



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

BIANCA L. TIRADO, CITY CLERK

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

JUNE 22, 2026, 5:30 P.M.

Committee Members Present:

Sharon McBride*, Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers, Sherry Bolden-Simpson, Jessie Whittaker*, Sheila Niezgodski

Committee Members Absent:

Angela Smith, Karen L. White

Other Council Present:

Dr. Oliver Davis, Rachel Tomas Morgan, Canneth Lee

Others Present:

Bianca L. Tirado, Matthew Neal, Jasmine Jackson, Lari'onna Green, Veronica Pitt-Payne, Bob Palmer

Presenters:

Sherry Bolden-Simpson, Dr. Oliver Davis, Canneth Lee

Agenda:

Bill No. 26-16 - A Resolution Acknowledging the History of Racial Discrimination, Environmental Harm, Disinvestment, and Industrial Pollution Impacting the LaSalle Park Neighborhood, and Formally Apologizing to the Residents and Families of the Community

Bill No. 26-18 - Resolution Formally Accepting the Historical Sections of the Final Report of the Reparatory Justice Commission and the History of Racial Discrimination Against Black Residents Documented Therein, Acknowledging the Analyses and Recommendations Sections of the Report for Purposes of Policy Discussions, and Issuing a Formal Apology

INTEGRITY | SERVICE | ACCESSIBILITY

Jasmine Jackson
CHIEF DEPUTY CITY CLERK / CHIEF OF STAFF

Matthew Neal
DEPUTY CITY CLERK / DIRECTOR OF POLICY

Veronica Pitt-Payne
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

EXCELLENCE | ACCOUNTABILITY | INNOVATION | INCLUSION | EMPOWERMENT

300 City Hall | 215 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. | South Bend, Indiana 46601 | p. 574.235.9221 | f. 574.235.9173 | www.southbendin.gov



From the Common Council and on Behalf of
the City of South Bend

Members marked with an asterisk (*) are in virtual attendance via the Microsoft Teams app.

Please note the attached link for the meeting recording:

<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/browse.aspx?dbid=0&mediaid=410037>

Committee Vice Chair Sheila Niezgodski called to order the Residential Neighborhoods Committee meeting at 6:21 P.M.

Bill No. 26-16 - A Resolution Acknowledging the History of Racial Discrimination, Environmental Harm, Disinvestment, and Industrial Pollution Impacting the LaSalle Park Neighborhood, and Formally Apologizing to the Residents and Families of the Community

Committee Member Sherry Bolden-Simpson, 6216 Exeter Court, South Bend, IN 46614, and Councilmember Dr. Oliver Davis, 1801 Nash Street, South Bend, IN 46613, Petitioners, presented the bill.

Councilmember Dr. Davis explained that the resolution is targeted toward the LaSalle Park Neighborhood due to its significance as a historically Black community that has been impacted by racial discrimination, redlining, unequal public investment, housing segregation, and environmental injustice. He spoke about the LaSalle Park Neighborhood's instrumental role in the City's reparatory justice work. He said it is necessary to apologize and move forward with action, citing other cities that have publicly apologized for racism in the past.

Committee Member Bolden-Simpson said it brought healing when the city of Goshen, Indiana formally apologized for its history as a sundown town. She spoke about changing hearts through policy actions and asked her fellow Committee Members to support the bill.

Committee Vice Chair Niezgodski opened the public hearing.

Mark Anella, 1010 Quimby Street, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill. He stated that there is a precedent for this based on similar actions from other municipalities, and there is a clear public interest in repairing and working together moving forward.

Miranda Schwab, 307 East LaSalle Avenue, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill. She spoke about learning about the extent of historical discrimination in the City. She stated that acknowledging the harm caused is an important step toward justice.

Kay Westhues, 216 West Madison Street, South Bend, IN 46601, spoke in favor of the bill. She said the City is not the only place where these things happened, but acknowledging its history is a step toward healing that makes the City a stronger place.

Sophia Wilson, 1010 Quimby Street, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill. She said the apology is needed to begin reparations for the City's history of racism, and it is one (1) step toward healing and becoming a better community overall.



Katherine Redding, 1409 Miner Street, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill. She said admitting that there has been a historical problem is the first (1st) step to reconciliation and true justice. She thanked the sponsors for bringing the bill forward.

Araquel Bloss, 2913 Erskine Boulevard, South Bend, IN 46614, spoke in favor of the bill. She said her own family has thrived in the City since arriving here in the early twentieth (20th) century, and she feels personally obligated to seek equity for those who were denied the same opportunity due to systemic racism. She thanked the Reparatory Justice Commission for their report and the Common Council for supporting their work.

Committee Vice Chair Niezgodski closed the public hearing.

Citizen Member Jessie Whittaker said she is in favor of the apology, noting that her family has lived in LaSalle Park since 1946.

Committee Member Bolden-Simpson moved to send Bill No. 26-16 to the Full Council with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Member Gooden-Rodgers and carried by a vote of five (5) ayes with one (1) Committee Member and one (1) Citizen Member absent.

Committee Chair Karen L. White – <i>Absent</i>	Committee Vice Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Sharon McBride – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Sherry Bolden-Simpson – <i>Aye</i>	Citizen Member Angela Smith – <i>Absent</i>
Citizen Member Jessie Whittaker – <i>Aye</i>	

Bill No. 26-18 - Resolution Formally Accepting the Historical Sections of the Final Report of the Reparatory Justice Commission and the History of Racial Discrimination Against Black Residents Documented Therein, Acknowledging the Analyses and Recommendations Sections of the Report for Purposes of Policy Discussions, and Issuing a Formal Apology From the Common Council and on Behalf of the City of South Bend

Council President Canneth Lee, Petitioner, 1929 North Huey Street, South Bend, IN 46628, presented the bill. He said the resolution fulfills the Reparatory Justice Commission's recommendations of a formal apology and making the Reparatory Justice Report a permanent historical document.

Committee Vice Chair Niezgodski opened the public hearing.

Mark Anella, 1010 Quimby Street, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill. He said historical racial discrimination in the City was a result of the decisions made by people in power, and repair comes from making new decisions.

Sophia Wilson, 1010 Quimby Street, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill. She said it is important to preserve the Reparatory Justice Report as an official historical document for the purposes of educating the public and guiding policy actions.

Miranda Schwab, 307 East LaSalle Avenue, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill and



echoed the comments of previous speakers.

Katherine Redding, 1409 Miner Street, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill. She said the Reparatory Justice Report contains a significant amount of the City’s history, and acknowledging its status as a historical document is a necessity. She thanked the Reparatory Justice Commission for their report and the Common Council for bringing the bill forward.

Araquel Bloss, 2913 Erskine Boulevard, South Bend, IN 46614, spoke in favor of the bill. She thanked the Reparatory Justice Commission and its subcommittees for their work on the report and stated that she supports its acceptance as a historical document. She expressed hope that this will lead to reparatory actions from the City.

Council President Lee clarified that this bill also issues a formal apology to all Black residents of the City of South Bend, past and present, for historical discrimination and the resulting harms. He noted that the previous bill was specifically for the LaSalle Park area.

Committee Vice Chair Niezgodski closed the public hearing.

Committee Member Gooden-Rodgers moved to send Bill *No. 26-18* to the Full Council with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Vice Chair Niezgodski and carried by a vote of five (5) ayes with one (1) Committee Member and one (1) Citizen Member absent.

Committee Chair Karen L. White – <i>Absent</i>	Committee Vice Chair Sheila Niezgodski – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Sharon McBride – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Sherry Bolden-Simpson – <i>Aye</i>	Citizen Member Angela Smith – <i>Absent</i>
Citizen Member Jessie Whittaker – <i>Aye</i>	

With no further business, Committee Vice Chair Niezgodski adjourned the Residential Neighborhoods Committee meeting at 6:42 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheila Niezgodski, Committee Vice Chair