



Chairperson
Patrick Hare #5

Vice Chairperson
Leigh Woodruff #5

Members/ District
Nicole DiCello #4
Savvas Kosmidis #4
Reese Bernard #2
Samuel Santiago #1

**City of Worcester
Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee**

MEETING AGENDA MONDAY, October 19, 2020 5:33 pm

WEBEX Meeting

Please note: all times listed below are approximate

- 1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Welcome & Public Comment Notice**
Call to order roll call – all member present
- 2. September 21, 2020 Minutes Approved**

I. Public Comment:

Kevin Ksen: Speaking on the Civil Service after having heard some good points made by Sgt. Cipro about Civil Service at the last meeting. Feels like the committee's priority is to do whatever possible to address the lack of diversity on the police force and other departments. Strongly support the elimination of Civil Service from new recruits being hired. Referred to article in the T&G in January when the citizens of Webster voted to remove the police from Civil Service and their police chief was speaking of it as an impediment to hiring and having a broader diverse force. That article also mentions Grafton, Marlboro, Uxbridge, Athol, are among more than 2 dozen MA communities that have already left Civil Service. And the Chief Sergeant in Worcester has publicly spoken out over the last month or so about Civil Service being an impediment to diversity. It seems pretty clear that Civil Service restricts the applicant pool and we are looking at

fewer potential hires when restricted to the numbers required by Civil Service. Looked at the top 20 Civil Service list (on the state site for Worcester) out of the top 20 candidates there were just a few that speak Spanish, that was the only other language listed, and primarily male and almost exclusively ex-military. Out of the 20 only 1 is nonmilitary. If looking to diversify the police force, even that right there, restricts the increase in militarization of the WPD rather than decreasing the militarization of the WPD. I want to ask you folks, there are a lot of reasons to be pro and against Civil Service but I think your task is to look at ways to increase diversity within the WPD. Just by the numbers and the data I want to encourage you to look at us pulling out of the Civil Service for police and fire. Thank you.

II. Welcoming of New Board Member Sam Santiago/ Introductions

Sam Santiago (SS): Hello to the other members and the public listening in. My name is Sam Santiago and I live in Worcester, long life resident in Worcester. I'm excited and nervous to be on this new board and being able to give back to the city. I've been employed in Shirley almost 18 years; I've given 18 years to the Town of Shirley and sat on a couple of boards and currently on a couple committees in town. For one, I sit on the marijuana subcommittee in Shirley; Shirley is a Yes Community for marijuana retail. I'm actually the Police Chief in the Town of Shirley been there going on 18 years, the last 4 as Chief. I recently graduated with a Masters from Clark University and I'm an adjunct faculty at Anna Maria. In two weeks I'll be teaching The History of Policing and Race which I am excited about and again I'm just glad I'm able to give something back to the City.

Patrick Hare (PH): My name is Patrick Hare and I am the Chair of the Committee.

Leigh Woodruff (LW): Hi Sam, I'm Leigh Woodruff and I am the Vice Chair. I am a lawyer at Community Legal Aid in Worcester.

Reese Bernard (RB): I am a retired educator, teacher for the City of Worcester and also I taught at Worcester State University. My field of study - mathematics and diversity and inclusion and equity and social justice - Doctorate from UMass and dealing with multicultural education and equity and social justice and diversity and inclusion.

Nicole DiCello (ND): Hi, I'm Nicole DiCello, I'm the owner of Bedlam Book Café, a new store in Canal District in Worcester. I also serve on the board for the Worcester County Poetry Association.

Savvas Kosmidis (SK): Hello, I'm Savvas Kosmidis, serving on the board representing District 1. I am a consultant for the state of MA and I own my own business in landscaping and snow established and grown in Worcester.

III. Special Announcement:

Chair: I have to announce tonight that I am taking a new job. I am heading off to The City of Fitchburg to work for the Mayor. Which leads me to some new news as well, I have to announce to you all here tonight, that I am resigning from the board; a very bittersweet announcement... I was part of the board's second coming back in November 2015 and I've had the pleasure of working with you all and those that have come before you to do some really great things

Board members shared their congratulations and all felt his presence will be missed.

IV. Subject To Address at Next Meeting:

Chair: Need to vote on a new Chair and potentially on a new Vice Chair

V. Discussion on Reviewing the Civil Service Process & the Classifications (Public Safety, Permanent and Provisional Positions)

Pam Callahan recommended discussions on provisional Civil Service positions first. Civil Service is to provide job protection, protection of veteran status, but if you are not going to have an exam, all those provisional employees of the City, do not have those protections. Provisional means pending an examination, but there hasn't been one in years/decades.

Second, would be the permanent employees. There are quite a few people who are permanent. What will it mean to remove the status of that position to a Non Civil Service position now that they've taken the exam and are considered permanent Civil Service employee?

Third, is Public Safety and how is that going to play out in terms of getting people hired who will really meet the diversity of the City of Worcester and what demographics are that reflect it?

Chair: I agree provisional status is probably the easiest to start with. We, as a board, need to come up with 3 separate recommendations on Civil Service; Provisional, Permanent and Public Safety. Those recommendations can be: no recommendation, no changes, or changes, whatever we see fit. We will need to take into consideration what we hear from City residents, research provided and

public comments. At this time we will open it up to floor and see what people are thinking.

Member Discussion:

- Members do not want to break anything that is working well.
- What is the process in place of Civil Service when removed in cities?
- Affirmative Action Policy now in place and can supersede Civil Service process
- Labor Service: An entry level Labor Service employee must first get on the Civil Service list. Then once they have several positions available, they'll certify a whole group. So maybe they will do 100 because they are looking for 15. All of those people have been on a list for a long time and it takes longer to get those people hired.
- Civil Service process highly inefficient, difficult to navigate, labor intensive, unattractive process for people to go through. Hindering prompt hires.
- Pros- Cons of eliminating Civil Service:
Large African American, Latino, Asian and whites dominate the landscape. The exam downside, it takes too long to get a job and veterans are on top of the list. We need to make progress, to come up with something to make the City reflect the demographics. Still seems African Americans are not getting the opportunity to serve. How many black people have retired from the City of Worcester for 30-40 years?
- System is archaic, came from 19th/20th century to deal with corruption and nepotism but we have other ways to deal with those things now
- Not only is the system inefficient, it is not helping to increase diversity in the city especially those positions in the streets like public safety.
- Important concerns to deal with before making a recommendation: What are the pluses and what would be given up? A ready pool of candidates and the cost
- If recommendation is to make change, consider analysis of the cost that will change. Invite some people from other cities such as Webster to see how they made the change and the results. This should be considered before making a change.
- Invite more diverse communities such as Springfield, Boston or Cambridge
- Affirmative Action Plan is part of the process during the interview and selection process

- To consider before making recommendation: analyze the pros and cons which are the ready pool of candidates, cost and infrastructure on HR.
- 2 important things to do to move this process in the right direction:
 1. Set up a structure for analyzing all the issues we have discussed
 2. Have a timeline- who do we need to hear from? What do we need to know?
- Create a spreadsheet; breakdown items of what is working, what is not , where AA comes into the process, how to improve efficiency in process of taking exam and getting on a list. Breakdown to components and tackle one by one
- Next couple meetings, read what is necessary and invite who is necessary

VI. Increasing D&I Meeting Publicity

- Hold public forums
- Publicize what is happening in the meetings especially if inviting speakers or guests
- Advertise in T & G etc, so public knows what issues are under consider

VII. Civil Service Breakdown & Bringing in Experts

- Break down into 3 different categories and realizing that the Civil Service process may work or not work for each one individually not as a whole, so it is really important to have those 3 different recommendations.
- How has their recruitment gone since then and what do their numbers look like, has it got any better?
- What could the exam be replaced with?
- Samuel Santiago offered to reach out to Middlesex County and Central Ma Chiefs to invite to D & I. Chief Santiago said he does not use an exam, he posts the position and selects the best candidate
- Member expressed concern that Police Chiefs from surrounding towns do not have the diversity in the community like Worcester and perhaps their decision making process would not apply to Worcester just because of the Diversity
- Member opined that Worcester was doing a phenomenal job with recruitment and diversity and inclusion and committees like this and a position like a Chief Diversity Officer are examples of that and it would

be very hard to accommodate and translate what other , smaller towns, are doing and take that into Worcester.

- Member also opined that the civil service exam is outdated and requires tweaking and the focus of D &I should be on how to better the system that is in place.
- Member asks if anyone approached WPD to get their opinion? Do they want to get out of Civil Service? We want to be on the same page as City Manager, union and conditions of employment.

Pam has there been any discussion on this from an internal process? Has there

PC: To my own knowledge, at this point, I do not believe anybody has been

VIII. Additional Thoughts/ Summary on Civil Service Process & Moving Forward

Summary of our discussion:

- Breaking things down into Public Safety, Permanent and Provisional
- Having some sort of spreadsheet with items further broken down
- Hammer through what are the barriers for a person of color in this process
- Pam is going to work on that spreadsheet, comparing the pros and cons that we have.
- Bring in a few more people to speak from other cities to learn what their experience
- Samuel to contact some of his colleagues in some of the towns that have already gone down this road
- Further publicize the meetings with these topics
- Ask press manager to attend meeting

IX. Survey Updates- none at this time

X. Final Thoughts

Please let staff liaison know who you would like to nominate for Chair and Vice Chair and if you are interested yourself.

XII. Adjournment

draft