



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 13, 2017 – 5:30 PM
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA



The **Fairbanks Diversity Council (FDC)** convened at 5:30 p.m. on the above date to conduct a Regular Meeting at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, with Mayor Jim Matherly presiding and with the following members in attendance:

Members Present:

Shirley Lee, Seat B	Rita Davis, Seat L
Montean Jackson, Seat C	Jeff Walters, Seat M
Travis Cole, Seat E	Kelvin Lee, Seat O (telephonic)
Herbert Butler, Seat G	Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director
Marna Sanford, Seat I	June Rogers, City Council Member
Douglas Toelle, Seat J	

Members Absent:

Ana Maria Richards, Seat A (unexcused)	Rosalind Kan, Seat H (excused)
Juanita Webb, Seat D (excused)	Jo Ann Borges, Seat K (unexcused)
Vacant, Seat F	Amber Taylor, Seat N (excused)

Also Present:

D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk	Christina Rowlett, HR Admin
Eric Jewkes, Police Chief	Mike Meeks, Chief of Staff

CALL TO ORDER & READING OF THE FDC MISSION STATEMENT

Chair Matherly called the meeting to order and read aloud the FDC Mission Statement. He stated that Ms. Trina Bailey is no longer a member of the FDC, and there is a vacancy.

Vice Chair Walters recognized members who were nearing term expiration. **Ms. Jackson** indicated that she would be willing to apply for reappointment; **Ms. Lee** stated that she will not be able to continue on the FDC. **Chair Matherly** stated that Ms. Richards has indicated that she would not be continuing on the FDC.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Toelle, seconded by **Mr. Cole**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda.

The Agenda was APPROVED without objection.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS (Limited to 3 minutes)

Frank Turney 329 6th Avenue – Mr. Turney spoke to racial discrimination in jury selection, and he referenced the draft letter in the agenda packet. He indicated that he would like the letter to be sent to the Bar Association. He stated that he has done some homework on the issue and that the Supreme Court agrees that there is a problem. Mr. Turney spoke to jury consulting and stated that the process cherry picks jurors. He suggested that the letter also be sent to the Governor.

Police Chief Eric Jewkes – Chief Jewkes stated that he has observed a number of jury trials and that there is no external source by which jurors are selected.

Hearing no more requests for testimony, **Chair Matherly** declared Citizen’s Comments closed.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of May 9, 2017

Mr. Toelle, seconded by **Ms. Lee**, moved to APPROVE the May 9, 2017 meeting minutes.

The Minutes were APPROVED without objection.

FAIRBANKS POLICE DEPARTMENT & HUMAN RESOURCES REPORTS

HR Director Angela Foster-Snow spoke to the ordinance being introduced to the City Council that would give a \$20,000 bonus to a lateral police officer hired by the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD). She stated that bonuses would be paid with salary savings and would actually be a cost savings to the City since it costs about \$40,000 to train a brand new recruit. She stated that a lateral hire is someone who has already been academy-certified. She stated that FPD is currently very understaffed. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that the City is hoping to contract with a former Alaska State Trooper (AST) to perform background checks for employment at the City. She shared that there are four dispatchers in the background process currently; she indicated that it can be a long process. She stated that there is an Engineer I position open at the City that will close next Friday. She stated that she is working to update City job descriptions. She stated that she sometimes get phone calls inquiring about events pertaining to the FDC.

Ms. Rogers added that she is co-sponsoring the FPD bonus ordinance and that it may save even more money than anticipated.

Chief Jewkes stated that two officers who graduated from the Academy on Friday started at FPD on June 12. He stated those officers will begin field training the following week. He stated that five applicants are currently undergoing background investigation. He stated that there has been about a half a dozen inquiries since the FPD bonus ordinance was introduced. Chief Jewkes, in response to FDC member questions, confirmed that the questions asked of applicants during the interview process remain the same. He spoke to some of the details in the FPD bonus ordinance and to the staffing challenges at FPD. Chief Jewkes indicated that traffic enforcement can lead to crime prevention.

Ms. Rogers stated that she feels it is important for FDC members to speak to the City Council in support of the FPD bonus ordinance. She stated that she would like to do something special for Officer Elzey. **Chair Matherly** stated that he would bring pizza to the next FDC meeting.

Mr. Walters, seconded by **Mr. Butler**, moved that the FDC SUPPORT City Ordinance No. 6050 regarding FPD hiring bonuses.

There was a unanimous voice vote in the affirmative to SUPPORT
City Ordinance No. 6050.

DIVERSITY TOPIC OF THE MONTH

a) Invocations at Public Meetings

Ms. Sanford stated that she reached out to the sponsor of the failed FNSB ordinance which addressed invocations at public meetings. She stated that the topic is no longer forthcoming.

Chair Matherly stated that the City Clerk gives an invocation at City Council meetings, and it is more of a meditation than a religious prayer.

Mr. Butler stated that he supports the separation between church and state; he stated that he is against invocations at public meetings. **Mr. Walters** expressed some agreement with Mr. Butler and commented that he enjoys the reading of the FDC Mission Statement at the start of meetings.

Ms. Lee pointed out that since invocations are no longer an issue at the FNSB or at the City, the FDC may not need to spend any more time on it. **Ms. Sanford** stated that members should keep the issue on their minds in case it reemerges in the future. She stated that if it comes up again, she would like the FDC to address it. **Ms. Jackson** stated that she would like to see the Pledge of Allegiance added to FDC meetings.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Jury Selection Process, Letter to the Court System

Ms. Sanford, seconded by **Ms. Jackson**, moved to APPROVE the Letter to the Court System.

Mr. Walters spoke to the letter he drafted and to the research he did in preparing the document. Members discussed how to go about addressing jury discrimination in the court system since it is out of the City of Fairbanks and Borough jurisdiction. **Ms. Lee** commented that the letter should go to someone who can legally affect change. She stated that the recommendation may be to create a data collection tool to ensure a jury of peers is met and that information be made public.

Ms. Sanford stated that it is good idea to get the word out about FDC to the courts and legislature, but that she believes the issue of jury discrimination is outside the purview of the body. **Mr. Butler** stated that it is a nationwide issue that has gone on for centuries. He added that the FDC should acknowledge that the issue is concerning but is beyond the FDC. Members continued discussing how to proceed. **Ms. Lee** suggested adding language to request data collection and sending the letter to the court and the legislature.

Clerk Snider cautioned that it may not be appropriate for the FDC to send a recommendation directly to the State legislature since the FDC serves under the City Council. She suggested that a resolution to present to the City Council may be more appropriate.

Ms. Sanford suggested that a resolution could be sent to the Criminal Justice Commission; she stated that they take on new issues. **Mr. Toelle** agreed with Ms. Sanford's suggestion. **Chair Matherly** and **Mr. Walters** stated they would work with other members to prepare something.

Ms. Sanford, with the concurrence of the second, WITHDREW the motion to approve the letter.

b) Term Limit, Role, and Duties of Vice Chair

Mr. Walters proposed that the Vice Chair term be changed to a one-year term. **Ms. Foster-Snow** suggested that there be an Emeritus, a Vice Chair, and a Vice Chair Elect.

Mr. Toelle, seconded by **Ms. Sanford**, moved to RECOMMEND that the Vice Chair term be changed from three years to one year, and that an Emeritus and a Vice Chair Elect be added.

There was a unanimous voice vote in the affirmative to RECOMMEND that the Vice Chair term be changed from three years to one year, and that an Emeritus and a Vice Chair Elect be added.

Members agreed that the terms of the positions be from July to July. **Chair Matherly** indicated that he would propose an ordinance to the City Council to make the changes.

Ms. Sanford pointed out that FGC 2-234 subsection (12) states that the FDC will not be involved in matters outside the jurisdiction of the City or Borough. Members discussed FGC 2-234 subsections (10) and (12) and questioned whether the language would prohibit the FDC from making a recommendation regarding jury discrimination. They requested that the City Attorney look into the issue.

Ms. Sanford, seconded by **Ms. Jackson**, moved to POSTPONE the recommendations regarding the Vice Chair position until a response is received from the City Attorney in regard to FGC 2-234 subsections (10) and (12).

There was no objection to POSTPONING the recommendation.

Ms. Sanford requested that the City Attorney's response be discussed at the next FDC Policy and Procedure Committee meeting on July 6.

Chair Matherly stated that he will discuss the Code sections with the City Attorney, and he will email Ms. Sanford. He stated that Mr. Walters would work on the jury discrimination issue.

FDC COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Butler Assignment to FDC Committee

Mr. Butler indicated that he would like to serve on the Policy and Procedure Committee.

b) FDC Policy & Procedure Committee Minutes – 04/27/17 & 06/01/17

This agenda item was informational only and was not discussed.

FDC MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mr. Lee stated that he enjoyed the meeting and that he looks forward to the next one. **Chair Matherly** thanked Mr. Lee for all he does in the community through the No Limits organization.

Ms. Jackson stated that she has been busy with graduations because her granddaughter graduated high school, and her daughter graduated UAF. She stated that she has been blessed.

Mr. Butler stated that there is mention of a Diversity Action Plan (DAP) in the FDC ordinance; he requested a copy of the DAP. He suggested that the FDC invite the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation (FEDC) to visit and bring a report. He stated that he would be unable to attend the next meeting.

Mr. Cole asked whether members were still planning to serve ice cream at City Hall during the Golden Days events. **Chair Matherly** indicated that is still the plan. **Mr. Cole** stated that member participation in the event should be discussed at the next meeting.

Ms. Foster-Snow stated that she and other City employees visited the Food Bank earlier in the day. She commented that she was a recipient of a food box when she was a young, single mother; she reminded everyone that household income is another part of diversity.

Mr. Toelle spoke briefly to his involvement with the Food Bank. He shared that the Accessibility Committee will meet on Thursday, June 15.

Ms. Davis invited everyone to attend the Juneteenth events over the weekend. She stated there will be a gathering at the JP Jones Community Development Center on Saturday, June 17 at 11 a.m. before the parade.

Ms. Sanford stated expressed excitement that the Indigenous People's Day bill was transmitted to Governor Walker's desk and will be signed into law.

Ms. Rogers thanked Ms. Foster-Snow for her comment regarding the broadness of diversity. She advocated for the reappointment of Ms. Jackson to the FDC.

Ms. Lee thanked everyone for their contributions to the group. She commented on how much work there is to do and stated that she will stay involved even though this is her last meeting as a member.

Mr. Walters thanked members whose terms are expiring for their service and for being a part of the group since the creation of the FDC. He asked whether the FDC would have a presence at the upcoming Juneteenth and Intertribal Powwow events. He stated that he would be out of town until July 1. He stated that the Golden Days and WEIO events are also coming up. **Mr. Walters** stated that June is Gay Pride Month and that he would like to invite Hayden Nevill with the Gender Pioneers group as a guest speaker for the July or August meeting. He stated that he would like to invite Senator Coghill's office to provide an update to the FDC on senate bills pertaining to criminal justice reform in July or August. **Ms. Sanford** agreed to reach out to Jordan Schilling with Senator Coghill's office.

Ms. Lee stated that it would be a nice if the FDC could march in the Golden Days Parade on July 22. **Chair Matherly** stated that he would discuss upcoming events with Ms. Foster-Snow. He stated that he will look into the details about the parade and try to send an email to members. He announced that there is a Southside Community Farmer's Market every Tuesday from 4-7 p.m. at 24th Avenue and Rickert Street from June through September. He spoke briefly to the diversity in Fairbanks and stated that it is an honor to serve the City and the FDC.

MEETING DATES

The next Regular Meeting of the FDC is scheduled for July 11, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Matherly called for ADJOURNMENT at 7:25 p.m., and no members objected.



Mayor Jim Matherly, Chair



D. Danyielle Snider, CMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS