6/5/2019

58-R-19

A RESOLUTION

COMMITMENT TO END STRUCTURAL RACISM AND ACHIEVE RACIAL EQUITY

WHEREAS, City of Evanston embraces its racial diversity and seeks to continue its path to being the Most Livable City in America; and

WHEREAS, City of Evanston believes that all individuals living or visiting the City should be treated fairly and with respect and dignity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Evanston recognizes that there is an escalation of hatred, bigotry, and overt racism in our country; and

WHEREAS, in order for the City of Evanston to fully embrace the change necessary to move our community forward, it is necessary to recognize, and acknowledge its own history of discrimination and racial injustice. The land we currently know as Evanston originally belonged to the Potawatomi Tribes until their forceful and violent relocation at the hands of white colonizers; John Evans, our city's namesake, played a role in the Sand Creek Massacre that killed approximately 150 Native Americans; and, the first Evanston resident of African descent, Maria Murray, was a former slave purchased by the Vane family to labor as a domestic in 1855, and

WHEREAS, the City of Evanston government recognizes that, like most, if not all, communities in the United States, the community and the government allowed and perpetuated racial disparity through the use of many regulatory and policy oriented tools. Some examples would include, but not be limited to the use of zoning laws that supported

neighborhood redlining, municipal disinvestment in the black community; and a history of bias in government services. Such practices were often overt, but more often, covertly adopted or incorporated under the guise of what would appear to be legitimate policy. These ordinances and other city-wide practices have contributed to the decimation of historically black neighborhoods, a lack of trust of government by some black residents, and the collapse of a once economically thriving black community; and

WHEREAS, the City Council acknowledges that the trauma inflicted on people of color by persistent white supremacist ideology results in psychological harm affecting educational, economic, and social outcomes; and conjures painful memories of our City's past not only for those who lived through them but also generations to follow,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EVANSTON, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES SET FORTH IN THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, WHICH ASSERTS AS A FUNDAMENTAL BASIS THAT ALL PEOPLE ARE CREATED EQUAL AND ARE ENDOWED WITH THE UNALIENABLE RIGHTS OF LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS:

SECTION 1: The City Council of Evanston hereby acknowledges its own history of racially-motivated policies and practices, apologizes for the damage this history has caused the City, and declares that it stands against White Supremacy.

SECTION 2: The City Council of Evanston hereby rejects prejudice and bigotry based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin, including the idea that white people are inherently better or more worthy than any other group of people and declares that it stands against White Supremacy.

SECTION 3: The City Council of Evanston hereby condemns the actions, speech, and attitudes of those who promote hate against any race, ethnicity or other basis, in an effort to interfere with the unalienable rights of any human being. The City of Evanston hereby declares that

it reaffirms its commitment, in collaboration with all residents, to pursue policies and take action to ensure civil and human rights to all individuals.

SECTION 4: The City Council of Evanston hereby declares Evanston an anti-racist city that strives to value all citizens, be a welcoming place to all people, and examine its own practices that may unintentionally exclude some of our neighbors; particularly people of color.

SECTION 5: The City of Evanston hereby affirms its commitment to eradicating the effects of systemically racist past practices from City Government and all City-affiliated organizations. As the elected council, charged with representing the City of Evanston and its residents whereby resolve to:

1. Participate in Racial Equity training in order to deepen our understanding of how our decisions can hinder or promote equity for all, while paying particular attention to those historically disadvantaged.
2. Join the Government Alliance for Racial Equity, a national network of government (agencies) working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

_____
Stephen H. Hagerty, Mayor

Attest:

_____
Devon Reid, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

_____
Michelle L. Masoncup, Corporation Counsel

Adopted: _____, 2019