BURTON, MICHIGAN

CENSUS COMMITTEE MEETING

JANUARY 28, 2020

MINUTES

US Family Restaurant	Census Committee	9:00 AM

G3512 S. DORT HWY
BURTON, MI 48529

This meeting was opened by Councilman Vaughn Smith at 9:00 AM.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. ROLL CALL

Meeting Facilitator: Vaughn Smith, City Council

Present:

Duane Haskins, Mayor
Steve Heffner, City Council
Dennis O'Keefe, City Council
Greg Fenner, City Council
Tina Conley, City Council
John Krolewski, Bendle Superintendent
Kristy Spann, Bentley Superintendent
John Ploof, Atherton Superintendent
Brian Ross, Police Chief
Kirk Wilkinson, Fire Chief
Mike Vogt, Assistant Fire Chief
Racheal Boggs, City Clerk
Ellen Ellenburg, County Commissioner
Jean Johnson, Senior Center
Tom Ellenburg
Steve Welch
Kevin Burge

II. PUBLIC PORTION

A. Disscussion on ideas to make sure every Burton resident is counted in the 2020 Census.

Mayor Haskins made introductions and thanked everyone for being here. Thank you to the school Superintendents for being here: John Krolewski from Bendle, Kristy Spann from Bentley and John Ploof from Atherton. This is a community-driven event. We need to spread the word and network this to people. It is about the trust factor. We have some pretty integral people here: Jean Johnson will play an important role with our seniors at the Senior Center and has a Holy Redeemer connection. Mr. Fenner has been a Barber on the south end for many years and will be helpful in that area. There are many other city leaders here today that I know will be working hard to get our census numbers up so we can get some of our money back. We will schedule our next committee meeting very soon. The Mayor's Office is always open to help you.

County Commissioner Ellenburg stated she attended a meeting last Friday with the City of Flint and it was discussed that the amount of money at stake is $1,800 per resident per year. This is a huge amount. The county has formed a committee as well. We can get more done in groups. We need people that are familiar to residents in key areas to go out and promote this. There is grant money for non-profit organizations and a Burton church has already received $5,000. We have had trouble tracking this down. I will send information as I receive it through Ms. Boggs.

Mr. Burge asked, if it is done by tracking number, who can get it?

Mr. Fenner stated he would like more information about the process, specifically the online form, will they need an ID card to log in?

Commissioner Ellenburg stated she believes it is for tracking purposes but she will look more into this and report back.

Mr. Krolewski stated Dedra Ladd, Census Partnership Specialist came to our board meeting recently with information that may be useful. I will pass her contact information along to the city.

Mayor Haskins asked the schools if they will direct the census individuals to the city when they come to speak at their board meetings.

Ms. Spann asked, who is the person they should put them in contact with at the city?

Mayor Haskins said Taylor is my Executive Assistant. You can contact her and she will get that information to Vaughn or Racheal as needed.

Mr. Smith stated it is very important that the schools be involved. The schools can get into the homes through children and grandchildren. In Gary, Indiana, a school did a coloring contest for K-12 that I would like to try if it isn't too late. We are running out of time. This first card will be sent out by the Census on March 12th. We have to find a way to reach people before that card comes out. This will benefit schools, roads, and seniors.

Mr. Welch stated people are already being contacted by the Census.

Mr. Smith stated the calls do not come first. This could be misinformation.

Mayor Haskins stated we need to be careful. This seems unorganized and we are getting varied dates. We really need actual dates so we are all on the same page. Has anyone heard of a final response date?

Ms. Boggs stated after our conversation the other day about a deadline to respond, I contacted the census. Deadlines to respond will vary per individual that's why they have not given a final response date. Once someone receives the invitation to participate they will have 2 weeks to respond online or via phone. If that is not completed, a paper questionnaire will be set out. Households will have 30 days to fill it out and return it. Because the dates they receive it varies, so does each person's deadline.

Mr. Smith discussed the importance of using social media to help spread proper information. We will be setting up sub-committees today for marketing, community events/outreach and hard-to-count education. A hand-out was provided detailing each sub-committee group. I would like the schools to do the coloring contest if there is time. It was very successful in Gary, Indiana.

Group discussion regarding the need for Census Takers (Canvassers): Mrs. Johnson stated some of the seniors may have interest. Mayor Haskins stated he believes this is being done at Michigan Works. Mr. Smith stated this is done door-to door electronically. To be a census employee requires training and a background check. Commissioner Ellenburg will try to get more information regarding this.

Mr. Smith stated anyone saying they are being contacted by the census prior to March 12th, this is probably not legitimate. It could be a scam.

Commissioner Ellenburg has a copy of the sample Census questionnaire. She will send it to Ms. Boggs to send out to the group.

Discussion ensued regarding specific questions on the sample questionnaire.

Mr. Burge would like to know if we will find out who didn't respond.

Mr. Smith stated Potter and Davison has a good response rate: 15% didn't respond. The southwest portion of the city (Saginaw and Bristol) has a low response rate (non-response of up to 29%).

Commissioner Ellenburg stated the response rate at the last Census was 80.3% which was about $118 million that Genesee County lost.

Mrs. Johnson asked if the questionnaire asks for social security numbers. She would like to explain to the seniors what the census is not going to ask.

Mayor Haskins stated I didn't think they ask for any personal information and that this information cannot be used by the police, etc.

Mr. Smith stated if it comes to this, have them fill it out without their social security number.

Mr. Fenner stated he went to Atherton to discuss the Census. He explained how much money we lost 10 years ago and what these funds mean to the future of our city. It was very well received.

Mr. Smith opened Public Comment. There was no public present to speak regarding the Census.

Mr. Smith stated I would like for us to decide who will be a part of which sub-committees at this time. I am looking for people to volunteer.

The following individuals will be in charge of sub-committees:

Community Events/Outreach: Ellen Ellenburg
Hard to Reach: Greg Fenner
Marketing: Vaughn Smith

The following was also decided:

- Police Chief and Fire Chief's will be in charge of education at Lochwood.
- Jean Johnson will take care of Burton Place (Monthly breakfast).
- Mayor Haskins will be doing mailings to City of Burton clergy this week.

- Schools will put Census information on their respective message boards/signs.
- The next Census Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 at 9:00AM at US Family Restaurant G3512 S. Dort Hwy Burton, MI 48529.

Conversation ensued regarding school millage and no tax increase.

Mr. Burge would like to see something census related hanging in the council chambers behind the Council President or the Mayor so it can be seen on the council meeting videos. Also, at the tax window near the slot where residents pay their bills.

Mayor Haskins stated we could have a message scrolling across the screen while the city council video is playing.

Discussion regarding other ideas: bumper stickers, frisbees, buttons/pins (Census Ambassador), script for answering the phone at City Hall and other city buildings.

Commissioner Ellenburg will check with the county to see if there are pins/buttons.

The next Census Committee Meeting is open to the public and will be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 at 9:00AM at US Family Restaurant G3512 S. Dort Hwy Burton, MI 48529.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:12 AM.

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