



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 11, 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:

Juanita Webb, Seat D	Jeff Walters, Seat M
Travis Cole, Seat E	Amber Taylor, Seat N
Rosalind Kan, Seat H	Kelvin Lee, Seat O
Marna Sanford, Seat I	Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director
Douglas Toelle, Seat J	June Rogers, City Council Member

Members Absent:

Vacant, Seat A	Herbert Butler, Seat G (excused)
Vacant, Seat B	Jo Ann Borges, Seat K (excused)
Montean Jackson, Seat C (unexcused)	Rita Davis, Seat L (excused)
Vacant, Seat F	

Also Present:

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

CALL TO ORDER & READING OF THE FDC MISSION STATEMENT

Chair Matherly called the meeting to order and asked Clerk Snider to read aloud the FDC Mission Statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Chair Matherly called for objection to APPROVING the Agenda and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

CITIZENS COMMENTS (Limited to 3 Minutes)

Chair Matherly called for Citizens Comments and, hearing none, declared Citizens Comments closed.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2017

Mr. Toelle, seconded by **Mr. Lee**, moved to APPROVE the June 13 meeting minutes.

The meeting minutes were APPROVED unanimously.

It was explained that the cards being passed around were for Public Works Director Jeff Jacobson's birthday, former FDC members Ana Richards and Shirley Lee and for Officer Dave Elzey. **Mr. Walters** pointed out that there are three vacant seats on the Diversity Council.

FAIRBANKS POLICE DEPARTMENT & HUMAN RESOURCES REPORTS

Police Chief Eric Jewkes spoke to the critical incidents that have taxed the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) in recent months, both operationally and emotionally. He stated that there have been four officer-involved shootings in 10 months. He shared statistics on calls for service per officer, per month. Chief Jewkes stated that FPD made an arrest earlier in the day for a second-degree murder that occurred on Saturday; he added that it was the sixth homicide this year. He stated that there are three officers in field training, and two recruits just returned from the Academy. He stated that there are nine total vacancies currently at FPD.

Members asked Chief Jewkes questions related to the FPD lateral hiring bonus and processes, employee diversity at FPD, domestic violence calls, competitive wages and benefits, and employee retention.

HR Director Angela Foster-Snow spoke to recent hiring at the City and to current vacancies. She reported that she recently attended the national Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) conference in New Orleans. She stated that she is working on identifying employee benefits that would come at no cost to the City, such as reduced prices on cinema tickets. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that the City has hired a new Assistant Fire Chief, Ron Templeton. She stated that Mr. Templeton is a former City Fire Department employee and has a great deal of experience in fire service. She shared that it would be nice if the FDC could host an ice cream social at City Hall for the Golden Days events. **Chair Matherly** and members discussed FDC involvement in upcoming events such as World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO) and Golden Days.

Ms. Rogers asked Officer Dave Elzey to come forward. She presented him with a token of gratitude and read aloud a statement she wrote to show her thanks to Officer Elzey for his continued work at FPD. Officer Elzey said a few words in response to Ms. Rogers' presentation.

Mr. Lee left the meeting at 6:17 p.m., and quorum was lost.

DIVERSITY TOPIC OF THE MONTH

a) Guest Speaker Hayden Nevill, Gender Pioneers

Mr. Walters introduced Hayden Nevill. He stated that Mr. Nevill leads a group called Gender Pioneers, and he does workshops through the school district for transgender issues.

Mr. Nevill stated that he is a local veterinarian. He stated that he was born female and transitioned to be a male. He described what the word "transgender" means and stated that it is an umbrella term for anyone who wants to be included. He spoke to how "Gender Pioneers" was founded in 2012, and he stated that there are about 50 individuals who are fairly active with the group. Mr. Nevill stated that the Gender Pioneers meet twice per month on first and third Thursdays at the Unitarian Universalist Church. He stated that the first Thursday meeting is a peer-to-peer support group, and the third Thursday meeting is divided into two groups: an

activism group and a group for parents who want to meet with a minister. He stated that there are opportunities to find resources and support, and that the group is happy to provide training on transgender issues. Mr. Nevill spoke in greater detail about the biological and societal aspects of being a transgender individual. He stated that transgender discrimination has seemed to increase with the growing rhetoric surrounding “bathroom bills.” He stated that Fairbanks is a fairly transgender-friendly city, but that there are still areas of concern. Mr. Nevill spoke to the Municipality Equality Index that is produced each year by the Human Rights Campaign, and he stated that Fairbanks has a rating of 35/100. He stated that the Gender Pioneers would like to see that rating go up. Mr. Nevill spoke to his own background, and he related his life experiences in being a transgender person.

Mr. Walters stated that former Mayor Eberhart tried to get sexual orientation language added to City/union contracts. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that Mayor Eberhart prioritized adding a statement to City job descriptions. She reported that the FDC Policy Committee has been working on a non-discrimination statement and that they will have a draft at the next meeting.

Members and Mr. Nevill discussed the Municipality Equality Index in greater detail, and they discussed some challenges that transgender individuals in the community encounter.

Ms. Rogers stated that acknowledging a problem is the first step in making it better. **Chair Matherly** spoke to the diversity in Fairbanks and thanked Mr. Nevill for speaking.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) FDC Recommendation on Jury Selection Process

Mr. Walters stated that he and Ms. Sanford met recently to discuss the issue. **Ms. Sanford** spoke to the Alaska Court System Jury Questionnaire that was distributed to members.

City Clerk Snider stated that the FDC may make recommendations to the Fairbanks North Star Borough and the City of Fairbanks, but may not make direct recommendations to another body or to the State of Alaska.

Ms. Sanford and **Mr. Walters** wondered whether there could be a voluntary demographics question on the form. Members discussed the best direction to take on the jury discrimination issue. They asked members if it would be okay if they met with Christina Johnson with the Alaska Court System to ask questions about how a change to the form might be made. **Ms. Sanford** stated that questions about race might not be allowed on a jury questionnaire.

Ms. Rogers stated that Senator Coghill would like to attend another FDC meeting. She suggested that the issue be discussed under “Diversity Topic of the Month” in August or September.

b) FDC Recommendation on City Code Amendments

Members requested that before the August meeting, the City Clerk prepare a draft of the suggested amendments to the Fairbanks General Code that were discussed at the June meeting. Members recommended discussing the issue at the next regular meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

a) FDC Participation at Upcoming Events

Ms. Foster-Snow volunteered to send an email to FDC members about the events taking place on July 21 and 22. She stated that if members send other event information to the City Clerk, she could build an events calendar.

Ms. Kan shared that International Friendship Day would take place on October 21 from noon to 5 p.m. at Pioneer Park; she distributed flyers about the event and invited everyone to attend.

Mr. Walters reminded everyone about the naturalization ceremonies that occur at various locations in the community. **Ms. Sanford** stated that she recently spoke at a naturalization ceremony, and she spoke to how moving the experience was.

Mr. Toelle announced that Wallbusters and Access Alaska would be holding an awareness event on August 9 and 10 at the Tanana Valley State Fair just inside the yellow gate.

Ms. Taylor shared that the Project Homeless Connect event will take place August 2 at the JP Jones Center from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. She stated that she now works for Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) Community Services and that they are having a garden party on Friday, July 14 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the building across from the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center.

b) How to Run for City Office

City Clerk Snider gave brief talk on opportunities to run for elective office in the Fairbanks community; she encouraged anyone interested to contact local Clerk's Offices. She spoke briefly to the poor voter turnout in the Fairbanks community, and to local efforts to increase voter participation.

FDC COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) FDC Accessibility Committee Minutes – May 18, 2017 (informational only)

City Clerk Snider verified the dates and times of the FDC Committee meetings for July.

FDC MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mr. Walters stated that he had no comments.

Ms. Rogers thanked Mr. Walters for inviting Mr. Nevill to speak. She stated she hopes he will apply to serve on the FDC.

Ms. Taylor stated that she has been doing a lot of outreach for the Violence Prevention and Survivor Services program for women at FNA.

Ms. Webb apologized for being absent at the last meeting.

Mr. Toelle stated that he appreciated Mr. Nevill's openness. He shared that he runs a tourism business and that one of his reindeer died. He stated that she was one of the most photographed reindeer in the world and that there are many comments about Ruby the Reindeer on Facebook.

Mr. Cole stated that he will try to attend the WEIO event and would also like to help serve ice cream at City Hall. He stated that he enjoys seeing how the FDC has evolved and that he hopes it can expand its influence.

Ms. Foster-Snow thanked Mr. Walters for inviting the guest speaker and for raising awareness for another part of the community. She stated that she will not be at the August meeting because she will be working at the fair.

Ms. Sanford apologized for not submitting the minutes from the last Policy Committee meeting. She suggested that, at a future meeting, the FDC discuss a way to assist Mr. Nevill with the restroom issue he brought up.

Ms. Kan stated that she appreciated Mr. Walters inviting Mr. Nevill to speak. She stated that she will be out of town and will not be able to attend the next meeting.

Chair Matherly spoke to his experience attending the Intertribal Powwow at the Carlson Center.

Ms. Webb thanked everyone who reached out to her family following the recent death of her brother-in-law, Buzz Otis.

MEETING DATES


The next Regular Meeting of the FDC is scheduled for August 8, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Matherly called for ADJOURNMENT at 7:42 p.m., and no members objected.



Mayor Jim Matherly, Chair



D. Danyelle Snider, CMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS