

Minutes for Durham City Participatory Budgeting Steering Committee

Call to Order

Durham City Participatory Budgeting Steering Committee May, 2020 Meeting was held on Wednesday, May 20th, 2020 virtually via Zoom. It began at 6:00 pm and was presided over by Ray Palma.

Attendees

Members in attendance included: Ray Palma, Tom Fletcher, Sarah Mye, Marion Johnson, Cesar Ortiz, Sean Almonte, José Romero, Jessica Uba, AJ Williams, Jenn Frye, Tiffany Elder

Others in attendance included: Javiera Caballero, Robin Baker, Andrew Holland, Jamie Tindal, John Killeen

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Ray Palma

Seconded by Marion Johnson

Vote: Unanimous, passed

Officers' Reports

Chair Report - Tiffany Elder did not have a report.

Other Reports

None

Agenda Items

Welcome and Introductions

- Ray Palma called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes (see above)

Announcements/Chair Report

PB Durham Cycle 2

Review & vote on by-laws

Robin Baker informed the committee that the city attorney's office said 3 year, staggered terms are legally infeasible

Tom Fletcher pointed out that board continuity and retention of institutional knowledge are important factors when considering how to move forward

The steering committee began discussing the wording of the board makeup

As currently proposed:

“Two thirds of the 15 members should be individuals that represent communities in Durham that have experienced / are experiencing long-term discrimination and oppression. Diversity within the following categories: class, homeownership status, age, ability, race and ethnicity representation, LGBTQ, educational background, SES, religion”

Javiera Caballero discussed the changing nature of bylaw wording around membership requirements that are binary in nature

The committee showed their support for *not* including specific quotas for classifications of diversity in order to not limit any boundaries

Robin Baker raised the issue that income is not asked on the application (potential road block for achieving members from different socio-economic and industry backgrounds)

- Javiera Caballero explained that the City Council had attempted to circumvent the issue of explicitly asking income level by offering stipends for board/commission positions. However, since COVID-19, the discussion ended.

José consolidated the proposed edits to the proposed wording to do/include the following:

- 1) Remix Jenn Frye’s proposed statement
- 2) Include “people who are directly impacted by” instead of “that are experiencing/have experienced”
- 3) Include language around not double-dipping identities
- 4) Include a seat for a member from a non-native english speaking background
- 5) Define the different identities (e.g. youth, elder, etc.)

Javiera Caballero proposed defining the youth position as the youngest age eligible to participate in the PB voting process until graduation of high school

Sarah Mye updated the membership wording proposal to:

“At least two thirds of the 15 members should be individuals that represent communities in Durham directly impacted by long-term discrimination and systemic oppression. Diversity includes but is not limited to the following categories: class, homeownership status, age (two youth members 13-18 years old), ability, race and ethnicity representation, LGBTQ, educational background, SES, religion, non-native English speaking background.”

Motion: José Romero motioned to accept the changes made to the bylaws pending legal review

Seconded: Sarah Mye seconded the motion

Discussion: None

Vote: Roll call

Aye - Ray Palma, Tom Fletcher, Sarah Mye, Marion Johnson, Cesar Ortiz, Sean Almonte, José Romero, Jessica Uba, AJ Williams, Jenn Frye, Tiffany Elder

No -

Motion passed unanimously

Robin Baker raised the point that the PB process’s future is very uncertain at the moment. The PB funds are not written into the budget and could potentially not be available until FY 2021.

Javiera Caballero discussed the proposal/option to use PB funds to be allocated for COVID-19 relief effort though non-profit and public assistance as opposed to the normal process.

- Review [subcommittee assignment](#)
- PB Cycle 2 [timeline](#)

Staff Recommendations for COVID-19 Relief

Use PB infrastructure and funds to help with community relief and assistance as opposed to the normal process.

Robin Baker noted that the \$5 million could potentially be used for supporting relief for individuals and nonprofits in the community but stated City Council is the ultimate decision-making body regarding the allocation of funds.

Boundary Ideas for Durham PB Districts, 2020 - John Killeen: [Document](#)

John Killeen gave the steering committee a report on the proposed Durham PB Districts for 2020 and beyond.

- 1) Newly drawn boundaries with consideration of getting roughly equal population for each district but also not to break neighborhood boundaries (full proposal on the document)
 - a) 8 different subdivisions
 - b) By Tim Stallman
- 2) High school assignment zones
 - a) Pros
 - i) Families are likely to be more familiar with high school assignment zones as working boundaries.
 - ii) “Focused” on high school, PB-voting-age students who are already engaged.
 - iii) They are not too numerous, which could keep the process from being too difficult to make sense of.
 - iv) City/municipal boundary could be districted by splitting it according to high school zones.
 - b) Cons (full description on document)
 - i) Not all students who attend a school live in that district
- 3) Election precincts
 - a) Pros
 - i) Could help reinforce district identity in a way that could foster future political participation as well.
 - ii) These areas are smaller, and it may be more likely that people will know one another (or get to know one another) at these local levels.
 - iii) Individually, Durham precincts range from 840 to more than 9,000 voters. These smaller areas could be combined to make roughly equal

population districts and stay sensitive to elements like neighborhood identity and historical geography like redlining.

- b) Cons
 - i) Edge areas that get included in precincts are in some cases predominantly outside the City. (See map)
 - ii) Thoughtfully combining these areas is time-consuming and the resulting customized districts may make the underlying meaning of election precincts less apparent. That would undermine Pro #1.

Action Items & Next Steps - Robin Baker

Next meeting is: Monday, June 22nd at 6pm

Announcements

José Romero nominated Marion Johnson to be the new Co-Chair of the PBSC

Jenn Frye seconded the nomination

Marion Johnson accepted the nomination

Motion: José Romero motioned to confirm Marion Johnson as the new Co-Chair of the PBSC

Seconded: Jenn Frye seconded the motion

Discussion: None

Vote: Roll call

Aye - Ray Palma, Sarah Mye, Marion Johnson, Cesar Ortiz, Sean Almonte, José Romero, Jessica Uba, AJ Williams, Jenn Frye, Tiffany Elder

No -

Motion passed unanimously

Adjournment

Motion: Tom Fletcher

Seconded: Sarah Mye

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion passed (consensus)

Meeting was adjourned at 7:38pm

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