



Additional Documents Distributed for the City Council Meetings of February 21, 2024

Item No.	Agenda Item Description	Distributor	Document
SPJ 01.	PUBLIC COMMENT	Joanne Nuckols	Email to Council
02.	PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)	Yvonne LaRose	Email to Council

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From: [Joanne Nuckols](#)
To: [City Council Public Comment](#)
Subject: Joint meeting City Council & Finance Commission
Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2024 11:31:51 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of South Pasadena. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

City Council, Finance Commission, city staff and consultants, I am speaking as a long time freeway fighter. There are several financial issues of the city related to that fight since 1973 which should be addressed.

I would like to speak to financial issues relating to the Schiff account from 1999, the 710 Rehabilitation Account from 2013 and the reimbursement from Caltrans of lost property tax since 1973, which is up to over \$3 million, money that should or could be coming into the city, now that the 710 is dead.

I have brought these issues up to council and staff before, hoping that someone would follow the money, the only fiscally responsible thing to do. We are a small city and do not have the resources of other big cities in the corridor with the same issues and cannot afford to ignore what is owed us. To date there has been no response to my suggestions.

First, in 1999, then state senator Adam Schiff initiated a rehabilitation account from the rent money from the historic houses for the upkeep of the historic houses in the 710 corridor. An audit of this account should be done to see how that money was spent or not. Could the city be getting some of that money for rehabilitation of the historic houses in South Pasadena in advance of sales to tenants in those historic houses, two I can think of that are on the National Register?

The money for the sales going forward goes into a separate 710 Rehabilitation Account administered by the California Transportation Commission and Metro. There is no criteria for disbursement of that money to the 5 cities that are entitled to those funds as confirmed by a CTC staff member four weeks ago. Additionally, depending on how the money is spent or manipulated by Caltrans, there would be no spill over of the \$1.2 million cap from that account that would go into the Rehab account to any of the five cities eligible to be used for affordable housing and transportation related projects.

Caltrans owes the city over \$3 million in back property tax reimbursement,

not paid over the decades. Previous City Managers did audits and wrote letter to determine how much is owed the city and asking for payment. The over \$3 million is based on that last audit. We think it is much more than that and should be looked into and not dismissed.

We are a small city, unlike Los Angeles and Pasadena, and can't afford to bypass any funds that we are entitled to. We need to do our due diligence and collect any money coming our way, to help mitigate the negative impacts of Caltrans occupation of our neighborhoods for 60 years. I'd be happy to fill anyone in on the details as to these accounts who would be interested in following the money.

Please act responsibly and follow these funds, the financial health of the city depends on every little bit.

Joanne Nuckols
South Pasadena Resident

From: [Yvonne LaRose](#)
To: [City Council Public Comment](#)
Subject: General Public Comment: The Significance of Black History Month
Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2024 11:50:43 AM

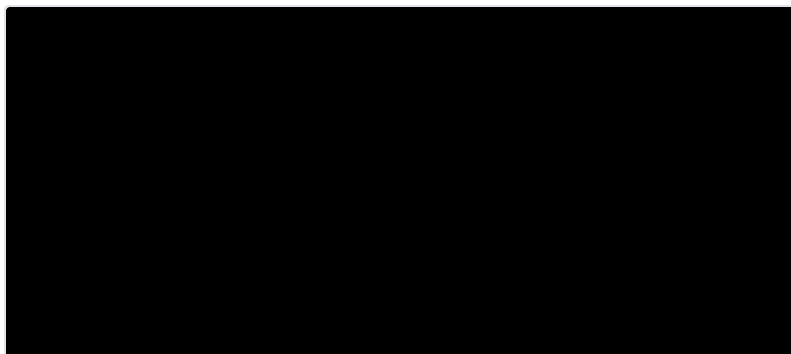
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Yes, four years in a row (accompanied by periodic Title VII reminders throughout the year) where I come to you to emphasize various aspects of Black History Month. Last year several South Pasadena residents urged me to speak and recommend actions that can be done to give substance to our three Sundown Town Proclamations and nurture a more inclusive *community*. I've endeavored to honor those requests.

A number of incidents have impacted me during the last three months. In particular were the numerous posts relating to astounding achievements of those who used to be designated as Negro or Colored, then having the *racial* identity evolve into being Black (a negative designation that took conditioning to become acceptable) or African American. (But I digress.) Those heralded achievements were not simply for the minority population. Those inventions benefited all demographics whether city, suburban, or rural, in significant ways that endure. Those inroads and creations are now part of what we consider part and parcel of our daily lives.

So Black History Month is a time when we do not suffer the hostilities that caused the racial glass ceiling to be cracked and broken. Instead, it is a time to look at the strengths, creativity, ingenuity, determination in the face of barriers in order to make Life for all one of pleasure with fewer limitations.

More recent events that impacted me as relates to acknowledging Black History Month were attending two screenings. One was "The Color Purple". The other was "Killers of the Flower Moon" (a look at the Osage holocaust). In the latter, a subtle tie-in to the [Greenwood Massacre](#) was included to show the atrocities were not isolated to only one ethnicity. One can justifiably draw the conclusion that all ethnicities have their stories of persecution and suppression; it's ubiquitous. It is very appropriate that we celebrate each ethnicity's heritage and achievements at their particular time of the year.



The Greensboro Massacre | Gateway Digital
History Collections



1921 Tulsa Race Massacre - Tulsa Historical Society & Museum

Following World War I, Tulsa was recognized nationally for its affluent African American community known as the ...

Last week, the final straw came as I was closing active tabs on a browser and discovered "Still Standing for the Cause", my blog post from 2009. Please take the time to consider the consultant's reflections. Finally, follow Heather McGhee's admonition in her book, *The Sum of Us*; do not build silos. Take positive steps to show how viral simple acts of inclusion, respect, and equity can make this truly a most desirable place to be.

Still Standing for the Cause

There are times when we go through situations that are most disagreeable. Unsavory as they are, unacceptable to the typical, forward-looking person, there are those who see no flaw in the circumstances because that is obviously where the person is supposed to be. They are among their kind. These individuals are progressing as they are supposed to be (which is actually stagnating and not being challenged in any meaningful way). These people are free to live wherever they want as long as it's in the same or lesser environment of where they're expected to be. Goods and services are acquired appropriate to the person's standing. There is freedom of self expression in whatever manner chosen, so long as it's among a particular class of people. Boundaries should be respected.

That description sounds like life from some foreign planet. It sounds like a brochure for a communist country tour or a visit to some place still existing under dictator rule. Actually, it's a description of life for a typical 21st Century resident in a United States ghetto.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has [established unequivocal standards](#) that relate to fair employment practices. One would expect that after more than 50 years, those rules and regulations would be part of every person's subconscious and guide them to make proper decisions as well as act in a reasonable way when sourcing, recruiting, screening, and hiring. But they don't. More examples are reported [each week](#).

Even in the recruiting industry, there are those who proudly beat their chests and boast about how ethical they are. Yet these are the very same people who will

attempt to have the applicant exclude themselves from being considered by asking them questions that tend to disqualify rather than demonstrate higher qualifications. What the applicants who survive this screening-out process gain is an opportunity at a lower salary because of the lack of skills they have to offer. It tends to be [Jim Crow](#) in treatment.

Again, prime examples of race-based pay inequities abound. Statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and education centers abound with the evidence. According to a 1998 study by the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), the difference between compensation received for work (and education that qualifies the individual for it) among black women compared with Asians was .857% and between black to white workers was .9724% for the same position. In other words, blacks could expect to earn at least 3 cents less than their white counterparts and 15 cents less than their Asian ones.

This reduced starting (and therefore long-term) salary keeps certain races and individuals locked into an ever downward spiraling path of lack of opportunity. It may look like they are getting work. But many times the work that is offered actually constitutes permanent under-employment. The only hope the person has of advancing their career is to change jobs because, unlike their initial hiring process, they will be passed over for all promotions unless they are quite aggressive in their pursuit of something more advanced.

These lesser positions and opportunities are partially hinged on the not-so imaginary inferior quality of education that is delivered in black neighborhoods, especially the ghettos, compared with what is supposed to be a level playing field of equal education and exposure to challenging concepts that will develop the critical thinking minds and talent we so desperately need in 2018. Teachers are saddled with not only inferior quality supplies and resources. They are also burdened with inordinate amounts of administrative paperwork. Couple those obstacles with students who come to school ill prepared because they may have been deterred by any number of factors, and you have a powder keg of disenfranchisement that can be blamed on any and every part of “The System.”

As with the times before the EEOC, before the 1950s, people no longer rock the boat with protests of unfair opportunity or unequal opportunity. Instead, they quietly take whatever they can get in order to support their own selves and their families. Stakes, as always, are high. There are bills to be paid, rent that always comes due or resort to living on the streets. But the salaries the minorities can command are so much less than that of others that the quality of goods and services that can be consumed is also lacking. The ripples of unfair employment practices spread across the pond and touch on every aspect of business and life as we know it.

It no longer does any good to protest the wrong. To do so is to be one who makes waves and is uncontrolled and uncontrollable, prone to violence at the least provocation. The solution is to shut up the noise and get rid of it by whatever means is expedient.

We stand today looking forward to a new horizon of opportunity and a promise of change from the status quo. We have a new president who has been elected on the

merit of who he is and how he conducts himself, not on what he is. What he actually represents is another statement about being an American. He is a blend of races that came to these United States. He is an example of one family's struggle to make ends meet and strive to be a little better than the previous generation. He is one who knows the history of this country and appreciates the foundations upon which all of the lessons are based. From that type of knowledge and awareness, there can be growth and improvement.

With grit, tenacity, hard work, and adapting to the many cultures surrounding him, Barack Obama has succeeded in being the the President of Change. Change is desperately needed. Nay, it is **required**. He prepares to step into his office on Tuesday with the state of the Nation in shambles scattered about the floor. The leadership of the previous administration was in word only, not in execution. The world is breathing a sigh of relief and pensively waiting for the first strokes of the man who will bring order back to the Nation of leaders.

We now have the daunting task of getting shell-shocked troops out of countries where they should not have been sent in the first place only to bring them back to home soils where there are no jobs. There are few job opportunities for those who never left the States while they face high rates of layoffs. Wages are not desirable. Rents are high. Housing is next to impossible to find because lenders are foreclosing on more properties than gaining revenue from the risk. Perhaps we should become a nation of Peace Corps enlistees who live from the basics of the land and build up. Is it realistic for us to look back to an agrarian economy? As long as agri-business isn't involved, that could be one of the solutions.

It was about 50 years ago that we marched on Washington singing and chanting and joining hands to demand Freedom Now. We listened as the charismatic King told us of how we were on our way to the Promised Land of Opportunity. But we now stand looking at that prospect and dare not breathe lest the dream vanish before our eyes.

Do we have anyone in our numbers, of whatever race or mixture, who is willing to call the injustices when they're encountered and strive to create the corrections, turn the thinking, to the directions where there truly is an open door for those who have worked to enter it? We look forward to this inauguration and are hopeful. But we look toward this inauguration with two generations of people who no longer remember why all of these inroads are landmark.

Instead, those two generations ask "[What's Going On?](#)"[inactive link] while those who were not even in their teens attempt once more to explain who the leaders were, what causes existed, why they were important and mattered. They hope by sharing the stories the younger generations will be infused with a desire to learn those lessons and names. There is a hope that they will strive to pick up the gauntlet and continue where others fell short.

We need to once again [reflect on our American freedoms](#) [inactive link] before we begin to formulate the response to these new generations. But we, all of us, no matter what color or ethnicity, need to be certain of the many promises this land held for us in the 1600s when the Pilgrims settled at Plymouth. And then we need to find ourselves still standing for the causes they represent. Finally, we need to

firmly grasp the reins of change in order to effectuate that change, not run away from the deterioration that has become part of our apathetic reverie. Rather we need to move forward to the progressive realization of The Dream so that it will not have been in vain.

Viva

Yvonne LaRose, CAC

Organization Development Consultant: Diversity/Title VII, Harassment, Ethics

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