

East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) Civic Engagement Subcommittee Meeting

August 21, 2018

Meeting began at 6:40 pm.

Purpose:	To organize cultural + language specific civic engagement workshops, share curriculum, advocate for ongoing funding, and advise on East Portland cultural + language specific issues and projects.
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1. Attendees: lore wintergreen, Frieda Christopher, Layla Assem, Galena Nekrasova, and Zinah Mudhafar.

Layla welcomed everyone, and each attendee introduced themselves.

2. Next month's (September 18) meeting:

Facilitator: Galena Nekrasova

Notes: Frieda Christopher

Food: Zinah Mudhafar

General EPAP Report: Frieda Christopher

3. Advocacy Planning for Strategic Priorities: Layla pointed to the Strategic Priorities.

D: Engage ethnic communities in neighborhood activities; provide overhead funding for translation/language services to remove barriers and improve messaging and invitations.

Lore explained some of the history on this priority. She said Andrew Scott, Director of the Office of Budget was against this proposal, so blocked it becoming overhead funding. She reminded us of meetings we had with Andrea Valderrama, with the Mayor's Office, about making it part of overhead funding. For this year there is only \$75,000 in the City budget to explore the idea of making it overhead funding. Koffi Dessou from City Office of Equity & Human Rights was also against overhead funding, because he did not want to handle the fund.

Lore sees 4 options: 1. Ask for a meeting with Andrea again; 2. Contact Office of Human Rights Commission and ask to be on their agenda; 3.

Work with New Portlander Commission; and 4. Have advocates attend City meetings and ask for interpretation and translation of the meeting minutes. If their needs are not met to then sue the City.

Frieda asked who is exploring the idea of making it overhead funding this budget year. Lore said as far as we know, no one is seeking funding through the fiscal bump process. Galena asked: what do they need to explore for \$75,000? What goals do they want from this study? She thinks at least part of the funds should be spent on interpretation or translation. She thinks the study will be a waste of time. Lore asked who would call Andrea to ask her who is handling this issue.

ACTION: Layla will contact Andrea Valderrama to find out who is pursuing this further, and Layla will request this person attend our September meeting to discuss the issue. After this conversation, Layla advised that we consider the other options.

Galena said that Mayor Wheeler wrote a letter to FBI to investigate the Slavic community regarding Russian spies. She said the Russian community is afraid that the City of Portland sees them as traitors and many are planning to relocate. Lore explained that this is the other side of the prejudices coming forward due to the immigration issues begun with the current Presidential administration. See the letter below/next.



Office of Mayor Ted Wheeler
City of Portland

April 10, 2018

Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Special Agent In Charge Loren Cannon
9109 NE Cascades Parkway
Portland, OR 97220

Re: Russian Interference In Local Politics

Dear Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein and Special Agent In Charge Cannon:

As the Mayor of Portland, Oregon, I am deeply troubled to learn of the large number of fake social-media accounts linked to Russia being used to influence American politics. While most of the attention has focused on the Kremlin's effort to influence the 2016 presidential election, I am concerned that foreign powers may be aiming their technological weapons at local politics as well.

As you know, Special Counsel Robert Mueller recently indicted the Internet Research Agency ("IRA") and 13 Russians for conspiracy to interfere with the U.S. political process, including the 2016 presidential election. As described in the indictment, these Russian conspirators created fake social media accounts and used them to:

- "[S]ow discord in the U.S. political system." Indictment, ¶ 6.
- Wage "information warfare against the United States of America." *Id.* at ¶ 10(c).
- Spread "distrust toward the candidates and the political system in general." *Id.* at ¶ 10(e).

In particular, the indicted Russian conspirators allegedly:

- "[T]hrough fraud and deceit, created hundreds of social media accounts and used them to develop certain fictitious U.S. personas." *Id.* at ¶ 32.
- "[C]reated and controlled numerous Twitter accounts designed to appear as if U.S. persons or groups controlled them." *Id.* at ¶ 36.

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- Bought space on computer servers in the U.S. as a way of "masking the Russian origin and control of the activity." *Id.* at ¶ 39.
- Used the online accounts to "write about topics germane to the United States such as U.S. foreign policy and U.S. economic issues ... to create 'political intensity through supporting radical groups, users dissatisfied with [the] social and economic situation and oppositional social movements.'" *Id.* at ¶ 33.
- Used these fake social media personas to, among other things, urge people not to vote, to vote in a particular way, spread allegations of voter fraud, and otherwise interfere in the U.S. political system. *Id.* at ¶¶ 45-47.

I am concerned that foreign conspirators are using these same tactics to sow discord into local politics in America.

For example, as recently reported in *Willamette Week*, approximately 38% of the followers of my official Twitter account, @tedwheeler, are of dubious origin. In addition, City Staff have noticed some Official City Twitter and Facebook accounts receiving an unusual amount of suspicious, repetitive engagements that raise concern about automated, nefarious activity aimed at official City online accounts.

Finally, based on the nature of some posts to city social media accounts and information on Russian propaganda accounts made publicly available, I believe that it may be likely that Portland Twitter and Facebook accounts may have been, or currently are, being used by foreign conspirators in an attempt to sow political discord into our local politics in Portland.

Accordingly, I respectfully request a federal investigation into foreign interference with our local political process in Portland, Oregon. I suspect this problem reaches far beyond our City, but Portland stands ready to lead the way to keep local politics free of foreign interference. Please let me know how my office can assist in any investigation, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Ted Wheeler
Mayor, City of Portland

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E. Increase funding and technical assistance for organizations that desire to establish (two new ethnicity/languages every two years) or to strengthen existing ethnically - Based Community Health Worker (CHW) programs. Establish racially and ethnically representative community oversight of Community Health Worker programming.

Natalya and Galena had volunteered to work on the Outreach in the Slavic community, if funding was obtained for a Russian-language CHW training. Lore suggested that we invite Pei-ru Wang, Director of the Multnomah County Health Department Community Capacitation Center to our September meeting, to start the advocacy.

ACTION: Galena will call Pei-ru to set it up.

ACTION: Zinah will invite people from the Arabic-language training, so they could show how successful it was with the Arabic community.

We need to ask if the Capacitation Program has an Advisory Committee for the CHW program, and if they have people who speak Arabic, Russian, and other language on the Committee.

F: Educate first-time homeowners to require environmental hazard assessments on property to be purchased, and G: Expand community non-profit home repair and rehabilitation assistance programs to cover a greater number of households.

We will ask Natalya and Adriana to address Strategic Priorities F&G since they strongly supported adding them to the priorities. There was a short discussion about how to advocate with the governmental agencies listed as sources addressing these issues.

4. Dinámica: Zinah taught us a Middle Eastern dance.

5. Advocacy Planning for East Portland Action Plan Displacement Prevention in East Portland

Lore reminded us that our contribution to the EPAP Displacement Prevention in East Portland recommendations was to establish a community involvement process that to be implemented with each of the recommendations. Lore handed out the recommendation document in Russian and Arabic. Layla read the list of recommendations. Lore clarified the difference between Gentrification (livability improvements in an area) and displacement (when gentrification improves an area so much that

people will pay more to live in the area and how this displaces those who cannot pay more).

Galena asked: how we can work in this situation and who do we work with? Galena explained how all the housing around her was being improved and she could not afford to fix-up her home. Lore said there are predatory companies trying to buy homes in such conditions, and that they make cosmetic repairs and sell the home for much more than they paid.

Lore shared that the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability is working on six projects in East Portland and the Bureau of Transportation is developing an East Portland area plan. She reminded us of the EPAP Displacement Prevention recommendation for displacement analysis and we can be the advocates that make sure that these Bureaus are actively and sincerely involving the community.

Frieda suggested this group should meet with legislators to discuss the need for lifting the ban on rent control and no cause evictions, so they can hear from the various ethnic groups that are impacted by displacement.

Layla said for everyone to read and bring questions for next month's meeting, so we can discuss advocacy.

6. Representative to the 102nd and Pacific Generations project advisory committee:

Lore said that the EPAP Economic Development Subcommittee sent a letter to Prosper Portland recommending that the 102nd and Pacific Generations Project Advisory Committee have a representative from each of the following EPAP Subcommittees: Civic Engagement, Economic Development, and Housing Subcommittees. Lore explained what tax increment financing (TIF) was. Lore heard from Prosper Portland Project Manager Susan Kuhn, and she said they hadn't formed the committee yet but would keep EPAP appraised. Lore asked who would be willing to serve on the future committee.

ACTION: Galena thought Natalya would be good. Zinah said they would be interested, she has an idea about the project and said she was planning to open a bakery store to provide jobs. Perhaps they could serve as alternates.

7. Announcements:

Frieda announced David Douglas School District Board member Ana Del Rocio had announced her resignation from the Board, as of October 15, 2018. Frieda explained the steps that would be taken to appoint a new board member to replace Ana. She said the information and application is on the website www.ddouglas.k12.or.us in six languages.

Layla announced Midway Alliance is holding this year's annual "Festival of Nations" – September 16th from 11am-5pm at 146th & Division.

Zinah announced there would be an Arabic school to learn Arabic at IRCO 1-3pm on Saturdays. The first meeting will be Sept 15th. It is free unless you want to donate.

8. Next Meeting: September 18, 2018 at 6:30pm at the East Portland Action Plan office, 1017 NE 117th Ave. To schedule childcare, interpretation, or other accommodation, contact Lore at: 503.823.4035 or lore.wintergreen@portlandoregon.gov .

Adjourned 8:35 pm.