



## Beyond Apology Commission

Regular Meeting | April 17, 2025 | 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

### Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: TheRese Anderson Aduni, Phil Armstrong, Jacqueline Evans, Mattece Mason, Krystal Reyes, Greg Taylor, Kristi Williams, Corinice Wilson, Damali Wilson

Commissioners Present Virtually: Taylor West

Commissioners Absent: Vanessa Hall-Harper, Keith Mayes, D'Marria Monday

City of Tulsa Staff Present: Lexi Bollis, Amber Guipptons, Dion'trae Hayes

#### I. Call to Order

- a. Chairwoman Williams called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.
- b. Commissioner Aduni opened the meeting with the Ancestral Acknowledgement.

#### II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairwoman Williams entertained a motion to approve the March meeting minutes.
  - i. Commissioner Mason made a motion, Commissioner Armstrong seconded.
    1. Aye: 8, Nay: 0
      - a. Vice Chair Corinice Wilson and Commissioner Damali Wilson were not yet present in the meeting.
  - ii. Motion carried, March meeting minutes approved.

#### III. Guest Speaker: Omare Jimmerson, Executive Director of Oklahoma Birth Equity Initiative

- a. Chairwoman Williams introduced Omare Jimmerson. Grounded the commission in Black maternal health data from the Equality Indicators report.
- b. Oklahoma Birth Equity Initiative equips families to have healthy births with dignity and reduce maternal health disparities.
- c. Gynecology was "founded" by experimenting on enslaved Black women.
- d. In the last five to eight years, Black maternal mortality is more prevalent in popular discourse.
- e. Black women in Oklahoma are two to three times more likely to die from pregnancy related causes than white counterparts. Highest infant mortality rate of babies to teen parents, Black teens highest of that. 60k near misses annually. 33% of Indigenous people experience mistreatment in birth.
- f. OKBEI Programs
  - i. Community-based doula program (no-cost for Black, Indigenous, Latine, justice-involved individuals, or those with substance use).

- ii. Queens Village – safe space for Black mothers to support and be supported by their peers.
- iii. Hospital quality improvement
- iv. TeamBirth Communication: Conversations with pregnant person, nurse, and doctor to speak together rather than passing messages through nurse.
- g. Commission Discussion:
  - i. Vice Chair Wilson: What's the median age of pregnant people you train?
    - 1. Omare: Right before age of 30. Serve teens all the way up to 40s. Stigma and lack of trust is a barrier. Teaching participants to shop around and find a provider who is right for them.
  - ii. Chairwoman Williams: What do you think the City and BAC can do to affect this issue?
    - 1. Omare: Talk to hospitals and educate them. Also must educate the community on their options.
    - 2. Commissioner Mason: How much do you think veil of silence plays a role in educating community?
    - 3. Omare: Definitely plays a role. OKBEI does a lot of community education.
  - iii. Commissioner Aduni noted that we also need more Black doctors. Commission Armstrong added that there also needs to be more incentive for Black doctors to practice in places like Oklahoma.

#### **IV. Chair / Vice Chair Report**

- a. Chairwoman Williams reported that Mayor Nichols moved his announcement from April 6 to June 1.
  - i. Holding off on defining committees and setting annual priorities until we hear his plans so we can be responsive.
- b. *Cost of Inheritance* Screening & Panel
  - i. Lexi shared information about the event, which she and Kyra Carby have been helping to plan. The event is on Saturday, April 26 at 6 pm at OSU-Tulsa's auditorium.
  - ii. *Cost of Inheritance* is a documentary that explores the complex issue of reparations in the United States using a thoughtful approach to history, historical injustices, systemic inequities, and the critical dialogue on racial conciliation.
  - iii. Vice Chair Wilson will help open the screening, and Commissioner Evans will participate in the panel discussion following the film.
- c. Involvement in Mayor Nichols's Announcement on June 1, 2025
  - i. Deputy Mayor Reyes shared the location for the announcement has not been determined yet.

#### **V. Old Business**

- a. Review and Vote on Commission Bylaws
  - i. Chairwoman Williams entertained a motion to approve commission bylaws.
    - 1. Commissioner Mason made a motion, Commissioner Evans seconded.
      - a. Aye: 10, Nay: 0
    - 2. Motion carried, commission bylaws approved.

#### **VI. New Business**

- a. Chairwoman Williams shared about a project she is working on with National Geographic about trees, the silent witnesses of trauma. Went to look at the Oaklawn Cemetery tree to discover it has been cut down. Devastating to see it is no longer there. Want to put something in motion to ensure community is informed on these important decisions before they happen.
  - i. Two grave markers that were by the tree are also not there.
  - ii. Erasure of history is happening around the country, need to know why no one was notified.
  - iii. Commissioner Aduni noted that the tree in front of Carver needs to be preserved. Commissioner Armstrong shared that during the Centennial Commission's work, they determined that tree is over 100 years old. Had an acknowledgement ceremony of the tree's importance in history. Could make City aware before anything ever happens to that tree to ensure it is preserved.
  - iv. Commissioner Mason recommended creating a catalogue of sites that have historical importance and have a designation for historically important trees. Then if the tree is in jeopardy, there has to be a notification process. Removal of these types of marks ebbs away at the soul of the entire city.
  - v. Trees have memory and tell story of historical trauma.

**VII. Announcements / Public Comments**

- a. Public Comments: Jeanetta with Deep Greenwood Foundation (121 N Greenwood) and Race Massacre descendant. Deep Greenwood Foundation is working to certify descendants by oral history or records. Focus on reparations by taxes, education, and money. Also working to preserve buildings that remained through the Race Massacre. We all have a part to play and unique voices, and it's important to work together in community.
  - i. June 1 Descendants Family Reunion at Mabel B. Little House 3 – 6:30 pm.
  - ii. Vice Chair Wilson thanked Janetta for being here, reiterated importance of working together.
  - iii. Second Public Comment: Heather noted that Deep Greenwood's restitution plan is specifically focused on Greenwood. Have certified 280+ descendants.
  - iv. Commissioner Armstrong underscored the importance of supporting one another, even as different entities may work independently.

**VIII. Adjournment**

- a. Chairwoman Williams entertained a motion to adjourn.
  - i. Commissioner Armstrong made a motion, Vice Chair Wilson seconded.
    - 1. Aye: 9
      - a. Commissioner West left the meeting prior to the motion.
  - ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 2:17 pm.