



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 10, 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: Heidi Shepard, Seat A
Montean Jackson, Seat C
Juanita Webb, Seat D
Herbert Butler, Seat G
Rosalind Kan, Seat H
Marna Sanford, Seat I
Jeff Walters, Seat M
Amber Taylor, Seat N (arrived @ 5:43)
June Rogers, Councilmember

Members Absent: Lisa Slayton, Seat B (excused)
Travis Cole, Seat E (unexcused)
Vacant, Seat F
Douglas Toelle, Seat J (excused)
Jo Ann Borges, Seat K (excused)
Rita Davis, Seat L (excused)
Kelvin Lee, Seat O
Angela Foster-Snow, HR Dir. (excused)

Also Present: Emily Braniff, Deputy City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER & READING OF THE FDC MISSION STATEMENT

Chair Matherly read aloud the Mission Statement of the FDC. He stated that the group is one voting member shy of a quorum.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Matherly led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS COMMENTS (Limited to 3 Minutes)

Frank Turney, 329 6th Avenue, Fairbanks – Mr. Turney gave an update on racial discrimination in the jury pool. He shared all sorts of case law from other states, and he indicated that one case involved discrimination based on gender and ethnic origin. He commented that there are fewer jury trials because everyone pleads out.

Ms. Jackson shared that Mayor Matherly recently attended and spoke at the 31st African-American Student Leadership Conference. She thanked him for taking time out of his busy day to spend time with secondary students in the community. She presented him with a gift from the on behalf of the students. **Chair Matherly** expressed appreciation for Ms. Jackson’s positive outlook; he stated that it was a fun event to attend.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After a quorum was established, **Chair Matherly** asked for a motion to APPROVE the Agenda. **Ms. Sanford**, seconded by **Mr. Walters**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda.

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Chair Matherly stated that he would be at the International Friendship Day event all day, and he encouraged members to sign up for a time slot. He stated the event would be on October 21. **Ms. Kan** stated that the event would take place at Pioneer Park.

Ms. Taylor stated that Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) will be holding a domestic violence awareness walk, vigil and talk on October 18, starting at 5:30 p.m. at 315 Wendell Avenue. She encouraged everyone to attend.

Chair Matherly stated that there will be an Opioid Summit at Wedgewood Resort on October 11 and 12. He stated the first day is more of a class-type setting, but the second day will be open to the public. He spoke to the opioid problem in Alaska and to how quickly a person can become addicted. He encouraged everyone to attend the event.

Mr. Butler recommended two books related to opioid addiction: Dreamland and Drug Lord, MD. **Chair Matherly** shared that the issue is personal to him because of his daughter's opioid addiction. He stated that there will be an open house at City Hall on Halloween Day starting at 10 a.m.

Mr. Walters stated that there is a fall fundraiser at the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center for the Festival of Native Arts on Friday the 13th. He stated that October 9 was Indigenous Peoples Day. **Mr. Butler** mentioned that the Alaska Federation of Natives event is coming up in Anchorage.

Ms. Kan stated that she is looking for a Native dance group to perform at the International Friendship Day event. **Mr. Butler** stated that he would speak to Ms. Kan about it later; other members made suggestions to Ms. Kan.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of September 12, 2017

Mr. Butler, seconded by **Ms. Taylor**, moved to APPROVE the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 12, 2017.

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

FAIRBANKS POLICE DEPARTMENT & HUMAN RESOURCES REPORTS

a) EEOC Report Review

Chair Matherly stated that Ms. Foster-Snow and Police Chief Jewkes are not present to give reports. He stated that the City continues to test dispatch applicants. He stated that he is

currently working on the 2018 proposed City budget. **Mr. Walters** stated that the FDC would like to advertise City job openings at public events.

DIVERSITY TOPIC OF THE MONTH

a) Guest Speakers from Local High School Student Diversity Groups

Mr. Walters introduced two West Valley High School (WVHS) students who are involved with the Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA): Jorielle Livingston and Evan James. The students introduced themselves as the President and Vice President, respectively, of the GSA at WVHS. They spoke about the group's efforts to provide a safe place for LGBTQ students to express themselves and their identities. They stated that they want to make the high school a more safe and comfortable place for students. Evan spoke to concerning issues such as a lack of understanding of transgender issues by school staff and a lack of consequences for bullying by homophobic and transphobic students. The young people reported that the GSA at WVHS has been in place since 2002, and that this is their second year belonging to the group.

Ms. Jackson asked the students if they were aware of the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) School District's policy on bullying. The students indicated that the policy is included in the student handbook. **Ms. Jackson** stated that bullying is against the law; she encouraged the students to do some research on the state statute. She also encouraged them to find out the correct person to notify if and when bullying occurs. The students indicated that the WVHS GSA has a staff sponsor who serves as a sort of liaison between them and the administration.

Mr. Walters asked how many students belong to the WVHS GSA; the students replied that the number fluctuates, but they have about 15-20 students attend meetings. **Chair Matherly** stated he would love to come and talk to the GSA group if they invited him. Members discussed the possibility of having a student serve on the FDC. **Ms. Rogers** informed the students that the FNSB School District has a Diversity Council; she offered to attend a meeting with the students.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Sanford requested an update from the City Attorney on the powers and limitations of the FDC. **Mr. Walters** stated that City Clerk Danyielle Snider has been working with City Attorney Paul Ewers to address Ms. Sanford's questions. He reported that the FDC had received a green light to move forward with support of the potty project.

Ms. Sanford stated that she sent an email to City staff and the FDC, and she claimed she did not receive a response.

Ms. Webb asked whether the potty project letter is moving forward. **Chair Matherly** replied that the Gender Pioneers informed his office that they did not want the letter to be sent out yet because they had put the potty project on hold. **Ms. Sanford** stated that her understanding was that the Gender Pioneers did not want to bring the issue before the City Council, but that they still wanted to move forward with the letter to businesses.

Mr. Walters stated that the issue will come up at a later time, and his understanding is that the group is gathering more support for the letter before moving forward. He added that the Gender Pioneers appreciate that the FDC has offered its support for the potty project.

FDC COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Policy & Procedure Committee Meeting Notes – 08/03/17 and 09/07/17

Mr. Butler, seconded by **Ms. Webb**, moved to ACCEPT the meeting notes. No members objected.

FDC MEMBERS COMMENTS

Ms. Jackson requested a moment of silence to honor those who lost their lives in the recent Las Vegas shooting. The group observed a moment of silence.

Mr. Butler stated that he has been catching up on reading FDC minutes. He stated that he would like to see all the FDC-related ordinances and approved resolutions linked on the City's website. He questioned whether the FNSB has any official documents supporting the FDC. **Mr. Butler** stated that he is concerned about the longevity of the FDC as new administrations come along. He recommended that the FDC invite the following individuals to speak at future meetings: FNSB Mayor Karl Kassel, a representative from the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights, a representative from the Equal Opportunity Commission, Anchorage Mayor Ethan Berkowitz, and Alaska Governor Bill Walker. **Mr. Butler** asked about the process for recommending agenda items; he stated there should be a procedure available to members. He spoke to the challenges in getting AFN to hold their annual conference in Fairbanks. He stated that local governments should support the event being held locally and work to improve aspects of hosting the conference. **Mr. Butler** recommended a one-hour PBS documentary addressing opioid addiction.

Ms. Rogers shared that there is a local committee coordinated by Explore Fairbanks that works to bring the AFN convention to Fairbanks. She expressed support for holding the event locally.

Chair Matherly stated that the process for adding FDC agenda items has been fairly loose. He stated that if someone has a suggestion for a guest speaker they can let him know and work to make arrangements. He stated that FPD recently placed a medicine take-back box in their lobby for folks to use to dispose of old or unused medication.

Ms. Taylor stated she has seen positivity in Fairbanks and that the Mayor has done a great job being involved in events and activities throughout the community. She thanked everyone for sharing all the events that they are a part of; she stated that she would continue to share hers.

Ms. Shepard stated that her office is working with the UAF Diversity Office on campus to put together a Diversity Fair for the spring semester; she stated she would like the FDC to attend.

Ms. Webb thanked Mr. Walters for inviting the students to speak. She asked if there were any committee reports.

Ms. Sanford stated that the Policy and Procedure Committee has met every month and that they are working hard in creating a policy vetting procedure; she stated that they are making progress.

Ms. Rogers thanked the students for speaking; she thanked Mr. Butler for all the research he does and for what he brings to the FDC. She asked that individuals not accept extra pain

medication from their doctors; she indicated that large prescriptions are part of the opioid problem.

Ms. Kan mentioned the upcoming International Friendship Day event. She stated that a representative from the Alaska Literacy Council approached her to see whether it would be appropriate if they spoke at an FDC meeting to help expand their program.

Mr. Walters stated that he is involved with the Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays group in Fairbanks who recently organized a brief survey about local concerns; he stated that the survey is optional and, with permission, he would send it to the City Clerk for distribution to the FDC. **Mr. Walters** stated that P-Flag is organizing an event on Friday, November 17 from 6 – 8 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church which will give community members an opportunity to talk about LGBTQ-related issues in the community. He stated that he will send an email about the event as more information becomes available. In response to **Mr. Butler's** earlier question about FDC agendas, **Mr. Walters** stated that the City Clerk prepares a draft agenda and sends it to the Chair and Vice Chair a week prior to the meeting. He invited FDC members to send ideas for agenda items to him, the Mayor or the City Clerk. He stated that copies of the Diversity Action Plan (DAP) are available on the table. He thanked **Mr. Turney** for continuing to bring up the issue of discrimination in the jury pool. He wondered whether students who attended the leadership conference could come and speak to the FDC sometime in the future. **Ms. Jackson** stated that she would like to invite those students to speak at the January meeting.

Ms. Rogers reminded the FDC about the idea of shortening the Vice Chair's term to one year and creating another position to shadow the Vice Chair in order to make a smooth transition. **Mr. Walters** requested that the item be placed on the next agenda for discussion.

MEETING DATES

The next Regular Meeting of the FDC is scheduled for Tuesday, November 14, 2017.

Chair Matherly left the meeting just prior to adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Webb, seconded by **Ms. Sanford**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

Hearing no objection, **Vice Chair Walters** declared the meeting
ADJOURNED at 6:46 p.m.



Mayor Jim Matherly, Chair



D. Danyielle Snider, CMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS