

Diversity & Inclusion Taskforce Update

November 2019 to
February 2020

Why?

- Lack of diversity was reported by concerned citizens during a City Council Meeting.
- Memorandum of Understanding was reintroduced to City staff.
- City staff met with citizens on October 14, 2019 to discuss:
 - 1987 Memorandum of Understanding
 - Updating the MOU
 - Current status of the city regarding diversity

Result

- Diversity and Inclusion Conversation Starter was held November 15, 2019 to discuss:
 - Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace
 - Introduce the Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce
- Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce held their first meeting on November 18, 2019.

Purpose of the Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce

1. Form a group of stakeholders to review and provide recommendations regarding the 1987 Memorandum of Understanding.
2. Review and update the existing Boards and Commissions application.
3. Provide feedback to City Council in regards to the MOU relating to diversity and inclusion efforts past and present.
4. Broadly define diversity and inclusion, and what steps can be taken moving forward.

Purpose of Presentation

- Review the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Provide preliminary findings on current city practices.
- Provide preliminary recommendations.
- Create awareness of existing diversity and inclusion efforts.

What is the 1987 Memorandum of Understanding?

- Community of Concerned Citizens was formed in 1982 and continue their efforts to improve quality of life for minority groups.
- An agreement between the Community of Concerned Citizens and officials of the City of Independence, Missouri.
- The agreement was mutually attained on August 31, 1987, with the assistance from the Community Relations Service, United States Department of Justice.

Agreement 1.

The City will develop a meaningful two-fold police recruitment program. The first phase will ensure that blacks are recruited, hired, trained and promoted within the ranks of sworn personnel. The second phase would ensure the same commitment in civilian job categories.

Agreement 1. Evaluation

- **Current Practices**
 - City of Independence and IPD have standard recruitment processes.
 - City of Independence Human Resources Division facilitates the hiring process and works with the hiring managers for each department.
 - External job postings are sent to various organizations:
 - Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
 - Women's Employment Network
 - Various Religious Organizations
 - Community for Concerned Citizens
 - IPD has a list of highly motivated and qualified team members who attend career fairs, academies and universities throughout the state.
 - IPD is currently using a recruitment team to assist in their efforts of finding qualified applicants.
 - All members of this team must be in good standing and highly motivated.
 - Appointments are approved by their supervisors.
 - There are approximately 17 recruiting events scheduled in the next two months.
- **Recommendations**
 - Staff should continue to review hiring practices to expand workforce demographics across all city departments.
 - In conjunction with an ongoing board/commission staff should provide reporting to track statistical trends and progress.

Agreement 2.

The City and the Community of Concerned Citizens will jointly make a complete review of the City's affirmative action plan in order to increase the effectiveness of the plan and achieve demonstrable results. The joint review will encompass recommendation number 1, above and will be completed by March 1, 1988.

Agreement 2. Evaluation

- **Current Practices**
 - There is no Affirmative Action Plan.
 - The City of Independence follows Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines against discrimination in the workplace.
 - The City has an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy and complaint process.
- **Recommendations**
 - EEO Policy should be updated to reflect current best practices.
 - Accountability standards should be incorporated into the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan.

Agreement 3.

The City will review and refine the present mechanism for citizens to file complaints against police officers. The new mechanism development will be guided by the policy statement of the Police Executive Research Forum, reference police agency handling of police misconduct. This procedure will be printed and distributed to community organizations. The review and refinement will be completed by January 1, 1988.

Agreement 3. Evaluation

- Current Practices
 - IPD has a complaint system in place that follows a national standard.
 - The model that is followed comes from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.
 - IPD is no longer members of this organization, but still follow the practices.
 - IPD has a profiling system that captures detailed information.
 - This information is reported to the State of Missouri.
- Recommendation
 - Continue existing practices.

Agreement 4.

The City will make available a copy of the police department's standard operating procedures manual to the Community of Concerned Citizens. The manual will be delivered to the Community of Concerned citizens by October 1, 1987.

Agreement 4. Evaluation

- **Current Practices**
 - The Standard Operating Procedures for the Police Department are made available to the public upon request of specific procedures.
- **Recommendations**
 - Standard Operating Procedures should be made available online for the purposes of transparency and ease of access by citizens.

Agreement 5.

A “Know Your Rights When Arrested” pamphlet will be developed, printed and disseminated to guide behavior in the event of an arrest. Date of completion and commencement of the pamphlet will be October 1, 1987.

Agreement 5. Evaluation

- **Current Practices**
 - The pamphlet is not currently in circulation.
 - Staff has updated the pamphlet, and is working on final edits for distribution.
- **Recommendations**
 - Make the pamphlet available online or in a printable format for ease of access to citizens.
 - Make the pamphlet available in Spanish.
 - Disseminate the pamphlet at events in order to provide opportunities for the public to become educated.
 - Create a video to provide information on media platforms.

Agreement 6.

The City Manager will select an Affirmative Action Officer to administer the City's Affirmative Action Plan. This officer will meet regularly with the Community of Concerned Citizens for their input and to provide information regarding plan progress. The Community of Concerned Citizens recommends that the person selected for this position not be the Director of Personnel. The Affirmative Action Officer will be made 30 days from the date of this agreement.

Agreement 6. Evaluation

- **Current Practices**
 - An Affirmative Action Officer was selected after the execution of the agreement.
 - There is currently no Affirmative Action Officer.
- **Recommendations**
 - A review should be performed and accountability measures should be put in place to guide the City toward a more diverse place of employment.

Agreement 7.

In the purchase of goods and services, the City will ensure equal employment opportunities for Blacks, other minorities and females doing business with the City. This policy will be monitored by the Affirmative Action Officer.

Agreement 7. Evaluation

- **Current Practices**

- The city currently has several contracts in place with local business owners.
- Currently there are no opportunities beyond standard processes regarding requirements to award contracts to businesses with diverse workgroup makeup.
- The Procurement Division is reviewing local metropolitan policies to determine best practices.

- **Recommendations**

- Continue to research best practices to include local preference.
 - Minority and women preference standards.
- Procurement should review practices of solicitation to broaden the scope of businesses whom are aware of new RFP's.
- Further accountability could require that RFP's be held until one minority, female owned or local business has submitted a response to the request.
- Work with other community organizations to expand the scope of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Agreement 8.

The Chief of Police or his designate will contact the Community of Concerned Citizens Executive Board, regarding any incidents that may have racial implications. The Community of Concerned Citizens will provide the City with a list of their Executive Board and their telephone numbers. The Executive Board of Community of Concerned Citizens will reciprocate and inform appropriate City officials of any possible racial implications that they may be aware of. The list of the Executive Board members and their respective telephone numbers will be given to the City Manager by October 1, 1987.

Agreement 8. Evaluation

- **Current Practices**
 - Previously information was not being provided directly to the Community of Concerned Citizens.
 - The Community of Concerned Citizens have not provided the city with a current list of Executive Board Members.
 - IPD reports various incidents through various channels.
 - IPD is routinely reaching out to the Community of Concerned Citizens.
- **Recommendations**
 - Create a process and reporting mechanism on incidents.
 - Create a contact list of various groups for ease of communication.

Agreement 9.

The City will provide statistical data to the Community of Concerned Citizens upon request. The Community of Concerned Citizens will use this data for analysis of conditions of minorities in such subject areas as housing, unemployment, underemployment, family income, etc. When requested, if statistical data is not available, the City Manager will make reasonable good faith efforts to acquire such data within the limits of available resources.

Agreement 9. Evaluation

- Current Practices
 - To date no statistical information has been provided.
- Recommendations
 - Statistical data can be obtained online through various entities.
 - Independence Council for Economic Development (EDC)
 - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
 - United States Census Bureau
 - Information on accessing this data should be provided to the Community of Concerned Citizens and anyone who requests it.

Agreement 10.

In order to implement the above stipulations and further identify community concerns and possible solutions, appropriate City officials/staff will meet with representatives of the Community of Concerned Citizens on the third Tuesday of each month, from 7:00 p.m to 9:00 p.m. The first meeting will commence on September 9, 1987. The meetings will generally be held in City Hall although some meeting times and dates may be reviewed and appropriate changes made if mutually agreed to by the parties involved.

Agreement 10. Evaluation

- **Current Practices**
 - City staff currently does not attend Community of Concerned Citizens Meetings.
 - IPD has committed to working out a schedule with the Community of Concerned Citizens to attend their meetings quarterly or as needed, and has started to attend meetings.
- **Recommendations**
 - Select staff continue to attend Community of Concerned Citizens meetings as needed.
 - Create open lines of communication with various organizations.

Boards and Commission Application

- The Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce reviewed the existing boards and commissions application.
- Recommendations were made to include fields that gathered demographical information.
 - Race/Ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Age
 - Affinity Group Affiliation
- The additional information will be tracked and recorded to gather data regarding the makeup of boards and commissions relating to the diverseness of all boards and commissions.
- The application was also updated to be better accessible and user friendly online.

Conclusion

- The Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce has reviewed the existing MOU and has found deficiencies that need improvement as well as areas where the city is currently meeting the expectations of the MOU.
- Staff has begun steps to address some of the recommendations made by the taskforce.
- The taskforce identified and incorporated several new fields in the city's boards and commissions application.
- The taskforce will continue to work on defining next steps for the taskforce and the Diversity and Inclusion mission.



Questions?
