



City of Pflugerville

Minutes - Final

Equity Commission

Monday, November 8, 2021

6:30 PM

100 E Main Street Suite 500, Pflugerville, TX

Regular Meeting

Equity Commission Members:

James Matlock - Chair

Shawn Douglas - Vice-Chair

Elizabeth Guillory-Medina

Daisy Delgado Castillo

Virginia Rogers

Pat Epstein

Elizabeth Montoya

1. Call to Order

Call to Order 6:32 PM

James Matlock - Chair Present

Shawn Douglas - Vice-Chair Present

Elizabeth Guillory-Medina Absent

Daisy Delgado Castillo Present

Virginia Rogers Absent

Pat Epstein Present

Elizabeth Montoya Absent

Others present: Sereniah Breland, City Manager; Jason O'Malley; Deena Rawleigh APH; Jim McDonald; Maren Lujan, APH; Jennifer Griswold, Library Director

2. Citizen Communication

In accordance with the Texas Attorney General's Opinion, any public comment that is made on

an item that is not on the published final agenda will only be heard by the Equity Commission.

No formal action, discussion, deliberation, or comment will be made.

None

3. Approval of Minutes

3A. [2021-1195](#)

Approval of the October 25, 2021 minutes

Jennifer Griswold, Library Director

Chair Matlock called for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Epstein moved that the minutes be accept as written. Motion passed.

4. Discuss and Consider Action

4A. [2021-1196](#)

Presentation and focus group discussion from Austin Public Health
Austin Public Health will hold a focus group with the Equity Commission to discuss health disparities in the area.

Austin Public Health

Ms. Lujan with Austin Public Health (APH) introduced herself and spoke about facilitating a collaborative effort on the part of Austin Public Health for an Austin Travis County Health Plan. She explained there was low representation from Pflugerville, and thought it was a good opportunity to connect with the Commission, to find out where the need lay. Ms. Lujan stated that she wanted it to be an open conversation. For starters she asked for introductions from the Commission.

Ms. Epstein introduced herself and stated she had been a school board trustee in Richardson ISD, and has served in numerous capacities for many boards and commissions.

Chair Matlock stated he had been a resident of Pflugerville for 20 years. He stated that he works for City of Austin as program manager, coached, and raised kids here. He further stated that 2020 was a tumultuous year and he wanted to help so when there was an opportunity to make it better, he took the opportunity.

Vice-Chair Douglas stated that this is his first foray into public sector. He is a director at a technology company, has been here 15 years, raising children in the community. He stated that he wants best opportunities possible for them.

Secretary Delgado Castillo, said she is a social worker and has been working in that capacity for over decade. She has lived in Pflugerville 5-6 years, and wanted to feel more connected to the community.

Ms. Lujan stated that she wanted to meet with the Commission to see what they felt the biggest health concerns were in the area. Ms. Epstein asked for context in what APH had to offer.

Ms. Lujan said in this context, they want to target people's health needs.

Chair Matlock said he wanted to applaud them (APH) for the covid testing they set up and applaud them for being proactive. He stated that from a minority perspective, one of the big concerns is diabetes and high blood pressure. He also stated that Covid and the disproportionate number of black and brown people being affected by it was also a concern.

He stated that he believed there was not enough communication of information on services. He further stated that because there are several programs that he was not aware of, advertising may be lacking in reference to these programs.

Ms. Lujan said she is representing a lot of stakeholders in addition to public health.

Ms. Epstein asked if there was a reason there was not an Austin Public Health office in Pflugerville.

Ms. Lujan stated that they were gathering this data and meeting with the Commission in order to determine need for services. She asked the Commission what types of things would they like to see.

Ms. Epstein said testing for kids, a way to bring elderly to the services, and food services. She stated that hunger leads to other issues.

Ms. Lujan Ms. Epstein if she felt there was a great disparity between Pflugerville and Austin,

Ms. Delgado Castillo said there are plenty of primary care facilities but as far as mental health services, that is something that is not available here unless you have insurance. She stated that she knows Austin ISD brings in mental health providers into the schools, and that she didn't see that in Pflugerville ISD.

Ms. Epstein said that was also the case in terms of the senior population. The pandemic and freeze heightened the need here.

Chair Matlock said that is the answer to the question, the disparity between Austin and Pflugerville is you must go to Austin to get the access. He stated that is part of the reason the shuttle program is needed.

Ms. Lujan said she is not familiar with the shuttle program.

Ms. Delgado Castillo explained it is like eastside Austin shuttle.

Ms. Lujan asked for any other concerns that the commission wants to have noted.

Chair Matlock said that during the freeze, the elected officials were working to get basics for people, and that Austin Public Health should have been present immediately.

Mr. McDonald said that parts of Pflugerville are in a food desert.

Ms. Epstein pointed out many folks are mobility challenged, many people do not speak English, they don't drive, food pantries are set up to bring fresh vegetables to them every day. This notion of a food desert is also one that is constrained by mobility.

Ms. Griswold stated that there is an increase in library guests that are experiencing homelessness, searching for social services, and/or experiencing mental health crisis.

Chair Matlock said he has done work with the food bank, providing healthy food, for indigent people. Without transportation they do not have the opportunity to buy healthy food, and they are left to buy carbs.

Vice-Chair Douglas stated that the Central Texas Food Bank is far to go when you do not have transportation.

Ms. Epstein mentioned Circle of Hope food bank, but that they are only open one or two days a week.

Vice-Chair Douglas mentioned the 78660-zip code has been the leader for multiple months in a row for Covid. He pointed out the zip code encompassed more than Pflugerville and that having data more specific to the city would be great. Given the current data, it needs to be addressed. He mentioned medical distrust among black and brown people was a large problem.

Ms. Lujan moved on and asked the Commission about the strengths in the community.

Chair Matlock stated that the ability early on to provide testing was a great help.

Mr. McDonald said they have popup covid testing for those who cannot get tested during the day.

Ms. Epstein said there is a strong volunteer community in Pflugerville, there are people who do different segments, but the pandemic has been a problem, generally her neighborhood does a yearly food drive but could not last year.

Mr. McDonald said he has been in the Rotary, and a lot of people volunteer, but they cannot provide healthcare, they cannot provide the medicine, immunizations etc., so there is a gap.

Chair Matlock said government services that are being paid for need to be delivered in the community.

Mr. McDonald agreed that there is a strong volunteer community. He mentioned the the volunteers who went to clean the Historic Colored Addition Cemetery with lawnmowers, etc. from their homes. He said there is an organization talking about food insecurity called Backpack to Friends. He further stated kids that kids who come to school hungry get discipline referrals, etc. because they cannot concentrate. When they come to school fed their grades go up and discipline referrals go down.

Ms. Epstein said she still thinks the things that the taxpayer already pays for, should be in the community.

Mr. McDonald agreed that volunteers can only go so far. He said those types of services, are beyond what most volunteer organizations can do.

Ms. Epstein said in terms of free and reduced lunches during the pandemic, volunteerism cannot do all of it. She also stated that Pflugerville is the first community boarding Austin, a rapidly growing population, and a lot of families are being priced out of Pflugerville. She asked how do we make sure these people stay in their home?

Chair Matlock said a lot of kids are diagnosed with ADHD and autism, where is APH for that? A lot of kids are seen as discipline problems, most people don't get correct diagnoses because they do not have healthcare.

Ms. Lujan asked if there are any short term or long-term solutions that the Commission would propose, and who are the stakeholders who should be involved in getting these things done.

Chair Matlock and Ms. Epstein both said that the community needs a place here for immunizations, that could organize with the schools.

Ms. Epstein said the starting point is basic healthcare for kids. Basic wellness care for the most at-risk people.

Vice-Chair Douglas said greater level of access, and healthcare education, and nutrition education. This is one of the largest areas of food insecurity. The way to combat medical mistrust in the black community is for one, to not assume people have access.

Chair Matlock suggested as an immediate thing that APH could do was outreach to senior citizen communities, apartment communities, getting out information about services to those areas immediately.

Ms. Epstein said there are so many things that people are faced with that we don't think about. She said technology is difficult for older people.

Ms. Rawleigh asked if they thought a mobile clinic would be a solution. Ms. Delgado Castillo said yes, she has seen it in use elsewhere but has never seen one up here. She asked if it could be something that stops one Saturday a month in an older citizens community, or an apartment complex, or the Pfield. She further mentioned the Health Fair. Mr. McDonald said APH was there at Deutschen Pfest.

Ms. Epstein said she was glad to hear that. She asked whose idea it was. Mr. McDonald said it was City Manager Breland's idea.

Ms. Lujan asked what sources would be valuable in doing outreach to the community.

Chair Matlock said all of us go one place, HEB, it is the HUB for information. He said there are some restrictions on what they will advertise.

Ms. Lujan asked for additional sources for information.

Ms. Epstein mentioned the Senior communities and senior apartments.

Mr. Matlock said PfISD.

Ms. Griswold mentioned the library.

Ms. Delgado Castillo mentioned fliers on the trail, and explained that when covid started there was a Spanish flier up. Those that are mobile and have kids that walk the trail.

Ms. Epstein agreed they were nice to see the posters along the trails.

Ms. Lujan asked for any last comments and asked them to share broadly.

Ms. Epstein said high quality, lower income housing for families and seniors.

Ms. Lujan asked if it was safe to assume existing low-income housing was not high quality.

Ms. Epstein said not necessarily and it is a major issue in Travis County.

Ms. Griswold said men's health.

Vice-Chair Douglas said a mobile food pantry.

Ms. Epstein said maybe Central Texas Health needs to have satellite points for more access.

Chair Matlock says it all comes back to communication and said if you don't get the word out you will have food left over.

Ms. Lujan thanked the Commission, and told them that Ms. Griswold has her contact information. She said she would like to follow-up with them Commission and keep them engaged in community health initiative, and include Pflugerville in planning efforts.

Chair Matlock said he wanted to understand that they are getting information from different focus groups and there will be a compilation, and a report.

Ms. Lujan said it will be a plan and they would love to get Pflugerville's input etc, and other partner organizations they would love to have better representation from Pflugerville and wrap commission into workgroups and development plans. She said one of the things she would like to do is make sure the rest of Travis County is included. Chair Matlock said he would like her to come back and do a presentation.

Ms. Lujan said the report will be completed in March 2022, will do community presentations, and get additional feedback and the development process for a new improvement plan will start in the fall.

4B. [2021-1197](#)

Pillars: Transportation; review of the Cap Metro Shuttle Service Commission will discuss recommendations for Cap Metro and the City Council to be presented at the end of year report.

James Matlock, Chair

Chair Matlock explained to initial idea of having the Commission ride the shuttle prior to the meeting, but realized it may constitute a violation of the Open Meetings Act. He asked Ms. Griswold to bring up the video on the Cap Metro shuttle.

He explained the service was on demand and that there are different ways you can ride. He further stated that the reason he brought it up was because the numbers are not favorable. He explained that much of that may be due to Covid and lack of advertising. He stated they should re review the data on Cap Metro and the Commission should make a recommendation to extend the

program.

Ms. Epstein said so they need to get the data.

Shawn said he still doesn't understand what the goal is, is the goal breaking even or is the goal providing services for the citizens.

Chair Matlock asked Ms. Breland what the goal of the program is.

Ms. Breland spoke about another city's program which is door to door service. She said there are other options that cities are using that would cost less. She said she believed the council wanted to support an agency, but she will still recommend other options. She further stated that she believes the Council's goal is to provide transportation and she will always suggest a lower cost if she could get the same service.

Mr. Matlock said his counterpoint to a private service is that uber drivers are not vetted like Cap Metro.

Ms. Breland said it is a different program for municipalities, it is not just a typical uber driver.

Chair Matlock said he likes the Cap Metro program because it sets us up for more permanent long term public transit. He said he doesn't know what the other company looks like from a safety standard, but the data they saw a few months ago it was in the red.

Ms. Breland said it will always be in the red, and all are tax subsidized.

Vice-Chair Douglas suggested the recommendation should be providing more access to transportation.

Chair Matlock said also knowledge of the program, since so many people don't know about it, there needs to be advertisement in this program.

Ms. Delgado Castillo said in regard to the APH , this may be something to give to them.

Ms. Epstein said unless you raise taxes you won't have Cap Metro

City Manager Breland agreed.

Chair Matlock and Ms. Epstein discussed transit in Dallas and Chicago.

Chair Matlock said he wanted to look at additional data, but he wasn't sure they will have any more data.

Vice-Chair Douglas said the data was minimal ridership. He said it comes down to basic equity.

Chair Matlock said everyone knows what the data will state it is not profitable, but he also thinks he would like to see this program expand beyond March 2022 to get more data. He stated he thinks ridership will improve.

He asked for a motion to recommend they extend the Cap Metro service.

Ms. Epstein said without the data, it would have to be worded differently

Motion died.

Chair Matlock said at the next meeting they will talk about purchasing policy and will discuss transportation later after they get more data.

Motion tabled until December.

4C. [2021-1198](#)

Second November meeting discussionThe 2nd meeting falls during a holiday week. The Commission will gauge interest and availability of members for this meeting.

James Matlock, Chair

Ms. Breland asked the Commission to skip the second meeting in November in order to give staff a mental health break. Council and other boards are not meeting that week.

Chair Matlock said he had no problem with that. He called for a motion to skip the meeting on the Monday of Thanksgiving. Ms. Epstein motioned the meeting not happen on November 22. Vice-Chair Douglas seconded, motion passed.

5. Adjourn

8:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Coffey Griswold
Library Director

Approved as submitted on December 13,2021