

FLAG,

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conversation should have gone. I take responsibility for that," Clark said.

Still, testimony turned emotional at several points in the evening as residents offered responses to the conversation during the previous meeting.

Mathew Poteet said that the city already takes sides in some matters, especially during the holiday season when a Christmas tree goes up in the Keizer Civic Center and when councilors take oaths to support and defend the state and nation's constitutions.

"Maybe we don't call them flags, we call them banners and line River Road with them next year as we do during the holidays," Poteet said.

Resident Cortney Clendening, after reading a letter from another resident, was still at the mic when Councilor Ross Day unleashed a torrent of criticism on those speaking during public testimony.

Day called those with disabilities "the most discriminated class in the history of humankind. My point is that I haven't heard anyone talk about the disabled."

That brought Clendening to tears as she recalled assisting disabled veterans

at a kayaking event two days prior.

"I didn't come here to judge you," said Clendening after Day directed his fury at her. "Just because we aren't talking about it doesn't mean the advocacy isn't happening. I do not believe that problems get solved when conversations fall apart in disrespect."

Resident Claire Snyder, who organized a Pride Fair in Keizer two weeks prior, recommended that the council add a position that acts as a point of contact for and give voice to "members of the community who do not seem to have a place in the conversation right now."

Snyder has suffered through a raft of criticism and threats as a result of organizing the Pride Fair, particularly from a group that showed up to demonstrate against the event the day it happened. Snyder began her statement noting that the council had taken to "brushing off" the lived experiences of some residents as merely "feelings," which has occurred on several occasions in the recent months.

Clark signed a proclamation recognizing June 19 as Juneteenth, the day when the last victims of American slavery were notified that they were free, at the start of the meeting. It took more than two-and-a-half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation for them to learn of what happened.

DEI,

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Councilors agreed to do more research into the other cities' efforts and submit them before the group's next meeting. Smith planned to delve deeper into Beaverton, Reid will be looking into Monmouth and Dallas, Herrera will examine efforts in Oregon City.

"Make sure to ask about what efforts have been most successful and what the pitfalls were," Smith said.

Smith also suggested scheduling "listening sessions" either as part of neighborhood association meetings or independently.

"I want to make sure that we are going out instead of just inviting people in," Smith said.

Herrera, who has championed youth inclusion in civic matters alongside marginalized groups, said he would like to ask the Keizer Chamber of Commerce to add a youth award to its annual First Citizen awards. Additionally, he suggested that city councilors become more involved with

McNary High School's large Latino Club.

After developing plans headed into the group's next meeting, scheduled July 21 at 4 p.m., Reid asked if there was anything the city might do to recognize LGBTQ+ Pride Month before it ends June 30.

"I was thinking particularly about the reader board out front and what our policies are with that," Reid said.

Deputy City Recorder Debbie Lockhart, who is in charge of the messaging on the board, said the policy thus far has been limiting topics to city meetings and events. A policy change would rest in the council's hands.

On two occasions, Herrera and Reid briefly sparred over how the city should approach the conversation going forward with Herrera wanting some acknowledgment of the history behind the need to do DEI work. Reid wanted to approach it through a lens of positivity.

"I think the approach that we are stuck [in the past] isn't helpful. I think we have to acknowledge the work that has been done and build on that," Reid said.

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Cat of the Week



Name: COLLETTE
Age: 3

HISTORY: She is a grey and white domestic short hair.

PREFERRED HOME: Collette enjoys chin scratches and is very affectionate.

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