

MINUTES
WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
RACIAL EQUITY SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, December 7, 2020

The Special Committee on Racial Equity of the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met remotely at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, December 7, 2020, Chair Wright presiding.

ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: Chair Wright, Trustee Levin, Trustee Lui, Trustee Wilsey
President Thomas E. Horn, *Ex officio* and
Vice President Charlotte M. Shultz, *Ex officio*

Staff Present: John Caldon, Managing Director
Jennifer Norris, Assistant Managing Director
Sharon Walton, Communications and Events Manager

REGULAR ITEMS

Staff Update on Racial Equity Action Plan:

Chair Wright called this inaugural meeting of the Special Committee on Racial Equity to order. She stated that at the regular meeting of the War Memorial Board of Trustees on November 12, 2020, President Horn formed the Committee to facilitate Racial Equity work for the Board. Chair Wright said she is honored to be acting as Chair and looks forward to working with the Committee.

Chair Wright reported that War Memorial staff has also formed a staff Racial Equity Team, which is being co-facilitated by Jennifer Norris, Assistant Managing Director, and Sharon Walton, Communications and Events Manager. She thanked Ms. Norris and War Memorial staff for the tremendous work they have done on the Racial Equity Action Plan. Chair Wright asked Ms. Norris to update Trustees on the Racial Equity Team's progress.

Ms. Norris stated that the War Memorial was tasked with creating a War Memorial Racial Equity Action Plan based on the Racial Equity Framework policy document created by the Office of Racial Equity (ORE). She stated that all City departments, 54 in total, must submit their plans to ORE by December 31, 2020. The racial equity leads from each department have been meeting monthly to discuss best practices, share information and provide support. Early reviews of the War Memorial draft plan have been positive.

Ms. Norris noted that creating the Racial Equity Action Plan is Phase 1 of a multi-phase process. This first phase is a review of the conditions, policies, procedures, and work areas that affect War Memorial employees. Ms. Norris stated that Phase II will be undertaken on a timeline to be determined in 2022-23 and will have an external focus on policies and procedures that impact the public. The Racial Equity Framework document is comprehensive; it requires the department to review itself through a Racial Equity lens, assessing not only the intent of departmental policies and procedures, but more importantly, their impact.

Phase I of the Framework requires an inward facing focus to understand where the department stands on, and to create strategies for improvement in, seven areas:

1. Hiring and Recruitment
2. Retention and Promotion

3. Discipline and Separation
4. Diverse and Equitable Leadership and Management
5. Mobility and Professional Development
6. Organizational Culture of Inclusion and Belonging
7. Boards and Commissions

To complete the Framework, staff relied on a variety of methods to develop an understanding of where the department is already meeting the standards set forth by ORE and where there are opportunities for improvement.

Ms. Norris stated the first step was to create a staff Racial Equity Team. The War Memorial's Racial Equity Team is comprised of 11 employees, including Ms. Norris and Sharon Walton, Communications and Events Manager, who together function as co-facilitators. The Racial Equity Team includes a diversity of lived experiences from immigrants and those born in the United States, men and women, Executive Team and entry level employees, and staff from all divisions of the War Memorial. The Racial Equity Team has met bi-weekly since August, focusing each meeting on a different section of the plan.

Ms. Norris reported that as part of the process to understand the needs of War Memorial employees, the Racial Equity Team created and distributed an employee survey. Staff also examined demographic data supplied by Human Resources to discover not just the racial composition of the department, but to also explore whether some racial groups are disproportionately represented in our highest salary ranges or leadership positions. She stated that when disparities are revealed, the Framework requires the department to develop intentional and specific strategies and timelines for the implementation of new or revised policies to close gaps. The department must also define the indicators for success and name which employees in the department will lead the execution of each action defined in the Plan.

Ms. Norris stated that Section 7 of the Racial Equity Framework focuses on Boards and Commissions and that each section begins with a departmental goal. The departmental goal created by the Racial Equity Team for Section 7 is for staff to provide substantive support to the War Memorial Board of Trustees Special Committee on Racial Equity. The Committee itself is tasked with providing recommendations to the full Board on issues related to Racial Equity. Ms. Norris then proceeded to explain the Framework's goals as defined by ORE.

Ms. Norris read to Trustees the Framework's Section 7 on Boards and Commissions:

- 7.1. Ensure a diverse and equitable Board and Commission members that match the community being served.
- 7.2. Safeguard members so they naturally feel welcomed and valued, not tokenized.
- 7.3. War Memorial Specific: Raise Awareness of the importance of Racial Equity in the arts.

Ms. Norris then reviewed each of the Section 7 sub-headings for Trustees:

- 7.1. While this subsection asks departments to ensure diverse Board members, as a policy body appointed by the Mayor, the department does not have control over the diversity of Board members.
- 7.2. The Framework has three parts. The first part encourages each Board to ensure it is centering people with disabilities, working people, etc. This could mean providing ASL interpretation, food during meetings, or translation services. An example of an accommodation currently being provided is that for safety reasons this Committee meeting is being facilitated via video conference during the COVID-19 pandemic. Another example is that War Memorial Board of Trustees' agendas include information about how the public can request interpretation services, ASL, open captioning or assistive listening devices like those offered in War Memorial performance spaces. The second part asks each department to commit to ongoing Racial Equity work, being mindful of ongoing and current issues. Trustees complete the City mandated anti-harassment and unconscious bias trainings every two years, and staff is coordinating with a group of Executive Secretaries of City policy bodies to explore ways in

which Trustees and other Board members and Commissioners can satisfy this mandate while not inadvertently meeting in groupings that would violate Sunshine Ordinance open meeting regulations. The third part suggests the possible development of a mentorship between newer and more experienced Trustees.

- 7.3. Each section of the Framework encourages departments to develop specific goals. For this section, the Racial Equity Team has drafted a goal stating that the War Memorial Board of Trustees will work to raise awareness of the importance of Racial Equity in the arts.

Ms. Norris said that in preparing for this meeting, she met with Chair Wright and Director Caldon to create a list of possible next steps for this Committee to discuss and possibly recommend to the full Board. They include:

- Invite stakeholders to present Racial Equity Reports at WMBT meetings.
- Survey Trustees to gauge interest, knowledge, and priorities around Racial Equity.
- Participate in Racial Equity training.
- Develop a WMBT Equity Statement.
- Develop a WMBT Racial Equity Assessment Tool to be applied to policies prior to their adoption.

Ms. Norris stated that staff recommends as a first step the addition of Racial Equity Reports from stakeholders to the monthly agenda for the War Memorial Board of Trustees regular monthly meetings in 2021. She stated that staff, working with this Committee, President Horn and Chair Wright, would identify and invite specific licensees to make 3-5-minute presentations to Trustees about programs focused on Racial Equity. Staff would request that stakeholder Racial Equity Reports focus on the actual impact of licensee programs, rather than solely on intention.

Chair Wright opened the floor for discussion on the staff report. Trustee Levin said that he was impressed with the work staff has done and suggested that the Board follow staff's suggestions. President Horn and Chair Wright complimented and thanked Jennifer Norris, Sharon Walton and the staff Racial Equity Team for the work they have completed.

Following discussion, Director Caldon noted that there was not an action item on the agenda for today's meeting, but having heard no objections, staff would proceed with inviting stakeholders to present Racial Equity Reports at War Memorial Board of Trustees monthly meetings in 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Wright called for public comment on items within the jurisdiction of the Special Committee on Racial Equity of the Board of Trustees, but not on the agenda. There being none, Chair Wright closed public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Special Committee on Racial Equity, Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.



Jennifer E. Norris
Executive Secretary