



**CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA BILL**

City Council Regular Meeting - 01 Jun 2020

NEW
AB 7980 -
Regular Business

COVID-19 Anti-Bias Resolution

**Proposed Council Action:
Approve Resolution**

**DEPARTMENT OF
COUNCIL LIAISON
OTHER COUNCIL MEETINGS
COMP PLAN POLICY NOS.
OTHER POLICIES
EXHIBITS**

Executive Department Wally Bobkiewicz
Councilmember Marts
May 18, 2020 (Good of the Order)
n/a
Resolution Nos. 2002-09, 2019-03
A. Proposed Resolution

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Introduction

This agenda bill seeks City Council approval of a resolution rejecting racially based bias, harassment and hate crimes due to COVID-19 (Exhibit A).

Background

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, immigrant and refugee community leaders and civil rights organizations have reported a regional and national increase in bias, harassment, and hate crimes, particularly against Asian American and Pacific Islander, Black and African American, Hispanic and Latino, and other marginalized communities.

In response, numerous area cities have issued resolutions and proclamations decrying these acts.

At the May 18, 2020 Council meeting, Councilmember Marts, who represents Issaquah on the Sound Cities Association (SCA) Public Issues Committee (PIC), relayed the SCA's intention to adopt a proclamation rejecting discrimination related to COVID-19 and requested that the Issaquah City Council consider a similar action. At the meeting, multiple City Councilmembers expressed support for considering such a statement.

On May 20, 2020 the Sound Cities Association Board unanimously approved the proclamation.

City Outreach

Throughout COVID-19, the City has been sharing anti-discrimination messages through its communications channels. These messages have included:

- Misinformation about coronavirus can create fear and hostility that hurts people and makes it harder to keep everyone healthy. We're stronger as a community when we stand together against discrimination.
- Coronavirus doesn't recognize race, nationality, or ethnicity. While the 2019 novel coronavirus started in Wuhan, China – that's just geography. Having Chinese ancestry – or any other ancestry – does not make a person more vulnerable to this illness.
- Wearing a mask does not mean a person is ill. People wear masks for a variety of reasons, including cultural and social reasons. We should not judge someone for wearing a mask or assume they are sick. We should expect to see more people wearing masks, now that the CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain, like grocery stores.

The City is actively communicating with the community, sharing these anti-stigma messages and encouraging people to report any concerns.

Proposal

The attached resolution (Exhibit A) was modeled after the proclamation issued by the Sound Cities Association. The resolution reiterates the City's commitment to encouraging tolerance and rejecting discrimination. The resolution also references action taken by the City to dispel discrimination and encourage reporting.

Financial Information

n/a

Administration's Recommendation

The Administration recommends approving the proposed resolution rejecting racially based bias, harassment and hate crimes due to COVID-19.

Update

n/a

Alternative(s)

- 1) Do not approve resolution.
- 2) Modify resolution.

RECOMMENDATION

Administration / Executive Department:

MOVE TO: Approve Resolution No. 2020-____, rejecting racially based bias, harassment and hate crimes due to COVID-19.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-__

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ISSAQUAH, WASHINGTON, REJECTING RACIALLY BASED BIAS, HARASSMENT AND HATE CRIMES DUE TO COVID-19.

WHEREAS, since the outbreak of COVID-19, immigrant and refugee community leaders and civil rights organizations have reported a regional and national increase in bias, harassment, and hate crimes, particularly against Asian American and Pacific Islander, Black and African American, Hispanic and Latino, and other marginalized communities; and

WHEREAS, misinformation about coronavirus propagates fear that hurts people and impairs the ability of first responders and other City services to provide necessary response to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, in alignment with the City’s mission to “foster a safe, vibrant, livable, and inclusive community” the City desires to promote inclusiveness, celebrate diversity, support all fellow community members, prevent the spread of misinformation, and reject hate and bias in all forms; and

WHEREAS, the City has a history of acknowledging these values through the issuance of resolutions and proclamations celebrating tolerance and cultural diversity, rejecting discrimination, and proclaiming the City a Hate Free Zone, beginning with Resolution No. 2002-09; and

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the City has actively shared factual COVID-19 information and anti-stigma messages and resources to the community through its communication channels; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to further demonstrate its commitment to inclusivity given the abuses occurring during the COVID-19 outbreak; NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ISSAQUAH, WASHINGTON, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Statement. The City of Issaquah rejects racially based bias, harassment, discrimination, and hate crimes due to COVID-19 and denounces all COVID-19-related misnaming, blaming and harassment based on race, ethnicity, place of origin, physical ability, socio-economic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or religion.

The City commits to promoting an inclusive community and urges those in our community to treat each other with respect and work together to overcome all expressions of hate and bigotry.

Section 2. Reporting. The City of Issaquah encourages community members who observe or are experiencing incidents of discrimination, harassment, or hate crimes to report the incident to the Washington State Human Rights Commission (1-800-233-3247) or to call 911 in emergency circumstances.

PASSED by the City Council this ____ day of _____, 2020.

VICTORIA HUNT, COUNCIL PRESIDENT

APPROVED by the Mayor this ____ day of _____, 2020.

MARY LOU PAULY, MAYOR

ATTEST:

CHRISTINE L. EGGERS, CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JAMES E. HANEY, CITY ATTORNEY

RESOLUTION NO: 2020-
AGENDA BILL NO: AB 7980