

Council work group begins plotting path of DEI work

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Despite some contentious moments, a group of three Keizer city councilors laid out a partial path forward as the city seeks to make progress on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

Councilors Roland Herrera, Elizabeth Smith and Laura Reid met for the first time as the Community Diversity Engagement Work Group Wednesday, June 16. The group, along with city staff members, spent most of the time brainstorming possible paths and parceling out assignments for the next meeting. The work group will, eventually, make recommendations to the council at-large about how to proceed.

Whether to hire a consultant to help guide the city in DEI matters became the first major topic.

"I want our brand to be inclusive, not 'The Keizer Way' or whatever. A consultant would help us do this and it would be timed well with the hiring of a new city manager," Herrera said.

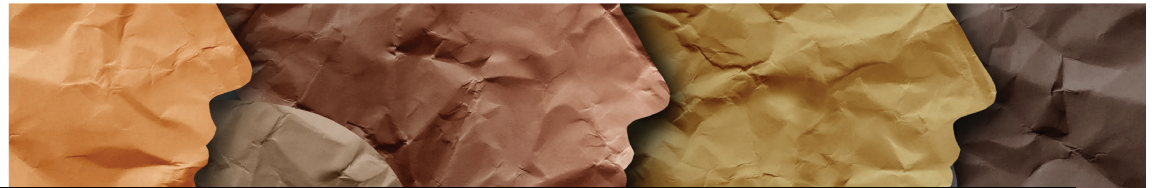
Smith backed the idea as a good investment, but Reid worried about where the city would find the money. City Manager Pro Temp Tim Wood suggested that an expected share of federal

funding tied to COVID-19 could free up some resources to pay for a consultant.

Smith had researched how Beaverton and some other cities were handling DEI issues as models, noting that Beaverton's effort had been divided into several paths, "arts, gardens, services and engagement, cultural inclusion, mediation and dialogue and neighborhood associations."

Neighborhood associations, which have had precipitous drops in attendance in recent years, were an avenue she would like to see the city invest more time in.

"We should find out if there is anything [the city and council] can do to reach out and build their resources," Smith said.



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— ROLAND HERRERA
City Councilor

**DIVERSITY
EQUITY &
INCLUSION**

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Pride flag debate stirs more ire

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Advocates calling for the city to display a LGBTQ+ Pride Flag continued their efforts at a Keizer City Council meeting Monday, June 21.

Two weeks prior, Councilor Roland Herrera floated the idea of flying a Pride Flag alongside the existing ones outside

the Keizer Civic Center. The discussion quickly devolved into something more heated when Councilor Ross Day noted that if the city chose to fly a Pride Flag, it would also need to allow other points of view access to the space. Day said a group wishing to fly the confederate flag might request access to the space and the city would have no recourse to deny it.

During the meeting Monday, Mayor Cathy Clark took some responsibility for letting the conversation end up where it did.

"I'm very sorry that the conversation ended there. We have some set limits on flags in particular, and that is where the

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DASIO GONZALEZ

Guilty plea lodged in 2020 Keizer death

By ERIC A. HOWALD
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One of two men charged in connection with the 2020 death of a man found dead in a vehicle in Keizer Station was sentenced to 15 years in prison last week.

Dasio Gonzalez, 23, pleaded guilty to manslaughter and robbery in the first degree in the death of 21-year-old Oscar Martinez, of Salem, on Feb. 3, 2020.

Gonzalez will be eligible for parole after serving 12 years of his sentence.

Another suspect in the death,

Kristian Mann, of Keizer, is still awaiting trial, currently scheduled for March 2022.

Martinez was found dead of a gunshot wound in a smashed van in the parking lot of the Keizer Station Starbucks. The van had collided with parked cars before coming to a stop on an island.

One caller to 9-1-1 reported seeing a male hanging out of the van and falling to the pavement where he was picked

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