



Legislation Text

File #: 20-224, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Discussion on How COVID 19 Is Disproportionately Affecting Blacks, Latinos and Other Underserved and Marginalized Communities

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is for the Council to discuss how COVID 19 is disproportionately affecting Blacks, Latinos and other underserved and marginalized communities. In addition, identify solutions that can be integrated in the recovery efforts and provide relief to vulnerable populations in Carrboro and Orange County.

DEPARTMENT: Town Manager

CONTACT INFORMATION: Anita Jones-McNair, Recreation Parks and Cultural Resources Director-Race and Equity Officer - amcnair@townofcarrboro.org <<mailto:amcnair@townofcarrboro.org>>

INFORMATION: Mayor Pro Tem Foushee requested to place an item on an upcoming meeting agenda that affords the Council time to discuss how COVID 19 is disproportionately affecting Blacks, Latinos and other underserved and marginalized communities. She also wanted to include in that discussion how can the Town intentionally reach out in the communities to address concerns. The May 19, 2020 meeting vote was affirmative in favor of a discussion in the next few weeks.

Later in the meeting, Deputy County Manager, Travis Myren presented the County Wide Recovery Planning Process and Overview Plan. Attachment A is the updated information presented during that presentation.

More recently, Tiffany Palmer Lytle, a speaker from the floor at the May 26, 2020 meeting, requested that the Town Council find ways to address the disproportionate impact of COVID 19 in the Black and Brown communities - Blacks, Latinos and other underserved and marginalized communities. She made the following suggestions: provide COVID testing, incorporate more handwashing and sanitizing stations throughout town, offer flu vaccinations, create a newsletter sharing resources and updates, protect voting rights/allow absentee voting and working with the school board on keeping children safe and re-opening schools. Ms. Lytle also offered the following links to articles that provide additional context to the discussion:

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/covid19-racial-disparities>

<https://www.aclu.org/news/racial-justice/if-covid-19-doesnt-discriminate-then-why-are-black-people-dying-at-higher-rates/>

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/04/16/mapping-racial-inequity-amid-the-spread-of-covid-19/>

Later that evening Orange County Elected Officials received an email from Orange County Elected Officials of Color who have a keen interest in issues that affect communities of color, in addition to issues that affect the communities of their respective jurisdictions. The email highlighted concerns and requests related to the current COVID-19 pandemic. See Attachment B.

Note other information that can provide context to the discussion:

Racial make-up of Carrboro (based on the Census Bureau)

70% White

11% Black or African American

1% American Indian and Alaskan Native

10% Asian

8% Hispanic or Latino

Finally, the Orange County Health Department's Coronavirus page provides information on the number of cases in the County and background information. See Attachment C.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: No fiscal impact at this time.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Town Council discuss how COVID 19 disproportionately affects Blacks, Latinos and other underserved and marginalized communities. Based on the conversation identify solutions including outreach that can be integrated in the recovery efforts for Carrboro and Orange County.