



Agenda Item Summary

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Submitted By

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Agenda Item Title

Presentation from the Community-Led Oak Park Reparations Task Force

Overview

The public conversation for reparations for the Black/African American community in Oak Park began with a presentation from Walk the Walk before the Village Board on February 22, 2021. Since that time, Walk the Walk created an independent Oak Park Reparations Task Force which partnered with Dominican University to develop a reparations survey. Walk the Walk finalized the report in February 2024.

Anticipated Actions/Commitments

Staff plans to begin community educational sessions regarding reparations in early fall 2024. These sessions will provide information regarding reparations and collect community input. Additionally, staff will continue to review Village records to provide guidance and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will continue to work with the local reparations group around racial equity needs. Community engagement and Village record review will help inform possible recommendations to be brought forth to the Board regarding next steps.

Report

In the summer of 2020, the community group Walk the Walk launched initiatives around anti-gentrification, housing, community bridging, and reparations. Their work began in the fall of 2021 with the Oak Park Public Library's Anti-Racist Book Club, Austin-Oak Park's historical bike drive, housing education discussions, Village Board policy presentations, and the launch of the Oak Park Reparations Task Force. At that time, the Task Force launched with nine (9) residents of the Oak Park area: Christian Harris (Founder/Director), Jameel Abdul-Rafia, Nancy Alexander, George Bailey, Christina Dyson, Camile Grant, A. Michelle Perkins, and Marsha Spight. The members are from a variety of backgrounds and ages, spanning 17-75 years of age at the onset. The Task Force met with the goal of publishing a report of historical harms to the Black community and suggested repairs.

DEI Impact

The Report provides excellent information regarding the history of Oak Park and brings needed attention to many significant events that have impacted the Black/African American community.

Alternatives

N/A