



Action Minutes – Council Naming Committee

Meeting Date/Time: October 25, 2024 at 9:30 am, Hybrid Meeting – Zoom & First Floor Conference Room, Town Hall

Members Present: Jess Anderson (Chair), Karen Stegman, Paris Miller-Foushee, Melissa McCullough

Staff Present: Chris Blue (Town Manager), Loryn Clark (Deputy Town Manager), Shenekia Weeks (DEI Officer), Susan Brown (Communications), Molly Luby (staff liaison)

Agenda Item	Discussion Point	Motions/Votes	Action
Call to Order	Meeting called to order at 9:32 am	n/a	n/a
Old or Ongoing Business	Susan Brown reviewed existing policies around the sale of naming rights and outlined how to apply the policy to specific examples.	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee members discussed potential issues and agreed that the existing policy does not currently need to be amended.
	<p>Loryn Clark updated the committee on the potential formation of a non-profit “Friends of” group for housing, similar to the “Friends of Chapel Hill Public Library” or “Friends of Parks & Recreation.” Two primary findings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Such groups are formed and run by community members. It would not be appropriate for local government staff to be part of the formation of a non-profit that supports departmental work. The Town can accept targeted donations. For instance, community members interested in supporting affordable housing can donate money to a specific fund. 	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion about the roles of “Friends of” groups. They are both advocacy groups and fundraising groups. Libraries and Parks have a long history of support by community non-profits. Such groups are built-in to the industry. All agreed that no one wishes to be in competition with existing nonprofit partners working in the community. Town staff do not solicit donations; community members and elected officials can share ways people can donate to Town initiatives that they care about. Committee would like a clear, transparent process for directing those donations. Staff will develop and share that process.
	<p>Molly Luby reviewed two open petitions to rename streets based on ties to historic racism. Key decision points for the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer the petitions using the existing policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Option 1:</i> Change street names. ➤ <i>Option 2:</i> Decline to change street names. 	Full committee agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee deferred answering the petitions using existing policy because it does not provide clear guidance around renaming facilities based on ties to historic racism. Committee discussed the work of other communities that have engaged in initiatives to rename streets and public facilities with names tied to historic racism.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ <i>Option 3:</i> Decline to change street names and agree to add additional signs that provide historical context to the street name.• Draft an amendment to the existing policy that addresses community interests in renaming Town-owned facilities as a means of righting historic wrongs and/or changing a name that does not reflect the values of the community.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The committee would like a rubric that clearly addresses open petitions and future requests to rename facilities because of ties to historic racism. The committee’s goal will be to recommend a policy amendment to Council that includes this rubric.• Staff will draft a proposal for the committee to review and discuss at next meeting.
New Business	<p>Molly Luby shared an overview of the process for adding names to the marker at Peace and Justice Plaza:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Once a year, the Naming Committee may bring forward to Council for consideration the names of people nominated to be honored on the Peace and Justice Plaza marker.• Nominees must be deceased.• Nominees must have demonstrated a lifelong commitment furthering the causes of peace and justice in Chapel Hill. <p>Mayor Anderson presented a petition from retired Judge Jay Bryan requested that William “Bill” Massengale’s name be added to the marker.</p>	Unanimous approval to recommend Town Council add Mr. Messengale’s name to Peace and Justice Plaza marker	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee members discussed Mr. Massengale’s lifetime of work and advocacy around abolishing the death penalty in North Carolina.• Staff will draft a recommendation on behalf of the Naming Committee for Council approval.
Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am	n/a	n/a