

**COMMUNITY HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND CULTURE  
COUNCIL COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 28, 2021 2:00 PM  
CITY COUNCIL BRIEFING ROOM – CITY HALL**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Councilmember Ana Sandoval, <i>Chair, District 7</i> Councilmember Mario Bravo, <i>District 1</i> Councilmember Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, <i>District 2</i> Councilmember Phyllis Viagran, <i>District 3</i> Councilmember Teri Castillo, <i>District 5</i>
<b>Members Absent:</b>	None

**Call to order**

Chair Sandoval called the meeting to order at 2:04 PM.

Chair Sandoval announced that the Government and Public Affairs Department had convened the ad-hoc committee on the SA SpeakUp portal and users tested the portal which will be launched on October 30, 2021 with a briefing to the Committee planned for November 9, 2021 on the new portal.

Chair Sandoval announced Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez’ intent to expand the protections in the Nondiscrimination Ordinance.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

- 1. Approval of minutes from the October 12, 2021, Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee.**

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez moved to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2021 Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee Meeting. Councilmember Castillo seconded the motion. The motion passed with four affirmative votes. Councilmember Bravo abstained.

**Briefings and Possible Action Items**

- 2. The City’s COVID19 and Flu Response and Preparedness by Metro Health Staff [Erik Walsh, City Manager, Claude Jacob, Director, Metro Health]**

Claude Jacob, Metro Health Director reported that COVID numbers were moving in the right direction and that the positivity rate was lower than the national average. Jacob reported that the City was at the “mild” risk level. A map of vaccination sites overlaid upon the Equity Index was provided and Jacob noted that the COVID presentation dovetailed with the next item declaring racism as a public health crisis. Jacob stated that the vaccination rate of 76% surpassed the State and national average and noted the disparities in vaccination among areas of the City. Jacob presented a graph showing the total Bexar County population by vaccination status and age group.

He outlined strategies to encourage COVID-19 Vaccination at events throughout the City as well as with social media, broadcast media, etc. He reported that over \$111,709 boosters were administered to Bexar County residents and provided an update on the pediatric vaccination. Jacob added that flu vaccines were being offered for free.

Discussion:

Councilmember Viagran commended the work of the Metro Health Team on getting residents vaccinated, especially at the Mission Marquee Plaza in Council District 3 and mentioned she was looking forward to the roll out of vaccines for children aged 5-11 years. Jacob credited Dr. Anita Kurian for this work.

Councilmember Castillo was pleased that the 78207 zip code had been targeted for vaccinations and stated that it was important to have the conversation with the community about their fears to better inform them.

Councilmember Bravo asked when the risk level might go to “low” noting that it was still at “mild.” Jacob was hopeful that we were trending in the right direction but felt that continued targeting of the unvaccinated was key and warned against holiday gatherings. Councilmember Bravo asked about the distribution strategy for the incentive gift cards and what role City Council might play. Jacob indicated that Metro Health purchased 10,000 of the \$100 gift cards that had been distributed 1,700 gift cards, noting that younger population seemed to be more enticed by the gift cards.

**3. The City’s Resolution on Racism as a Public Health Crisis.** [David W. McCary, Assistant City Manager; Jonathan Malagon, Interim Chief Equity Officer]

Chair Sandoval provided historical context and an introduction of the item. Jonathan Malagon, Interim Chief Equity Officer, presented an overview of the health impacts of racism as well as background on the Resolution and an overview of the Office of Equity and its change strategies. Malagon described capacity building efforts such as the Equity Trainer Program and Citywide Equity Lunch and Learn opportunities including partner organizations and numbers of staff trained to date. Malagon outlined the Equity Office’s work with City Departments to impact policy changes using the equity lens.

Metro Health Director, Claude Jacob acknowledged Jennifer Herriot, Kathy Shields and Carlos Rodriguez from the Metro Health Department, who had been working on health equity since 2017 as well as a six-month plan for future activities. Jacob highlighted progress made and the six-month plan for enhancement of data systems, engagement and empowerment of historically marginalized communities.

Discussion:

Chair Sandoval asked for more information on the data tools that would be employed, which Malagon explained were expected to be updated this year with 2020 census data. Chair Sandoval noted that a disparity study was performed regularly for the Small Business Program.

Malagon explained that the Office of Equity has helped with this study and introduced Jonathan Butler from the Office of Equity who explained that they wanted to ensure that the vendor selected to perform the disparity study would take equity information into consideration and to assure that their office would play an integral role. Noting that maps were broken up by precincts, Chair Sandoval suggested that Bexar County should support the resolution. Jacob committed to making sure that there was good coordination throughout Bexar County adding that there were different strategies needed for outreach in the unincorporated areas of Bexar County.

Chair Sandoval explained that the Resolution included economic opportunities and inquired about coordination with Ready to Work. Malagon reported that this year, the Workforce Development Department would create an equity action plan. Assistant City Manager McCary stated that the Neighborhood and Housing Services and Workforce Development Departments were scheduled to provide an update at a later Committee meeting.

Councilmember Viagran felt that the Resolution would be an opportunity for the City to lead on this issue and wondered if persons living with disabilities or mental health issues could be included. Malagon spoke about the new department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion which will include the Disability Access Office.

Councilmember Castillo highlighted the importance of direct outreach by Community Health Workers suggesting this would be a great model and that the Neighborhood and Housing Services Department (NHSD) and the Department of Human Services (DHS) should be brought into the conversation as well.

Councilmember Bravo commended Metro Health for establishing an Office of Policy and Civic Engagement (PaCE).

#### **4. Appointment Recommendations to the Municipal Golf Association (MGA) – San Antonio Board of Directors.** [Debbie Racca-Sittre, Interim City Clerk]

Debbie Racca-Sittre, Interim City Clerk provided an overview of the MGA Board of Directors composition and terms. She noted that the current term for City appointees expired in May 2021. Homer Garcia, III Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, introduced Andrew Peterson, CEO of Alamo City Golf Trail. Garcia outlined the Board application timeline and process which included establishment of an ad-hoc committee that convened and shortlisted 11 candidates.

Discussion:

Councilmember Viagran commented on the work of the ad-hoc committee and their intent to represent all council districts as well as trying to reach out to new audiences and users of the golf course.

The following listed candidates were in attendance and provided two minutes to give an opening statement and the committee asked follow-up questions.

1. Gretchen Garceau-Kragh
2. Samuel Luna, Jr.
3. Javier Paredes
4. Jenny Carnes
5. Geronimo Guerra
6. Chris Morales
7. Errol Sykes
8. Heather Wedige

The following candidates provided a written statement that was read into the record by the Interim City Clerk.

9. Demonte Alexander
10. Mary Carriker
11. Gregg Hopkins

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Chair Sandoval recessed the Community Health, Environment and Culture Council Committee Meeting into Executive Session at 4:06 PM to discuss the following:

- A. Consultation with the City Attorney's Office concerning attorney client matters under Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

Chair Sandoval reconvened the meeting at 4:52 PM and announced that no action was taken during Executive Session.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez moved to recommend and forward recommendation of the following applicants for the six vacant seats on the Municipal Golf Association San Antonio Board of Directors:

- Gretchen Garceau-Kragh
- Javier Paredes
- Demonte Alexander
- Jenny Carnes
- Geronimo Guerra
- Heather Wedige

Councilmember Bravo seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The appointments were to be scheduled for full City Council consideration on November 18, 2021.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:53 PM.

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*Ana Sandoval, Chair*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

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*Debbie Racca-Sittre,  
Interim City Clerk*

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