

**CITY OF SILVERTON
CIVIC CENTER EQUITY AND INCLUSION TASK FORCE MINUTES**

January 28, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Palmer called the meeting to order at 6:05pm. The task force members, staff, and presenters were present through the virtual meeting platform Zoom. Chair Palmer explained the meeting is being held through Zoom consistent with House Bill 4212.

Present	Absent	
x		Kyle Palmer (Chair)
	x	Lara Ghio Gaitan
x		Enez Bradford (<i>left at 7:40pm</i>)
x		Brianna Wolterman
	x	Orianna Farrell
x		Micole Olivas-Leyva

Staff Present: City Manager Pro Tem Bob Willoughby, Chief of Police, Jim Anglemier, and Assistant to the City Manager/Human Resources Coordinator, Elizabeth Gray.

Presenters/Guests:

From Mackenzie Engineering: Cathy Bowman and Alexis Bauer

From Civic Center Internal Design Team: City Councilor Dana Smith

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES from December 3, 2020 Regular Meeting

Member Olivas-Levyva made a correction to Section VI to correct the name of who made a motion to approve the minutes. Member Olivas-Levyva then made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Member Wolterman seconded the motion. Elizabeth Gray stated she would also make a correction to the attendance noted on the minutes. All members approved and minutes were passed as written.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT – Chair Palmer noted that written comment from Scotty Wilson was received prior to the meeting. Elizabeth Gray verified through the chat box that the member of the public present did not wish to provide public comment.

IV. DISCUSSION/ACTION

4.1 Participant Introductions

Task Force members, City staff, and Mackenzie staff made introductions.

4.2 Updates on Civic Center Project and Opportunities for Input – with Mackenzie Engineering

Assistant to City Manager/HR Coordinator Elizabeth Gray explained that the most recent meeting, December 3, 2020 concluded with a brief discussion of inclusive design features in interior spaces such as restrooms, lobbies, and Council Chambers/Court. This January meeting is planned to be the last design focused meeting because the Mackenzie team will then be implementing the design as laid out. She shared several slides of comments from the Community Design Survey from June/July 2020 as they related to representation and inclusivity in the design. She noted that the survey focused more on the exterior of the property and the park land, and that the survey did not include example images of interior spaces and so the comments are generally more focused on outside spaces. Comments included conducted the survey in Spanish (which the City did), recognition of native tribes, and spaces in which to

interact positively with police, sustainable materials, murals, a police memorial likely in an inside space, a community center type emphasis, focus on family play, a community gathering space, and usability for all physical abilities.

Cathy Bowman and Alexis Bauer began the Mackenzie presentation. Cathy noted that the Design Team had released Design Development documents to City staff on this same day. Volume and spaces are now defined and materials are now being defined, along with materials and signage. Floor plans and rooms would not change but the feel of the rooms could which is why the conversation is starting now. Cathy reviewed the perspectives of the outside of the building. Then she shared a color palette for the outside of the building. Alexis reviewed the floor plan, starting with the police public areas – separate entrance, waiting area, and records counter. There is also the soft interview room and access to a public restroom. The City Hall side of the building is a larger volume also with a secure vestibule and a direct visible connection to the finance department. Stairs and the elevator are to the left, along with a family restroom that accommodates multiple people. Upstairs holds a large landing outside of Council chambers and Court and a seating grouping that overlooks the level below and also the balcony area – public will have access to balconies. A few meeting spaces are open to the public on the back corner. Alexis shared precedent images for the police area with warm woods and visuals from the records area. Renderings of the wood tone color are paired with a lower ceiling to feel more residential. The area is designed to feel light and airy Member Olivas-Levyva asked if the records area is completely glassed in and if so is that for security reasons. Alexis confirmed this was the case. Cathy showed the layers of glass that could be used instead of a metal talk box. Chief Anglemier confirmed that the full separation is a CJIS (federal) requirement, both for documents and for computers with that kind of information.

Alexis shared possible renderings of the City Hall space on the second floor. It is designed for maximum volume and airiness. Other possibilities include using timbers from the school. Elizabeth pointed out that there is an intermediate lobby for the Finance department that mimics and enlarges the door and lobby in the current City Finance department. Alexis pointed out the Clerk's office, Council chambers, and other features on the floor. Alexis discussed the connection between the lobby and chambers and asked for the group's feedback on how much privacy there should be between those areas. Member Wolterman said the glaze takes away from how nice it could look and asked if roll out blinders or shade that is heavy and locks could be more flexible. Alexis said all of those are on the table. Councilor Smith and Member Olivas Levyva mentioned the possibility of distractions when looking outward from the Chambers. Chair Palmer mentioned the idea of a "crying child room" as you might see in a church. Elizabeth Gray mentioned that some boards and committees meet during the regular workday and so when in-person meetings return those distractions could be considered when looking at flexible shading options. Alexis reviewed a comment in the chat regarding the expense of shading options. Member Wolterman asked about keeping the glass clear on the doors and relights at the top of the windows but the rest of the windows covered. Elizabeth relayed comments in the chat about including a monitor in the waiting area and using standard drywall wall as an opportunity to have more art. Chair Palmer mentioned that sitting at the head of the room, he would wonder about safety glass/bullet resistant windows since this has happened in other communities. City Manager Pro Tem Bob Willoughby mentioned clear glass and Executive Session and the possibility of displaying information on screens that needs to be private. Cathy Bowman referenced the planned Executive Session room unless it is a very large group and said this need for the larger room would be considered. Discussion turned to seating in the Council Chambers. Alexis described keeping the area in front of Council open. For the second floor lobby benches were suggested along the walls, and Member Wolterman suggested monitors in that area as well as at a potential "cry room". Alexis Bauer asked if noise from the monitor could become a distraction. Member Wolterman suggested it might be more for evening meetings. Elizabeth Gray suggested the monitor could also silently display upcoming meetings or City messages throughout open business hours and sound could be enabled if desired for after-hours meetings, for potential overflow. Alexis Bauer described the clerk's office, which would match the Council Chambers scheme. The goal is to keep the long visual back to the public desk. Member Olivas Levyva asked about the approach to the Clerk's desk and the height of the window, also along with the Finance Department and how a person using a mobility device would approach the window. Alexis Bauer explained that all ADA requirements will be followed and that the goal is to make that the default and flow into the design as a given.

Member Olivas Levya asked about the stair materials and safety for children and service animals. Cathy Bowman indicated that the stairs are under discussion and code requirements disallow openings bigger than 4 inches in circumference for the protection of childrens' heads, etc.

Alexis Bauer then directed attention the layout of the Council Chambers and court. The podium and dais have not been fully developed and Alexis shared examples of other buildings with a variety of glass, wood paneling, and other choices. This is an area where the Task Force's input would be really helpful. Mackenzie has heard a lot of discussion about the impact of remote meetings and the difference in dynamic that has developed for meetings; for example, the traditional mode was to present to Council at a podium but that has shifted. Chair Palmer referenced that he and others hear that it is intimidating to come in front of the Council and to be a focal point for the audience at the same time. He noted that if the Councilors are not higher up than those at the back of the room cannot see them, unless they were to be in theater style seating which is likely too expensive. He referenced that Marion County Commissioners have that table off to the side. Another possibility would be for the podium to align with the first row of chairs so that a speaker feels a part of the audience. He said the design of this space is a vital decision to be made. Chair Palmer would like to entertain every out of the box possibility for the space because there is nothing more important than engagement. Member Wolterman stated conversations happen best in a circle; could the Council Chambers be set up more like a half circle to create a hint of an inviting conversation. Member Wolterman asked about where the interpreter usually stands for the meeting; Mayor Palmer replied "nowhere". Member Wolterman suggested that a space should be reserved. Mayor Palmer mentioned that perhaps captioning could be included on the monitor. Member Wolterman thought that was already happening and Mayor Palmer confirmed it is not.

Councilor Smith wrote in the chat that she was in favor of arced seating for Council and City Manager Pro Tem Bob Willoughby commented that he would encourage the arc seating as well both for orientation to the audience and better for the Councilors compared to a row. Member Wolterman commented it would be a great tribute to the original indigenous inhabitants of the area to attribute the circle gathering. Member Wolterman also indicated that dedicated wheelchair space at the front of the room, not just the back, would be important as well. Chair Palmer agreed that facilities were long designed to be intimidating and weren't designed to encourage input and involvement and that is not what we want to accomplish today. Cathy Bowman shared a visual with the dais in the middle of the room for feedback, similar to King Arthur's Court. Seats were arranged the perimeter. Chair Palmer commented that the Council in a circle is good but having backs to the audience is not ideal. Member Olivas Levya noted that there would be less seating available around the table. Alexis Bauer asked about court functions. Chair Palmer indicated that he was not familiar with the intricacies but sees the traditional design drivers as the same and does not see issues with the arc design and court function. City Manager Pro Tem Willoughby agreed. Councilor Smith commented in the chat that Peer Court would work well in the arc format.

Discussion turned to the space behind the dais and what members of the Task Force would like to see. Elizabeth Gray commented that the current chambers have the City seal and several pieces of art contributed by community members and asked if these were intended to be on a solid wall. Cathy Bowman said likely yes and shared examples from McMinnville of history carved into the wall. Member Wolterman was in favor of the simple wood paneling and commented on the difficulty of committing to a design within the wall. Alexis Bauer commented that the side wall and the doors into chair storage would likely include wood as well. Cathy Bowman commented that monitors will be included in the Chambers but are not shown in the current mock-up. Alexis Bauer commented that the dais could be fixed or mobile. Member Olivas Levya indicated that flexibility for other uses of the room would be nice. City Manager Pro Tem Bob Willoughby was in favor of a movable dais but concerned about reattaching electronics. Members and attendees commented on the precedent image with small round tables and chairs at the back of the room and how having tables at a seating option could be more inviting for meeting attendees.

Cathy Bowman introduced the topic of security in the Chambers and active shooter or other incidents. The room has dual access. Some jurisdictions have put bulletproof paneling at their dais. Chair Palmer commented that he is not in favor of implying that Council members are more valuable than audience members; however, there is not the same opportunity to affix paneling to the traditional audience seating

setup. Member Olivas Levya commented that audience members could also gather behind a shield like set-up. Councilor Smith indicated “more likely to be a target” in the chat and Chief Anglemier shared that based on what he has seen around the country that officials at the front of the room would be the likeliest target of any attack. Member Olivas Levya asked about emergency exits and Cathy pointed out the exit near the dais leading to the back stairs.

Alexis Bauer asked for feedback on two other spaces – public conference rooms designed to have equal seating around the table. Member Olivas Levya expressed a preference for the sample rooms with warmer tones and natural materials. Cathy Bowman shared visuals from the soft interview room and DV advocate/peer court room with roundtop tables and soft carpet. The group discussed light flow into small conference rooms and how to create privacy where needed.

4.3 Future Direction of the Task Force

Chair Palmer indicated it has always been his intention to expand the task force. This would have been something that occurred to him earlier but he thought that City staff wouldn’t tolerate another task force with an indefinite time period. He would very much like to see this be broader. Elizabeth Gray thanked Cathy and Alexis and extended the invitation to stay but said it was not necessary. Elizabeth then proceeded to share the slideshow with questions: 1) With the design input completed for this phase of the project, are there other areas related to the City where the group would like to focus?; 2) What are those areas?; 3) In an ideal area, how often would you see this group gathering; 4) Considering the perspectives represented in the group already, what other perspectives would you like to see in a group providing input and advise around diversity, equity, and inclusion?

For the first and second questions combined, Member Olivas Levya said one easy answer is future phases of the Civic Center project – the park project. Chair Palmer said the sky is the limit – future city projects, facility remodeling, outdoor park space, no end to some of it. There is a group from Rotary club that would love to fund a different kind of park – a sensory park – in the future and not necessarily on the Eugene Field property. Member Wolterman noted events that the City plans and endorses and the overarching idea of what community in Silverton is – how to focus that into an inclusive and more diverse space. This would mean as a task force, making statements, but also saying that “x” is a concern in a community and presenting options for responding in an inclusive and equitable way. This doesn’t necessarily mean the majority way; the Task Force would be the voice of underrepresented in the community and this Task Force should be a continual voice for the voices less in number. Elizabeth offered to move on and return to this topic if needed, and that she was happy to answer questions about services offered by the City so the list of ideas can be refined. Chair Palmer indicated the scope can evolve; with the example of the Historic Landmarks Commission, he was embarrassed to say that they were not consulted about this Civic Center project as a building in our historic district and using pieces of a building that was historic in the community - even if the Civic Center building itself will not be historic. Member Wolterman suggested another focus could be looking into what the City is missing, such as an ASL interpreter. Chair Palmer says there never has been one. Member Wolterman suggested an audit of sorts with the aim of improving services would be helpful or adding services. Elizabeth Gray asked to jump in with a quick explanation that while a sign language interpreter is not a given at a City public meeting - as opposed to the Governor’s COVID press conferences – that the City has interpretation resources on call if a request is made. It’s a requirement of a public meeting or program to fulfill requests for accommodation. She noted that she sees the broader point that this accommodation would have to be arranged in advance vs. someone not needing that service can join a meeting on whim. Chair Palmer said he did not know that this was a requirement and available. Member Olivas-Levya expressed interest in the idea of focusing on City events and building community with all community members during events, as well as collaboration with other groups, such as the Affordable Housing Task Force. City Manager Pro Tem Bob Willoughby noted that the language around accommodations for public meetings is on all of the meeting notices, whether the public reads that disclaimer or not. Chair Palmer said that he never doubted the City would be handling this correctly but there is sometimes a difference between setting something up and making it accessible and the legal obligation.

The third question related to how often the group would gather. Elizabeth Gray noted that the group has been meeting roughly once a month and timing to decision points in the process. Member Wolterman

indicated that once a month would be ideal and that there are a lot of ideas flowing. Member Olivas-Levy agreed and added that a work session could be added if needed.

The fourth question asked about other perspectives that would be idea in a group providing input and advice around diversity, equity, and inclusion. Chair Palmer would like to see more cultural representation. Said he was devastated not being able to find someone with the experience of a physical disability to participate in the Civic Building side of this, and that while building code guides a lot around accessibility it would have been better to have someone engaged. He said if the group gets bigger there can be more diversity in voices. Member Olivas-Levy said she would like to see the group grow with as many inputs as needed so long as it doesn't hinder our work. Member Wolterman added that it is important to have a clear point to what work we're doing. The point is not to be inclusive of everybody's opinions, that it should be focused. She noted there will be pushback about not allowing everybody's input to be valued the same. Input is valued, but this group is to recognize that there hasn't been and currently isn't equal representation across the board; the task force should have a clear point. Chair Palmer said he gets a lot of questions about this task force. Some have suggested that having a task force creates overrepresentation from people that are underrepresented and he does not agree with that. His opinion is that there are committees or commissions in the City to which he appoints an intentional balance. Others are task forces that are designed to do a thing. The homeless task force is designed to look at solutions for homelessness. The affordable housing task force is designed to advocate for affordable housing solutions; it's not designed to debate affordable housing, it's designed to facilitate affordable housing. This task force isn't for debating representation, it's to provide representation. The current people in positions are not always representative of those we want to see represented. He stated again that normally he tries to find people that debate things; however, a task force is designed to move something in a specific direction period, not debate the thought that it doesn't need to happen. It needs to happen until that representation exists naturally across the board. Member Bradford left at approximately 7:40pm.

Elizabeth Gray summarized the group indicated there are more topics to address, the group would like to meet roughly monthly, and other perspectives would be valuable in an expanded group, including but not limited to lived experience with disability and other cultural backgrounds. Member Wolterman added in the chat that including younger members would be ideal. Member Olivas-Levy also added non-English speakers or others with the experience of immigration.

V. COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

Member Olivas-Levy and Member Wolterman did not have anything else to add, nor did Chair Palmer, adding that he thought everything had been covered.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Member Olivas-Levy made a motion to adjourn and Member Wolterman seconded. Chair Palmer adjourned the meeting at 7:52pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

/s/Elizabeth Gray, Assistant to the City Manager/Human Resources Coordinator