

December 18, 2023

COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Harold E. Getty Council Chambers

4:50 p.m.

Roll Call.

Members present: Mayor Quentin Hart in the Chair. Mr. Boesen, Mr. Nichols, Ms. Creighton-Smith, Mr. Grieder, Ms. Wilder and Mr. Feuss. Ms. Wilder joined by Zoom and Mr. Chiles was absent.

Agenda, as proposed or amended.

Feuss/Grieder

that the agenda as proposed, be approved. Voice vote-Ayes: Six. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of December 4, 2023, as presented.

Feuss/Grieder

that the minutes of December 4, 2023, as proposed, be approved. Voice vote-Ayes: Six. Motion carried.

Discussion of a Sister City Partnership with St. Thomas, Jamaica.

Abraham Funchess, Executive Director of Human Rights, provided an overview of starting a sister city relationship with St. Thomas, Jamaica. The conversation started with a gentleman named Norman Grant who had been instrumental in helping Jamaican immigrants here in the Cedar Valley. A meeting was initially held with the Mayor of Cedar Falls and eventually brought before the Mayor of Waterloo to present the idea of a sister city relationship. He stated that it was felt that the idea of celebrating Jamaica Day would go over very well in Waterloo, in part due to our demographics. But in the larger context of pan-Africanism, it is particularly appealing to the Human Rights Commission, and he believes it would also be appealing to a larger swath of Waterloo as well.

Mayor Hart shared that Mr. Norman Grant, along with the Western Home, received the Diversity and Inclusion Award at the Grow Cedar Valley Conference and that part of the reason is not just because people are living here, but also the impact it has had on the overall commerce within the Cedar Valley. He has been able to supply workers and college students trained to take over in a number of capacities at the Western Home, potential partnerships with the Waterloo Community Schools, work at the Themepark and Waterpark and other areas of opportunity to help meet some of the workforce demands we have in the community. He stated that this is really about the culture and the economic impact this will have on both of our communities.

Abraham Funchess shared that International Human Rights Day is celebrated every December 10 and, though it has passed, he wanted to make sure we recognize it.

Ms. Wilder commented that she had heard a lot of great things about Mr. Norman Grant's work and believes our partnership with him will be incredible.

ADJOURNMENT

Feuss/Nichols

that the council adjourn at 4:59 p.m. Voice vote-Ayes: Six. Motion carried.

Kelley Felchle
City Clerk