:	Mayor Ron Nirenberg, <i>Chair</i> Councilmember Adriana Rocha Garcia, <i>District 4</i> Councilmember Shirley Gonzales, <i>District 5</i> Councilmember Ana Sandoval, <i>District 7</i> Councilmember John Courage, <i>District 9</i>
Staff Present:	Councilmember Roberto Trevino, <i>District 1</i> ; Councilmember Jada Andrews-Sullivan, <i>District 2</i> ; Erik Walsh, <i>City Manager</i> ; Andy Segovia, <i>City Attorney</i> ; Tina J. Flores, <i>Acting City Clerk</i> ; Dr. Sarah Baray, <i>CEO of Pre-K4SA</i> ; Dr. Colleen Bridger & Lori Houston, <i>Asst. City Managers</i> ; Homer Garcia, <i>Director of Parks &amp; Recreation</i>
Others Present:	Jan Kirby, <i>Nominee for Pre-K4SA Board of Directors</i>

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Nirenberg called the meeting to order.

**1. Approval of the Minutes from the Governance Council Committee Meeting of February 19, 2020.**

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to approve the Minutes from the Governance Council Committee Meeting of February 19, 2020. Councilmember Sandoval seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**2. Consideration of Applicants to the San Antonio Water System Board of Trustees (3 slots) and confirmation of Mayoral recommendation for Chair. [Tina J. Flores, Acting City Clerk]**

Mayor Nirenberg stated that he would like to nominate Jelynn Burley to serve as Chair of the SAWS Board of Trustees and the representative for the North Sector. He noted that all applicants from the South Sector and Southeast Quadrant required discussion and those applicants chosen would be interviewed by the Governance Committee at the Special Meeting scheduled for August 3<sup>rd</sup> with confirmation of the nominees to be presented to the full City Council at the City Council Meeting of August 6<sup>th</sup>.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting into Executive Session at 2:15 pm to discuss the following:

- A. Deliberate the appointment, evaluation, and duties of public officers and discuss legal issues pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.074 (personnel matters) and Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

**RECONVENED**

Mayor Nirenberg reconvened the meeting at 2:34 pm and announced that no action was taken in Executive Session.

Councilmember Sandoval moved to interview the following applicants: Leticia Ozuna, Fernando Reyes, James Smyle, Edward Belmares, Olufemi Osidele, Robert Potts, and Jelynn Burley. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Deliberation and action regarding the appointment of a new member for the City Council District 10 Board seat to the Pre-K 4 SA Board of Directors whose term will end on May 31, 2022. [Carlos Contreras, Assistant City Manager; Sarah Baray, Ph.D., CEO, Pre-K 4 SA]**

Dr. Sarah Baray presented the recommendation from Councilmember Perry of Jan Kirby to represent District 10 on the Pre-K 4 SA Board of Directors. She noted that the Board of Directors was comprised of 11 Board Members appointed by the Mayor and City Council. She stated that each Councilmember and the Mayor appoint one Director to the Board with the Mayor's appointee serving as the Chairperson of the Board.

Dr. Baray noted that Ms. Kirby had a Bachelor's in Education and a Master's in Early Childhood Education and has eight years' experience teaching pre-school and kindergarten in both the public and private sector. She noted that Ms. Kirby also had 23 years' experience teaching special education in pre-schools, ESL certifications, and has worked as a Bilingual interpreter for NISD. Dr. Baray noted that Ms. Kirby's work in the community included having served on the Northern Hills HOA for the last 13 years, as well as volunteering at Morgan's Wonderland and teaching Children's Choir.

Mayor Nirenberg noted that Jan Kirby was on the videoconference and available for questions.

Councilmember Courage noted that he was a teacher and taught many special education students and applauded Ms. Kirby for same. He inquired of her conversations with Councilmember Perry and how he might like her to serve on the Board. Ms. Kirby replied that some Councilmember Perry's concerns regarding Pre-K 4 SA are valid, but they are coming from a financial perspective and she noted that education was her background, not finance. She noted that she was a huge proponent of early childhood education and she looked forward to serving on the Board to the best of her ability.

Mayor Nirenberg noted his support for Ms. Kirby's nomination.

Councilmember Courage moved to forward for full City Council consideration the nomination of Ms. Kirby to represent District 10 on the Pre-K 4 SA Board of Directors. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. A briefing and possible action on a Council Consideration Request (CCR) from Councilmember Trevino on Returning the Christopher Columbus Statue located at Columbus Park to the Christopher Columbus Italian Society and renaming the Columbus Park to Piazza Italia Park. [Colleen M. Bridger, MPH, PhD, Assistant City Manager; Homer Garcia III, Director, Parks and Recreation]**

Mayor Nirenberg recognized Councilmember Trevino to discuss the CCR he submitted. Councilmember Trevino stated that he submitted the CCR in order to better represent two very prominent cultures in the city. He noted that San Antonio was home to many early indigenous cultures and early Italian settlers as far back as the 1800s. He noted that the best way to understand is to listen to these cultures and respect their heritage and influence. He stated that pride for some should not be pain for others and that both sides recognized the value of this history and agreed that this is the best path forward.

Director Garcia briefed the Committee on the process to complete the tasks outlined in the CCR to return the Christopher Columbus Statue located in Columbus Park to the Christopher Columbus Italian Society and

rename Columbus Park to Piazza Italia Park. Mr. Garcia noted that under the City Code, the preliminary removal of the statue from Columbus Park will require either: 1) review and approval by the HDRC; or 2) review and approval by the City Council to waive the HDRC process and directly authorize removal of the statue. He also noted that the City Council ultimately needed to approve the transfer of ownership of the statue and the renaming of the park.

City Attorney Andy Segovia noted that staff requested direction regarding the process of removing statue through HDRC or straight to the full City Council for consideration of the conveyance of the statue to the Italian Society. City Manager Erik Walsh also noted the need to move quickly as the state had been vandalized and required repair prior to its conveyance to the Italian Society.

Mayor Nirenberg noted that this topic had been discussed for many years and he stated that he would be happy with either route to convey the statue back to the Italian Society.

Councilmember Courage noted that the next City Council Meeting was in August and stated that if the HDRC planned to meet prior to that, then it might be prudent to go through the HDRC process.

Councilmember Sandoval thanked the local indigenous communities, the Italian Society, and Councilmember Trevino for their hard work putting this together. She noted that this was a resolution that was respectful of history and respectful of the current climate. She expressed her support to move this item forward, but noted her concern of possible threats to public safety experienced at the location of the statue. She inquired how staff controlled the situation of protests on both sides. City Manager Walsh noted that the situation at the location of the statue is heated and that staff would move quickly to repair the statue by removing the paint and returning it to the Italian Society. Councilmember Sandoval noted her concern for the safety of the HDRC members and requested that this be treated as last statue was and be forwarded to the full City Council for consideration.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if the city would be repairing the statue by removing the paint on it prior to returning it to the Italian Society. Assistant City Manager Lori Houston responded that an art conservator was deployed to the statue when it was vandalized. She noted that the art conservator recommended removal of the statue to initiate repairs. She stated that staff would begin the permit process to temporarily remove statue.

Councilmember Sandoval moved to forward discussion of the CCR to the full City Council for consideration. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. Motion carried by those present.

#### **5. A briefing and possible action on a Resolution declaring racism a public health crisis and to establish stronger efforts to promote racial equity in San Antonio.**

Mayor Nirenberg recognized Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan to discuss the resolution she proposed. Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan proposed the resolution in order to drive out racism and bigotry. She stated that this resolution sets us up to live in love, equality, and walk in justice, peace, and truth. She noted that racism is a problem and that as a city, passing the resolution is the first step in the right direction. She stated that 15 entities have already made this declaration including Dallas County. She mentioned that institutionalized and systemic racism truly impacted every community and the city must take action now as the first step to recognize and represent all members of the city.

Councilmember Sandoval thanked Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan for her leadership and bringing this item forward. She noted that COVID-19 has brought forth disparities in health among different ethnicities. She noted that underlying conditions exacerbate the illness but can be caused broadly by your race or ethnicity.

Councilmember Courage noted that several public health studies have shown that racism that African Americans experience in their daily lives created stress that affected internal organs and overall physical health. He noted that this also leads to a higher prevalence of chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes, as well as shorter life spans. He noted that these chronic health outcomes are worrisome during COVID-19. He noted that the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American College of Emergency Physicians agreed that racism is a public health crisis and that he would support this motion.

Assistant City Manager Colleen Bridger reiterated the staff recommendation that the resolution be forwarded to the Community Health and Equity Council Committee for further discussion, review, and revision prior to consideration of the full City Council. She noted that this review should be done in collaboration with the Office of Equity and the Metropolitan Health District.

Councilmember Sandoval moved to forward discussion of the resolution to the Community Health and Equity Council Committee. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. Motion carried by those present.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg adjourned the meeting at 3:10 pm.

### **ATTEST:**

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***Ron Nirenberg, Mayor***

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***Tina J. Flores, LPEC***  
***Acting City Clerk***