

**Diversity and Inclusion Task Force Meeting was held on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., James “Jim” E. Bostic, Jr., Chair, presiding.**

## **I Call to Order**

**Chair Jim Bostic** called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

**II Prayer** – Rabbi Joshua Heller, Congregation B’nail Torah

## **III Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Chair James Bostic, Member Raquel Gonzalez, Member Joshua Heller, Member Nicole Morris, Member Clarissa Sparks

Members Absent: Member Bill Murray

## **IV Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**2022-10** Meeting Minutes  
February 8, 2022 Diversity and Inclusion Task Force Meeting

**Motion and vote.** A motion was made by Member Nicole Morris, seconded by Member Clarissa Sparks, to approve the February 8, 2022 meeting minutes. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

## **V New Business**

**2022-10** Task Force Chair Report

**Chair Jim Bostic** reported he recently met with Mayor Rusty Paul, City Manager Eden Freeman, Communications Subcommittee Chair Joshua Heller, and Recreation Subcommittee Chair Clarissa Sparks. The Mayor was very interested with the preliminary reports provided by the subcommittees. There was much discussion about workforce housing for police officers, firefighters, teachers, healthcare workers etc. and others who are in the salary range of \$50,000. There have been many changes in Sandy Springs in just one year in terms of the cost of housing, including rental housing. Mayor Paul had shared that 40% of rental housing in the metro area had been purchased by investors.

Following the meeting with the city manager and the mayor, Chair Bostic provided an updated at the March 1, 2022 City Council meeting on behalf of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force. The Council was informed that the incentives put in place by the City in 2017 had been utilized by any housing developer.

**Joshua Heller, Communications Subcommittee Chair,** stated the biggest surprise in the conversation was the challenges of housing being different. Even in the last 12 weeks, many things have changed. At their meeting with the Mayor Paul and City Manager Freeman, the group discussed some of the challenges in attracting and retaining qualified officers. The Mayor was receptive to the preliminary communications recommendations. The Sandy Springs Works app was discussed, too, along with finding ways to making the business of the City more accessible, such as utilizing translations. It was discussed how it was important to have the right people in the right roles, which requires resources. Some of the feedback received from the mayor and city manager that print media was in decline, and the City was looking more into other communication mechanisms.

**Chair Bostic** continued Task Force members also discussed the need for hiring a Spanish translator to work as a City employee or contract employee to take on that responsibility, initially. Overall it was a great meeting.

#### 2022-11 Recreation Subcommittee Report

**Clarissa Sparks, Recreation Subcommittee Chair**, provided a brief update on subcommittee activities. The subcommittee is still supporting Sandy Springs Together and community leaders to organize the focus groups, who are now in the process of finalizing the actual questions and overall objective of the focus groups. The community meeting will take place at the end of this month.

**Chair Jim Bostic** asked about the 18 questions that were sent via email with the original survey. The survey received 715 responses, which is good. 85% of the respondent used a few Sandy Springs Parks and 95% of respondents felt welcome at the parks. 58% of respondents stated that they have not been to the free events in the parks for the last year. There is still work to be done.

#### VI Closing Comments - James E. Bostic, Jr., Chair

**Nicole Morris, Member**, asked what other components are missing from the final report.

**Chair Jim Bostic** replied the Housing, Communication and Recreation subcommittees are most important. The Task Force will not tackle the large task of transportation.

**Joshua Heller, Communications Subcommittee Chair**, stated during their meeting with the City, the Mayor did talk about extending MARTA passed North Springs, highway projects, and other modes of transportation. What other topics are still on the Task Force's radar? Perhaps the Task Force can also review policing in Sandy Springs and communities of color. It may be an important topic to address in the report.

**Chair Bostic** suggested that he have a conversation with Sandy Springs Sergeant Sal Ortega. The Sandy Springs Police Department has done a very good job.

**Member Raquel Gonzalez** advised the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force will meet again on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. Will the Task Force finalize the subcommittee recommendations at the next meeting?

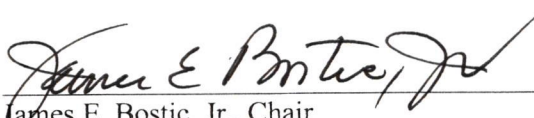
**Chair Bostic** stated there is still work to do for Recreation, so maybe another one or two meetings.


**Member Morris** stated the Task Force has been working for year, and has had a presentation before the Mayor and City Council. It is time for the City Council to pick up some of the recommendations.

#### VII Prayer - Rabbi Joshua Heller, Congregation B'nai Torah

#### VIII Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

  
James E. Bostic, Jr., Chair

  
Raquel D. González, Recording Secretary