



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Marc A. Ott, City Manager

DATE: May 13, 2015

SUBJECT: March 27 "Women Leading in Local Government" Training

First, I want to be clear to each of you that the content of the training referenced in today's article in the Austin American-Statesman is in no way reflective of this organization's approach toward issues of diversity. I also want to be up front in acknowledging that this particular training should have received proper vetting. I take responsibility for that not having occurred.

I personally invest significant time and attention toward issues of diversity in the City of Austin workplace. It is the very reason why we have employee affinity groups that advocate for and advance leadership development among minorities and among women that have chosen a path of public service. We provide funding, mentorship and support for these groups at the highest levels of the organization.

Our diversity programs are built on the foundation that each one of us brings our "whole selves" to work, and that recognizing diversity is acknowledging it at the most individual level. We all bring a diversity of life experiences to our work regardless of class, race or gender. To have a training team paint with such a broad and stereotypical brush is as offensive to me as it is to anyone in this organization.

Trust that Mr. Allen's remarks are not reflective in any way of our culture, philosophy, or approach toward managing this organization, nor our approach toward partnering with the City Council. The remarks were both unexpected and deeply disappointing. At the same time, I fully recognize the effect that his words have on our work, our work force, and the community. I will address it swiftly and directly. That will start with a separate statement to the press and the community this morning.

xc: Assistant City Managers and Chief of Staff