



## **Athens Justice and Memory Project Minutes**

**Thursday, February 16, 2023**

**5:00 PM**

**Booby Snipes Water Resource Center**

### **ACCGov Staff in Attendance:**

1. Mayor Kelly Girtz
2. Niki Jones - Assistant City Manager
3. Cameron McGlothen – Equity & Engagement Coordinator, Inclusion Office

### **AJMP Members in attendance:**

1. Hattie Thomas Whitehead
2. Charlene Marsh
3. Dr. Jenn Rice
4. Freddie Brown Jackson (Linnentown community member)
5. Bobby Crook (Linnentown community member)
6. Christine Davis Johnson (Linnentown community member)

### *Members who were not in attendance:*

1. Geneva Johnson Blasingame ((Linnentown community member) )
2. Christine Davis Johnson (Linnentown community member)

Inclusion Office

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### 3. Commissioner Mike Hamby

#### **Minutes**

- The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.
- Hattie Thomas Whitehead began the meeting by explaining that this team was assembled in September 2020 to work on avenues of atonement as outlined in the Linnentown Project resolution, and this is the 24th meeting.
- The team then took a moment of silence to in respect and acknowledgment of the Linnentown community.
- Whitehead shared that she would be on a call with different agencies that will delegate the funding and process for affordable housing.
- Mayor Girtz suggested that there should be some promotional tool used to raise awareness throughout the community that these funds are available to be used.
- Niki explained that the estimated timeline for the RFPs is currently June 2023 given that the eviction extension survey must be made available as well. He further explained that HCD will be speaking before the AJMP soon to clarify how the RFP process will work.
- Niki said that the funds allocated to affordable housing will be managed by the Housing and Community Development Department of ACC, given that it is coming from the federal government.

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- Mayor Girtz recommended that there should be an update of the expected timeline from the AJMP to give the HCD once they open the applications and surveys.
- Whitehead shared that there will be a committee that will be focused on working with the community to promote this opportunity.
- Mayor Girtz suggested that a one-pager is drafted to use during community outreach efforts.
- Whitehead explained that once this one-pager is created, the committee will be able to
- Niki shared that a new director of the Housing and Community Development Department has started working and will begin working on the project soon.
- Dr. Rice asked for clarity on what exactly the RFP will require from an applicant.
- Niki explained that the RFPs will be open to organizations who have the capacity to fulfill the work to improve homes to make them more affordable.
- Mayor Girtz clarified that the job of finding these homes and working on them is beyond the capabilities of ACC Gov staff, so they partner with organizations.
- \_\_\_ asked if the AJMP will be involved with the actual work of finding and improving these homes and sifting through applications. Whitehead responded that the AJMP will primarily focus on outreach and promotion, while ACC Gov will handle the other components.
- Niki shared that the Attorney's office is reviewing the paperwork necessary for the right-

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to-way. The Mayor & Commission will first review the findings of the Attorney's office, and then they will explain these results to the AJMP.

- Niki shared that the GIO is working along with the AJMP to determine who has ownership over S Finley Street to rename it. Whitehead explained that the AJMP was inquiring about the means by which a street can be renamed.
- Mayor Girtz identified the two means to rename a street based on the ordinance: to get a consensus among property owners or to have the Mayor & Commission to designate a new street name.
- Whitehead explained that she has been speaking with Commissioners about renaming the street and continues to do so until the vote comes up.
- Dr. Rice asked if the AJMP would have to make a recommendation to the Mayor & Commission. Mayor Girtz clarified that a formal recommendation and continuing to explain these intentions to the Commissioners is helpful.
- Dr. Rice suggested that the AJMP creates a full report so that the recommendation can be used to create an agenda item for the Mayor & Commission.
- Mayor Girtz asked the group to think about the language that will be used to advertise, as this should be clear and welcoming without pushing people away.
- Dr. Rice responded that there was a proposal for a firm specializing in drafting language for historical signs to consult on this project as a part of a drafted RFP and suggested

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working with this group to determine the most appropriate text.

- Dr. Rice explained that the RFP for the mosaic was nearly complete and she will relocate the file to send out.
- Dr. Rice noted that there are not currently any updates related to the mosaic.
- Niki explained that there must be five members present at each meeting to reach a quorum, so there would need to be at least five members present at the next meeting so that they can vote to reduce the quorum for future meetings.
- Niki shared that a new Inclusion Officer, Dr. Remy Epps, has been hired and will begin working with the AJMP soon.
- Whitehead reminded the group the Classic Center has allowed a history center to be created on their campus beginning in 2024.
- Whitehead moved to adjourn, and Dr. Rice seconded.
- The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

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