

Addenda
Minnetonka City Council Study Session
Meeting of June 29, 2020

ITEM 2 – Sustainability Action Options

Staff received email correspondence after distribution of the packet. These emails are attached.

ITEM 3 – Tree Protection Ordinance Update

Staff received email correspondence after distribution of the packet. These emails are attached.

ITEM 4 – Diversity and Inclusion Update

The attached emails were received after distribution of the packet.



14600 Minnetonka Blvd. | Minnetonka, MN 55345 | 952-939-8200 | eminnetonka.com

TO: City Council Study Session
FROM: Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director
DATE: June 29, 2020
SUBJECT: Change Memo for June 29, 2020

ITEM 2 – Sustainability Action Options

Staff received multiple emails with comments regarding Sustainability Action Options. (See attached).

ITEM 3 – Tree Protection Ordinance Update

Staff received an email with comments regarding the Tree Protection Ordinance Update. (See attached).

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: FW: MCI input for the proposed Minnetonka Sustainability Commission
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:12:46 PM
Attachments: [MCI Response to City's proposed SC 28Jun2020 FINAL3.docx](#)

From: Minnetonka Climate Initiative <mtkaclimateinitiative@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 10:55 PM

To: Brad Wiersum <bwiersum@minnetonkamn.gov>; Deborah Calvert <dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov>; Susan Carter <scarter@minnetonkamn.gov>; Brian Kirk <bkirk@minnetonkamn.gov>; Rebecca Schack <rschack@minnetonkamn.gov>; Bradley Schaeppi <bschaeppi@minnetonkamn.gov>; Kissy Coakley <kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov>; Geralyn Barone <gbarone@minnetonkamn.gov>

Subject: MCI input for the proposed Minnetonka Sustainability Commission

Greetings to Mayor Wiersum, Ms. Barone, and city council members! I am sending you this note on behalf of the Minnetonka Climate Initiative (MCI). We are so pleased that you are considering the formation of a Sustainability Commission (SC) for Minnetonka. And we thank you for meeting with us over the past few weeks to share ideas about the SC.

I have attached a document with two parts: an MCI response to the City's proposal for the SC, and an ordinance for the SC that has been drafted by MCI. This ordinance was reviewed with Mayor Wiersum and Ms. Barone, and we have edited it based on feedback we received at that meeting. We are hoping that you will have a chance to review this document prior to the study session tomorrow evening (June 29), at which you will be discussing the SC.

To summarize key points from the document:

We agree with City staff's recommendation as to the role of the SC. Specifically, *"Provide leadership in engaging the community, encouraging relationships and partnerships with neighborhoods, special interest groups, religious institutions, public institutions, business leaders, and other commissions."* For this to happen, we feel the SC is best served by including community members who have time and interest to devote, including those with environmental and climate change interests, scientific expertise, and students. We suggest the SC recruit individuals who do not currently serve on another Minnetonka commission.

MCI proposes the following makeup of members in the SC:

- 6 community members, representing each of the 4 wards, and 2 at large members
- 3 community members with relevant scientific expertise
- 2 or 3 students with voting memberships

We have a strong preference that the SC be driven by Minnetonka community members. The city staff has recommended a smaller number of SC members, 4 of

whom will be members of other Minnetonka commissions.

We also have a strong preference that the student members have the same voting rights as the adult members, since they will be most impacted by climate change and will have to live in the future with decisions made today. An SC is being considered at this time because our own Minnetonka youth have taken the leadership to bring climate change issues to the forefront.

Thank you for considering our thoughts and suggestions. We look forward to the study session and the discussion about the Sustainability Commission.

Best regards,

Linda Langin, on behalf of MCI
(612) 756-3685



**MCI RESPONSE TO CITY'S
PROPOSED PLAN FOR SC
AND
SC ORDINANCE**

JUNE 28, 2020



MCI RESPONSE TO CITY'S PROPOSAL FOR SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Mayor and City Council Members:

We are pleased that you are considering the formation of a Sustainability Commission (SC) for Minnetonka. We believe that the SC can provide valuable information and expertise for the city council on how to protect the environment and slow climate change via energy conservation and carbon reduction. We also believe community involvement is a key requirement for a successful SC. Establishing an effective Sustainability Commission now can add to the city's existing climate related activities and accelerate advancement on sustainable environmental and climate policies and practices.

We heartily agree with City staff's recommendation as to the role of the SC. Specifically, "Provide leadership in engaging the community, encouraging relationships and partnerships with neighborhoods, special interest groups, religious institutions, public institutions, business leaders, and other commissions." For this to happen, the SC is best served by including community members who have time and interest to devote, including those with environmental and climate change interest, scientific expertise, and students. We suggest the SC recruit individuals who do not currently serve on another Minnetonka commission. An SC comprised of community members advising the city council will assure Minnetonka residents that it is resident-driven rather than driven by other city commissioners. While we think the idea of collaboration with other city commissions is important, there are a number of ways to achieve this. For example, other local city SCs have joint annual meetings and / or work on joint projects with other commissions in their city.

As you consider forming an SC, we recommend two best practices to ensure it is equitable and successful:

1. **Community-led.** City staff has recommended that the SC have 9 members:
 - 3 at large community members
 - 2 youth (with no voting power), and
 - 4 members of other Minnetonka city commissions.

We think it is important that community members drive the SC and have a significant voice. Our research of other local city SCs indicates that having 11 to 13 members maximizes community participation. For that reason, we'd like to see a somewhat different composition of members:

- 6 community members, representing each of the 4 wards, and 2 at large members
- 3 community members with relevant scientific expertise
- 2 or 3 students (with voting memberships).

Also, we think that members of the SC should be allowed to initially vet potential SC candidates with final appointments by the city council, in an open and transparent process.

2. **Youth deserve a vote!** An SC is being considered at this time because our own Minnetonka youth have taken the leadership to bring climate change issues to the



forefront. Young people will be most impacted by climate change and will have to live in the future with decisions made today. Therefore, we believe they should have a vote equal to the adult members of the SC. And being part of a commission like this offers leadership training and development of tomorrow's leaders.

Conclusion

We thank you for your interest in creating a Minnetonka Sustainability Commission. Let's work together to create one that will effectively address today's and tomorrow's pressing environmental and climate change issues and that engages and benefits from the expertise and interest in our community.

We have attached below our proposed ordinance for establishing the SC. This was reviewed with Minnetonka Mayor Brad Wiersum, City Manager Geralyn Barone, and members of MCI. The original MCI ordinance has been updated based on feedback provided during that meeting.



ORDINANCE FOR SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Mission

The mission of the Sustainability Commission (SC) is to:

- Improve the quality of life for Minnetonka community members and its natural resources
- Preserve and restore Minnetonka's natural resources for today and generations to come
- Foster citizen leadership and involvement in city decisions and programs related to environmental sustainability and climate change
- Promote citizen knowledge and expertise related to environmental best practices through education.

Membership and Term

The SC will be comprised of 11 members, two of whom will be youth members, representing our high schools (Hopkins, Minnetonka, Wayzata). For the initial appointments of 2021, three of the members shall be appointed for a one-year term, three of the members shall be appointed for two-year terms, and three of the members shall be appointed for three-year terms. The two youth members shall be appointed to one-year terms. Terms will begin on January 1, except for student members, whose terms begin September 1.

A minimum of 4 members shall be technical experts in one or more of the areas of environmental management and / or sustainability.

SC member selection and appointment: Proposed SC members to be initially vetted by the SC using a transparent process, with SC members performing initial reviews and recommendation of proposed new members for city council appointment.

Scope

The scope of the SC will include all issues related to air, water, land, and life, including:

- Climate change
- Renewable energy
- Green building construction
- Transportation and land use
- Water quality and protection
- Woodlands, wetlands and open space preservation
- Biodiversity improvement and preservation
- Waste collection and disposal
- Recycling / reuse programs
- Air, noise, and light pollution



- Soil erosion

Duties

The SC will:

- Advise the city council on matters related to climate and environmental sustainability
- Recommend to the city council ways to advance city goals, policies, and programs related to the environment and climate change mitigation
- Advise city council on climate, energy conservation, ecological land stewardship, environmental degradation, and solid waste management. This advice to include matters of city plans and operations.
- Provide collaborative leadership on environmental sustainability with other city teams, boards, residents, faith communities, and business leaders
- Provide leadership in community engagement
- Provide research and input on projects that impact natural resources and sustainability efforts
- Provide education and outreach to residents and businesses about conservation initiatives
- Lead the development of a climate action plan (CAP), incorporating learnings and recommendations from the Xcel Partners in Energy (PIE) program
- Develop annual plan for SC, to include measurable goals and an annual report to the City Council on accomplishment toward goals
- Assume additional duties determined by the city council.

Rules

The SC will create by-laws to address the election and terms of officers, the definition of a quorum, attendance expectations, and management of vacancies.

Meetings

The SC will meet once per month at a time and place designated by the SC chair, or at a time and a place mutually agreeable to a majority of the members of the SC.

Relationships

The SC will report directly to the city council.

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: Environmental Sustainability Commission
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:27:25 PM

From: Laurence Margolis
Date: June 25, 2020 at 1:24:56 AM CDT
To: Deborah Calvert <dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov>
Subject: Environmental Sustainability Commission

I support the City Council establishing an Environmental Sustainability Commission. Such a Commission can play a major role in helping cities craft policy as well as getting the general public involved in efforts to conserve energy, protect open spaces, and work on issues related to water quality.

Similar commissions in neighboring cities have developed Climate Action Plans, started renewable energy projects, created city-wide composting programs, advocated for wildlife preservation and eco-friendly development, and more.

I hope you will support this idea.

Thank you, Larry Margolis

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: Sustainability Commission Study Session
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:25:48 PM

From: Jerrold Gershone
Date: June 28, 2020 at 7:16:21 PM CDT
To: Bradley Schaeppi <bschaeppi@minnetonkamn.gov>, Brad Wiersum <bwiersum@minnetonkamn.gov>, Rebecca Schack <rschack@minnetonkamn.gov>, Deborah Calvert <dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov>, Brian Kirk <bkirk@minnetonkamn.gov>, Kissy Coakley <kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov>, Susan Carter <scarter@minnetonkamn.gov>
Subject: Sustainability Commission Study Session

Hello Mayor and City Council,

I am writing in regard to the study session for the Sustainability Commission.

Thank you for taking steps to moving the Sustainability Commission forward. While I am very excited about the possibility of Minnetonka having a Sustainability Commission I am concerned that the staff is proposing 4 members from other commissions and only 3 community members. If that went through the Sustainability Commission would not be relevant to the environmental community of Minnetonka. The importance of the Sustainability Commission is to look at things through an environmental lens. We need the commission to be made up of members of the community concerned about the environment, experts on environmental issues, and students as full members. I do believe collaboration with other commissions is important but there are other ways to do that.

I know several people who had already written to you in support of the Sustainability Commission. They were also disappointed to learn of the proposed composition of the commission. When the information comes out Thursday afternoon for a Monday meeting it doesn't leave much time to respond or necessitates a second communication that isn't efficient for any of us. I know that the tree ordinance is also on the agenda. Again, an important issue that doesn't leave a lot of time for a thoughtful response. The tree ordinance would be a good issue for the Sustainability Commission to research and provide important information to the city council.

I certainly hope that you move forward a Sustainability Commission that has a relevant and proper composition of members. Such a commission would have the enthusiastic and dedicated support of the environmental community, It would bring forth the talented people and experts we have in our community who want to serve.

Thank you for your time.

Jerrold Gershone
13111 April Lane
Minnetonka

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: Environmental Sustainability Commission
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:24:01 PM

From: Sarah Carroll
Date: June 22, 2020 at 6:34:02 PM CDT
To: Kissy Coakley <kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov>
Cc: Deborah Calvert <dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov>, Susan Carter <scarter@minnetonkamn.gov>
Subject: Environmental Sustainability Commission

Hi Kissy,

I live in your ward and would love to encourage your support of a sustainability commission. I have been impressed by neighboring cities' renewable energy projects, city-wide composting programs, and eco-friendly development.

Minnetonka has a rich history in building an environment that embraces our natural resources, including building more walkable neighborhoods, as well as protecting and improving our parks and waterways. We also have demonstrated a balanced perspective on matters of economic development.

With these values in mind, I believe the commission could:

- Establish goals and encourage resident's actions on clean energy, and track progress on those goals
- Create opportunities for residents to reduce their carbon footprint and make their homes more sustainable.
- Engaging business owners in reducing their energy consumption and moving to clean energy

Thank you for considering this request.

Sarah Carroll
18411 Beaverwood Hill, Minnetonka, MN 55345

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: Minnetonka Environmental Sustainability Commission
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:19:10 PM

From: Paula Ramaley
Date: June 26, 2020 at 11:27:29 AM CDT
To: Deborah Calvert <dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov>, Susan Carter <scarter@minnetonkamn.gov>, Brian Kirk <bkirk@minnetonkamn.gov>, Rebecca Schack <rschack@minnetonkamn.gov>, Bradley Schaeppi <bschaeppi@minnetonkamn.gov>, Kissy Coakley <kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov>, "bwiersom@minnetonkamn.gov" <bwiersom@minnetonkamn.gov>
Subject: Minnetonka Environmental Sustainability Commission

Good morning ~

I am a Minnetonka resident and am asking for you to support the creation of an official Environmental Sustainability Commission for the City of Minnetonka.

I believe that it is important for Minnetonka to have an official, standing body that brings focus, resources and expertise to the issues of environmental protection and climate action in our City. As a 4th-generation area resident and parent I am very interested in seeing increased focus and resources go toward environmental protection and climate action in terms of community education and engagement. I also hope the city will lead by example but also provide incentives and regulations that encourage and require reducing energy consumption businesses and individuals as well as environmentally responsible building and development.

This is a key issue for me and many neighbors and friends throughout Minnetonka; it will certainly be one of the more important metrics by which we evaluate City leadership going forward.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and for your service.

Sincerely,

Paula Ramaley
17306 County Road 101 West (Ward 3)

Paula Ramaley

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: Environmental Sustainability Commission
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:17:41 PM

> On Jun 29, 2020, at 9:57 AM, Beverly Montgomery wrote:

>

> I understand that you are voting tonight on creating an official Environmental Sustainability Commission.

>

> Please support and vote to do this...to show that Minnetonka is committed to climate action and environmental protection. It would be good to have a commission which is focused on these issues.

>

> Thanks,

> Bev Montgomery

>

> 14601 Atrium Way #333

> Minnetonka MN 55345

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: FW: environmental commission
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:15:50 PM

From: WHaneC
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2020 12:41 PM
To: Bradley Schaeppi
Subject: environmental commission

please support the establishment of an environmental sustainability commission for our city.
w. hane carlson - woodhaven rd

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: FW: Supporting the Environmental Sustainability Commission
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:13:59 PM

From: Jane Ehmke
Subject: Supporting the Environmental Sustainability Commission

Hi Deb,

The reason I am writing to you today is that I support having an Environmental Sustainability Commission for Minnetonka. You have started to lay the foundation for energy action and appear to know the importance of such action now. Thank you! This is only the beginning of the process....

We as Minnetonka citizens, have a window of opportunity here to show how much we care about our ecological health.

Having a commission on Sustainability will take that foundation you have laid and we can start building the house!

This is not a year and a half project that will dwindle with lack of interest. The Commission is a sustainable effort that:

- *Engages students, business owners and residents , giving them opportunities to learn more about environmental and climate issues.
- *Creates many opportunities for Minnetonka residents to reduce their carbon footprint and make their homes more sustainable.
- *The Commission gives our citizens a medium for open discussion in actions, decisions and goals that impact their lives and future.
- *We have a chance to put Minnetonka on the map as a leader and a community dedicated to its ecological health in a big way!

Let's take some meaningful action and form the Environmental Sustainability Commission!
Our interest and support,

Jane and Bill Ehmke
5391 Maple Ridge Court
Minnetonka, Minnesota. 55343

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: FW: Tree Ordinance
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:09:52 PM

From: Heather Holm
Sent: Saturday, June 27, 2020 1:00 PM
To: Bradley Schaeppi; Jerrold Gershone
Subject: Tree Ordinance

Hi Bradley,

Deb Calvert just emailed to let me know that the Tree Ordinance is included in Monday's agenda. I will follow up with her.

I think we're all wondering why these environment-related ordinance changes are coming through the pipeline right now, especially during COVID when citizen engagement and collaboration opportunities are limited. I think that this item should be tabled. The members of the Sustainability Commission could research other ordinance language and come up with a comprehensive list of suggested updates and changes. The ones proposed are inadequate. Staff are shying away from the potential 'contentious' nature of adding climate resiliency language??

Here are some of my initial recommendations (I need to go through the proposed changes in more detail):

- Referencing a % tree cover is inadequate. This should include a breakdown of tree species, coverage by area/ward in the city, and where more tree cover is needed based upon known threats and possibilities for mitigation (development, tree disease, noise pollution from highways).
- The Woodland Preservation Area (WPA) should be mapped city-wide. Right now, a homeowner would have no idea if part of their property is designated as a WPA. A homeowner should be required to protect the WPA on their property, similar to a development-related requirement. Fix the loophole: 25% of trees in a WPA can be cut. When a resident sells the property, the next homeowner can cut 25% of the trees in the WPA.
- Update the high priority and significant tree list to ensure that developers are not credited with saving invasive species or trees with a high susceptibility to known diseases, for example, ash trees. The list should include a rating system of climate resiliency and ecosystem functionality (how well does that tree species support wildlife).

We should be focusing on the keystone species (species of trees that provide the most ecological function).

- Homeowners should not be allowed to clearcut their properties. We need to update the ordinance to reflect the same rating system and define a set limit of trees removed from a property. There should be a balance between property rights (the right to remove trees) and the community benefits that trees provide, particularly the collective neighborhood benefit and connectivity of tree cover in neighborhoods.
- Strengthen the requirements for developers to protect trees during construction. Right now, landscapers doing final grading can use heavy equipment on tree root systems. This negates any previous benefit of protection.
- Have the staff evaluate development projects 8 years or older to assess outcomes (tree loss) from construction. It takes at least 5-7 years for a large oak tree to die from construction-related damage. If we aren't measuring outcomes, how do we know if the current tree ordinance is working?

Heather



14600 Minnetonka Blvd. | Minnetonka, MN 55345 | 952-939-8200 | eminnetonka.com

TO: City Council
FROM: Geralyn Barone, City Manager
DATE: June 29, 2020
SUBJECT: Change Memo for June 29, 2020

ITEM 4 – Diversity and Inclusion Update

The attached emails were received after distribution of the packet.

From: Kissy Coakley
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 2:56 PM
To: Geralyn Barone
Cc: Tyronne Carter [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: America's Fun Science program list

Hello Geralyn,

Please add this to addendum if possible. If this is not the right way please let me know, but I would like to talk about this program as a part of the study session today. This is a program that is fee based and can be used to start building gaps for the city of Minnetonka to start addressing some of the diversity and inclusion work that needs to be done in Minnetonka.

Thanks

Kissy Coakley | Council Member 4th Ward

City of Minnetonka | kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov

[14600 Minnetonka Blvd. | Minnetonka, MN 55345](#)

Cell: 952-884-0376

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tyronne Carter [REDACTED]
Date: June 29, 2020 at 1:41:20 PM CDT
To: Kissy Coakley <kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov>
Subject: America's Fun Science program list

Hello Kissy. Attached is a one-page document which gives an overview of our programs, and our two original children's books. We are a minority-owned/woman-owned company.

I would be happy to give a short presentation at any time; I would just need sufficient lead time to arrange my schedule. This summer has turned out to be very busy for us in spite of COVID19! Thank you for everything!

Best regards,

Dr. Tyronne Carter



Program Offerings

952-294-2270

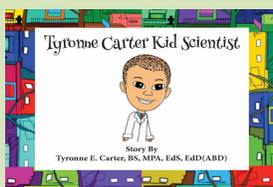
amfunsci@gmail.com

www.americasfunscience.com

Our programs help promote team building, leadership, self-confidence, creativity and joy. We make science FUN!

Program Name	Grade Level	Field Trip on Site	After School	Summer Camp	Preschool
Birthday Party w/science theme	Any age				
Grandparents Day	Any age				
Science Assembly / Special Event	Pre-K - 8	✓	✓	✓	✓
Slime Table Fun	Pre-K - 6	✓	✓	✓	✓
Putty Table Fun	Pre-K - 6	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bubble Fun for Toddlers	Pre-K				✓
Airplane & Space Starfighter Fun 	3 - 8	✓	✓	✓	
Advanced Rockets 	3 - 8	✓	✓	✓	
Paper / Straw Rocket Fun 	K - 6	✓			
Bots Good Racing Fun 	Pre-K - 8	✓	✓	✓	✓
Floating Magnet Car Fun 	3 - 8	✓	✓	✓	
Magnet Exploration Fun 	2 - 8	✓	✓	✓	
Balloon Rocket Car Racing Fun 	K - 8	✓	✓	✓	
Flying Bird Ornithopter Fun 	3 - 8	✓	✓	✓	
Flying Butterfly Ornithopter Fun 	Pre-K - 6	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dinosaur Digging Paleo Fun	Pre-K - 8	✓	✓	✓	✓
Weather Fun	Pre-K - 8	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sound & Light Fun	K - 8	✓	✓	✓	
Beginning & Intermediate Chess	2 - 8	✓	✓	✓	

ORIGINAL CHILDREN'S BOOKS WITH STEM LESSON / GREAT FOR HOMESCHOOLERS



Tyronne Carter is a kid scientist who uses his humor, the library, science and his love of reading to problem solve and win the day against bullies! Illustrated, hard cover, suitable for grades 2-6.



In this 2nd book, three friends teach Tyronne about the Engineering Design Process, and help him win first place in his school's science fair. Illustrated, hard cover, suitable for grades 2-6. Bilingual (English/Spanish)



Denotes STEAM programs (Science/Technology/Engineering/Arts/Math). Our customized programs are designed by a licensed K-8 science teacher/certified STEM instructor/member NSTA and ASEE, with the following standards in mind: Minnesota Science Standards, Next Generation Science Standards. Programs are generally one hour except where noted; preschool programs are 30 minutes. Complete details about each program and price structures are available at our website: www.americasfunscience.com. We have convenient ways to pay: Book & pay online in one easy step, OR book via email and pay by check or credit card. And please subscribe to our YouTube channel!



America's Fun Science LLC is a minority-owned/woman-owned company.

From: Jen Bouchard [REDACTED]
Date: June 27, 2020 at 11:52:26 AM CDT
To: Deborah Calvert <dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov>
Subject: My comments for the packet

Good morning Councilmembers Calvert, Carter, and Kirk -

I'm reaching out to you as my representatives on the Council in advance of your Mon. study session on equity work in Minnetonka. As I read over the packet, I had some questions and ideas that I am asking you to bring to the conversation on Monday.

1. **Re: A human rights commission (or similar concept)** - In 2017, Fartun Ahmed (currently my colleague on the Hopkins School Board) and I addressed the City Council and, based on widespread community feedback at that point, requested a human rights commission (HRC) be formed. We were told that it would take too much of staff's time to facilitate such a commission, and some council members expressed that they didn't think Minnetonka was ready for a HRC. In short, it was clear that inclusion in the form of providing access to BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and disabled members of our community in the form of a commission where they would have decision-making power was not a priority of the Council or staff 3 years ago. In the packet I see that the discussion was re-opened in 2018. Our community deserves more information on why the Council decided not to move forward with a HRC at that point. I also know that multiple community members have requested a HRC since 2018. I would like to know, specifically, who and what have been the obstacles over the past 3 years to creating this type of group in Minnetonka.

Councilmember Kissy Coakley and I are currently engaging our community members in a systematic way, and the HRC has emerged as a community priority. One of the "break-out" groups from our engagement sessions will be working specifically on a set of recommendations for a HRC to present to the Council in the fall. I'm letting you know this in advance so that we can work collaboratively. I am a proponent of centering youth voice in decision-making, and the incredible BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and youth with disabilities with whom we have the privilege of working alongside to make change in Hopkins Schools will be crucial to this work.

2. **Re: The need for diverse representation.** Related to the HRC - Part of creating an equitable community is ensuring there are a diversity of experiences and backgrounds – including racial backgrounds – in the spaces where decisions are made that impact our entire Minnetonka community. One of the reasons why it has historically been challenging for BIPOC to be elected or appointed to the Council, boards, and commissions in the Minnetonka is that they “lack the experience” (in the eyes of those appointing or endorsing, not necessarily in the eyes of the community members they would be serving). A HRC is one way to open up a pathway to gaining that experience (which was a point Director Ahmed and I made when we addressed the Council in 2017). In order to be effective, racial equity work in Minnetonka must involve more BIPOC in positions of power – both on the Council, commissions, and boards and in influential staff positions. Once BIPOC are in positions of power, they must be empowered and supported by their colleagues – and white people must be prepared and willing for institutional culture to shift and change.

3. **Re: demographics** - How did the City acquire the demographic information in the packet. It is based on the Census or another source? It appears that the demographics presented in the packet reflect residents of Minnetonka. However, the number of BIPOC people who attend school in, work in, and visit Minnetonka is much, much higher. This context is crucial as we discuss racial equity in Minnetonka.

4. **Re: Hiring an equity consultant** - In many predominantly white communities, racial equity (or D&I) work is often approached as an initiative (focusing on attendance at individual events, a series of book clubs/courageous conversations, hiring a consultant for a limited period of time, engaging with the same few BIPOC community members, relying on familiar models that have not produced substantive advances in equity) instead of an integrated part of every organization, structure, and decision made by people in power – and supported by policy and budget. I urge the City of Minnetonka to move beyond this initiative approach and examine where deeply embedded systemic racism shows up in our city structures and decisions made by people in power. If the Council does decide to advise staff to hire a consultant, please make the following elements a priority:

- The consultant must be BIPOC.
- The scope of the consultant’s work must include assisting city staff and leadership in understanding where systemic racism

is present in policies, practices, and organizational structure with the goal of enacting long-term systemic change.

5. Re: Collaborative community engagement work to advance equity – Since beginning our formal collaborative community engagement work on June 9, Councilmember Coakley and I have received 60+ survey responses and had dozens of individual conversations with members of our Minnetonka community (defined as anyone who lives in, works in, attends school in, or visits Minnetonka). We are working hard over the next 2 weeks to get more input by reaching out directly to people whose voices have been unheard and ignored in our community. We are working closely with our citizen advocacy groups to get their recommendations on topics related to housing, climate, and elections (all of these elements intersect with racial equity). We are also thrilled to be working with Elena Imaretska and the Minnetonka Collective team on our virtual engagement sessions that will utilize Human Centered Design to glean ideas to inform the set of community-driven recommendations we will bring to the Minnetonka City Council and the Hopkins School Board in the fall.

Hopkins School District leadership views this as essential collaborative work that will help inform how we can better collaborate to meet the needs of our community members, and district staff have been supportive in helping us spread the word via social media. I was confused when I heard that City staff was not willing to share our survey on the City of Minnetonka Facebook page (in order to reach more community members) because it was not an engagement process that was sponsored by the City, and the City only shares their events on the Facebook page (this was the reasoning that was given). If you take a look at the Facebook page, you'll see that the City is a collaborative partner with other organizations and shares their work regularly. Moreover, it is confusing to me that a collaborative community engagement effort by two elected leaders in Minnetonka, focusing on equity and inclusion, would not be supported by the City (especially given individual Council members and the Mayor have expressed their support for this work). I recently learned that Officer Marks assisted us in distributing the survey to members of faith communities and I am grateful for his collaboration. Perhaps you can help me gain some clarity on where the disconnect is here and how I can help. Thank you to the three of you for helping us continue to spread the word: <https://forms.gle/1sQqTehsTfv3H9QaA>

I appreciate you taking the time to read these thoughts. I know that we are all trying to be the responsive and forward-thinking leaders our community deserves during a global pandemic and a global uprising for racial justice. When it comes to working for racial equity, I know that I make mistakes on the regular, and I also know that I was socialized to uphold the status quo (which benefits me as a white middle-class woman). My hope is that we can continue to be partners in doing the hard and necessary internal and external work to advance equity in Minnetonka through lasting systemic change.

In community,
Jen Westmoreland Bouchard

Additional resources that have been helpful to me over the years and came to mind as I was reading the packet:

<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture-characteristics.html>

<https://medium.com/@eec/this-equity-picture-is-actually-white-supremacy-at-work-59f4ea700509>