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Public Testimony received 11-2-20 via email.

Dear Tracy Davis, City Recorder,

Please makes this testimony letter available to Mayor Clark and to all of the City Councilors,

Re: Inclusivity Resolutions and Denouncing of White Supremacy

Dear Mayor Clark and City Councilors, I write to you on behalf of Mano a Mano Family Center, a Salem-based nonprofit serving more than 100 families in Keizer.

We realize that these are scary times. As our own Vic Backlund used to say, do the right thing because it is the right thing to do. That's it. If you can't live up to that maxim, public service may not be for you.

American heroes, of all stripes, fought against fascism, tyranny, and White Supremacy. Denouncing White Supremacy is the right thing to do and the easiest thing to do.

White Supremacy movements are not comparable to Black Lives Matter. We all should have no problem denouncing White Supremacy movements such as Proud Boys, Nazis, and anti-immigrant groups. Denounce White Supremacy. Full stop. Qualifying your denouncement, or watering it down in any way is suspicious.

This Council has a history created by the adoption of the anti-LGBTQ language in chapter 44 of the City Charter. That history doesn't define you as Council members, if you walk away from it. The closer you stay to that history, the more it will stain you.

Mayor Clark, you are not alone in your efforts. Don't go at it alone, because it should be a shared effort. If it doesn't go well, it will be on your shoulders, and it should be a shared responsibility.

Sincerely,

Levi Herrera-Lopez, Executive Director
(1997 McNary Graduate)
Mano a Mano Family Center
levi@manoamanofc.org
503-389-0822 Cell Phone

Courtney
11-2-2020

Madam Mayor and members of the council,

I am here today out of deep concern over the discussion that took place last week regarding the draft of the inclusivity/value statement.

I am deeply concerned that after councilor Herrera suggested the statement include denouncing White Supremacy, he was faced with a barrage of reasons not to include it.

Councilor Reid said not all people have the same definition of white supremacy.

According to Merriam Webster, White supremacy is the belief that the white race is inherently superior to other races and that white people should have control over people of other races. White supremacy is the social, economic, and political systems that collectively enable white people to maintain power over people of other races.

The fact that people carry different definitions of White Supremacy is a part of both the explicit and implicit bias people carry. How others may define white supremacy is not the responsibility of you as the council to tip toe around. Given the official Merriam Webster definition, do you condemn this belief? As a city, do we condemn this belief? If the answer is yes, it needs to be said.

Councilor Kohler said he, "would be opposed to putting something in there that is white supremacy because then you would have to find every group under the sun to put in there."

Councilor Kohler, White supremacy is not a group. It is a belief. It is a belief that has no place in this country, in this state or our city.

Councilor Freeman mentioned moving forward the council should be going to the community to listen to what the people have to say ...have you gone to the community to ask what they would like to see in an inclusivity statement?

Have you asked people of color in our community what words in a statement would matter to them and make them feel more welcome? Councilor Herrera has asked to have something included that condemns white supremacy. Are you listening to him as the sole person of color on this council?

Have you asked the Black members of our community? The LatinX community members? The members with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ community members? If as a council you want to create

a statement about our community being welcoming and have it actual mean something, you MUST include the people who experience the hate and discrimination in this community?

I hear more than one of you reference our neighborhoods are "diverse and all are welcome" People of color may be there, but do they actually feel welcome? Are they a part of our community as a whole?? If you have yet to believe racism and hate are here in Keizer, come to a BLM rally or sit down and really listen to our communities of color, listen to our students and their families.... Keizer has many great people in our community, but we also have community members who have been allowed to demonstrate hate. I have seen it firsthand. As I stood on the corner on a Saturday afternoon just two weeks ago with our Black neighbors, we were supported by many with thumbs up and honks, but also flipped off, yelled at, blown out with exhaust from trucks that revved their engines as they drove by and required to dodge things being thrown at us. The HATE is HERE and must no longer be ignored. You as a council MUST call it out. By not naming it, it will be allowed to continue.

Mayor Clark, I heard and understand your desire to use the affirmative statements because affirmative statements are where you get action...I can, I will, I do, I shall. You said in the negative, there is an absence of action. I do not believe we can successfully move toward an ideal if we do not first condemn the beliefs and behaviors that are not desirable and keeping us from achieving that ideal of welcoming all. Let's turn the negative into an action...A statement that boldly states the city of Keizer condemns white supremacy, discrimination, hate, exclusion, bullying, violence, and intimidation is necessary. Actively condemning behaviors is an action and will continue to be an action if it is included in the statement.

A general positive statement feels like fluff. It does not make a strong enough statement against undesirable behaviors. Councilor Smith shared a much bolder statement from Philomath that was closer to denouncing undesirable behaviors, however, our communities of color need to read that our city condemns white supremacy, even if some of our white councilors and some of our white community members don't agree. You begin REAL steps toward inclusion and welcoming all when you are willing to take a stand for ALL, even if it makes you uncomfortable. True anti-racist work IS uncomfortable. I implore you to take a stronger stand in your statement of inclusion and condemn white supremacy.

Carol Dowd
11-2-2020

DRAFT:
Keizer Statement of Values
Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- #3
- a. Whereas All people shall be treated with dignity and respect; and (*Keizer City Council Resolution R2018-2912*);
 - b. Whereas "All" people includes but is not limited to the Federal and State Definitions of Protected Classes of people:
 - b.i. Federal definition – Race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, disability
 - b.ii. State of Oregon additions – Source of income, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity; and
 - c. Whereas equity is both a process and an outcome; and (*Salem-Keizer School District*);
 - d. Whereas the City of Keizer recognizes that Federal and State of Oregon practices, policies, laws and regulations have historically resulted in discrimination and disparity against people based on any protected class listed above.

#1

NOW, THEREFORE, The City of Keizer has taken action and commits to continuing to take action to be a city that welcomes every person regardless of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, disability, source of income, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

#2

In addition, the City of Keizer affirms its commitment to ensure that all members of the community are free from acts that are rooted in racism, discrimination, intolerance, bigotry, and hostility. We will strive to inspire and continually pursue a culture of safety and wellbeing.