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AUGUST 20, 2020

National African American Reparations Commission Final Assessment of the Evanston, Illinois' Reparations Initiative

This Assessment should be considered as an extension of the Initial Assessment of the Evanston, Illinois Reparations Initiative based on the December 10-11 Consultation conducted by a Team from the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC). The NAARC Team was comprised of Kamm Howard, National Co-Chairperson, National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA); Dr. Iva Carruthers, General Secretary, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference; Nkechi Taifa, Esq., The Taifa Group; Lionel Jean-Baptiste, Cook County Circuit Court Judge; and Dr. Ron Daniels, President, Institute of the Black World 21st Century, Convener of NAARC. The Initial Assessment and Recommendations are appended to this document and should be reviewed to grasp the full extent of the engagement and interaction by the NAARC Team with the key actors associated with the Evanston Reparations Initiative.

As the Initial Assessment indicates, the objective of the NAARC Team Consultation was to outline the basic principles and criteria for reparatory justice initiatives as distinguished from regular, standard or ordinary public policy. Equally important, the NAARC team's mission was to evaluate whether the Evanston Reparations Initiative could be endorsed as a replicable model for local, municipal, county and state reparatory justice initiatives across the country. Accordingly, the principles and criteria for an authentic reparations initiative are restated as follows:

1. Consistent with the principles of restorative justice, the government, institution, agency or individual that is responsible for inflicting injury or harm cannot define the remedy. The remedy must be defined or agreed to by those who suffered the injury or harm. Remedies may include Direct Benefits to people of African descent/Black individuals or families having suffered/harm injury and/or Collective Benefits for the overall damages suffered by institutions or communities as a whole. It is important to emphasize, that as a matter of principle, all persons of African descent are eligible for reparations.
2. In accordance with international norms for reparations, it is also imperative that the party inflicting the harm or injury issue a public apology to initiate the process of repair.
3. The creation of an independent structure to receive resources for restitution is a distinctive qualification for a reparatory justice initiative. Those who suffered the injury or harm must have the power to make decisions on the allocation of resources for restitution and repair. This should include the creation of an independent Black controlled structure to receive and allocate collective or direct benefits for restitution as

identified by the affected community, institutions or individuals, e.g., a Reparations Finance Authority as referenced in the NAARC 10 Point Reparations Program, Community Economic Development Corporation, Community Land Trust, Cooperative or similar structure.

4. Regular, standard or ordinary public policy is not reparations. The allocation of resources to meet current needs in the Black community and the community at-large which are not exclusively for the Black community and controlled by Black families, communities and institutions is regular/standard/ordinary public policy.

Rather than release the Initial Assessment and Recommendations immediately after the December 10-11 consultation, the NAARC Team elected to support the effort of interested stakeholders and actors in undertaking a process to implement the principles and criteria as stated. Since December of 2019, the NAARC Team has served as a resource for advice and counsel as local actors worked through the process of implementing the principles and criteria within the context of what was deemed feasible and appropriate for the Evanston Black community.

Based on months of interaction with local actors, the NAARC Team has concluded that the consistent and committed work by key stakeholders has produced a process and system which meets the principles and criteria for a Reparatory Initiative as outlined above:

- There has been ongoing education and consultation with the Black community at-large to generate proposed remedies to repair the harm of de facto segregation, redlining, economic under-development, inadequate public education, etc. This input augments recommendations received during town hall meetings previously conducted by Alderman Robin Rue Simmons.
- Substantive discussions with the Stakeholder group that was invited to the table during the NAARC Team Consultation of December 10-11, 2019.
- As a result of these discussions a Reparations Stakeholders Authority has been formed as the official body that will receive input from the community on a continual basis. The Reparations Stakeholders Authority will vet and vote on proposals for reparative remedy and advance their decisions to the Reparations Sub-Committee of City Council. The Reparations Sub-Committee will submit the decisions of the Reparations Stakeholders Authority to the full Council for funding.
- The Reparations Stakeholders Authority is finalizing the application process which will be institutionalized for submitting reparations proposals.
- The Evanston Community Foundation has agreed to serve as the fiscal agent for an independent Reparations Fund that will be administered by the Reparations Stakeholders Authority.

While the NAARC Team recognizes that the process of finalizing the implementation process is still a work in progress, the essence of the systems and processes which are being established exemplify the principles and criteria as stated earlier in this document.

We commend all the stakeholders who have invested time and energy developing processes, structures and systems for the milestone Evanston Reparations Initiative. Accordingly, NAARC is prepared to certify the Evanston Reparations Initiative as a model for local municipal reparations initiatives across the nation.

Accordingly, pending the availability of resources, in addition to making a public announcement recommending Evanston as a model for local/municipal reparations initiatives, upon request, the NAARC Team will be supportive as follows:

- Continue to function as a reliable resource to provide counsel/advice as the implementation process moves forward.
- Convene forums, workshops and town hall meetings on reparations and reparatory justice initiatives nationally and globally as part of the ongoing educational process for the Black community and the general public.
- Identify community economic development and healing specialists to serve as consultants to the Reparations Stakeholders Authority in terms of community wealth-building economic models, community wellness and other restorative remedies.
- NAARC Commissioner Justin Hansford, Esq., Executive Director of the Thurgood Marshall Center for Human Rights, Howard University, will provide legal counsel for the Stakeholders Reparations Authority.