



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
JULY 10, 2018 – 5:30 P.M.  
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:**

Zee Nace, Seat A	Sara Harriger, Seat K
Lisa Slayton, Seat B	Jeff Walters, Seat M
Montean Jackson, Seat C	Amber Taylor, Seat N
Juanita Webb, Seat D	Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director
Kathryn Ottersten, Seat E	

**Members Absent:**

Svetlana Nuss, Seat F	Douglas Toelle, Seat J (excused)
Vacant, Seat G	Vacant, Seat L
Rosalind Kan, Seat H (excused)	Vacant, Seat O
Vacant, Seat I	June Rogers, Councilmember

**Also Present:**

D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk	Christina Rowlett, Purchasing/Risk Mgr.
Jeff Jacobson, Public Works Dir.	

### **CALL TO ORDER & READING OF THE FDC MISSION STATEMENT**

**Chair Matherly** called the meeting to order and read the FDC Mission Statement.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Chair Matherly** led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Ms. Ottersten**, seconded by **Ms. Nace**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda.

**Chair Matherly** added “Appointment of Vice Chairperson” to Item (a) of New Business.

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

### **CITIZENS’ COMMENTS (Limited to 3 Minutes)**

**Helen Marie Matesi** – Ms. Matesi stated that she is with the League of Women Voters (LWV), and they will host a bipartisan candidate forum on August 8 at the Tanana Valley State Fair. She stated that the LWV will also have a booth at the fair.

**Ms. Slayton** suggested that two FDC members be assigned to attend the candidate forum.

Ms. Matesi, in response to a question from **Mr. Walters**, stated that the League is planning a second forum after the fair but before the election. She agreed to send any additional information about the forum(s) to the City Clerk. Members briefly discussed with Ms. Matesi the process for submitting questions to be used at the forums and the possibility of hosting a forum at City Hall.

Hearing no more requests to speak, **Chair Matherly** declared Citizens' Comments closed.

**Chair Matherly** introduced new member, Sara Harriger. Ms. Harriger stated that she was born and raised in Fairbanks, but moved away for a number of years and worked for the US Dept of State. She stated that she moved back to Fairbanks in December 2017, and is now the Director of the Morris Thompson Cultural & Visitors Center. Members welcomed Ms. Harriger.

**Chair Matherly** announced that Ms. Taylor and her family would be relocating out of state, and this would be her final meeting. He and FDC members said goodbye to Ms. Taylor.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- a) Golden Days Parade

**Chair Matherly** stated that last year the FDC served ice cream for Golden Days at 10th and Barnette; he stated that he plans to do it again and invited FDC members to attend on July 21 from 10 a.m. to noon. Jeff Jacobson clarified that the parade would go down Noble Street this year. Ms. Foster-Snow passed around a sign-up sheet for participation at the event.

### APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of April 10, 2018
- b) Work Session Minutes of June 12, 2018

**Mr. Walters**, seconded by **Ms. Webb**, moved to APPROVE the Regular Meeting minutes of April 10, 2018 and the Work Session minutes of June 12, 2018.

**Chair Matherly** called for objection to the motion to APPROVE the Minutes and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

### HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

**Chair Matherly** commended Ms. Foster-Snow for her HR work. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that she would like to have a meeting with Ms. Nace and possibly others to get a FDC Facebook page set up. **Ms. Ottersten** and **Ms. Slayton** stated that they would like to help also.

**Ms. Foster-Snow** provided an update on job openings at the City. She stated that the Deputy Fire Marshal position has opened, and it will be difficult to fill. She stated that the City intends to temporarily contract the work out so that construction projects are not held up. She stated that a Deputy Clerk position will be opening in the City Clerk's Office soon, and there are still 5 1/2 positions open in Dispatch. She spoke to the lengthy testing process for new dispatchers. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) still has five officer positions open, but they recruited five officers within the past six months. She spoke briefly to the intense background and hiring process at FPD; she asked for help in recruiting and stated that the department puts on a COPS seminar every two months. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated the administration heard loud and clear that FDC members would like to be more consistently involved in interview panels for all public safety supervisory positions at the City. She passed around a form for members to provide their contact information and availability for participating on a panel.

**Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that the FPD report has been removed from the regular agenda; she stated that instead, different department heads will rotate speaking to the FDC at each meeting. She introduced City Public Works Director Jeff Jacobson and invited him to speak.

Director Jacobson spoke to his love for his job. He stated that Public Works employees interact with the public on a daily basis in their work on potholes, snow removal, sidewalks, brush cutting, garbage collection, and other work. He stated that his staff is very public service oriented and believes in a partnership with the community. He shared that he has a zero tolerance policy on bullying and discrimination, but he will also go to bat for his staff when needed. Director Jacobson stated that while Public Works is a male-oriented environment, 8 of 36 employees are women. He stated that women are in lead operator, supervisory, heavy equipment operator, and mechanic positions. He reported on the ethnicity of Public Works permanent employees: two Hispanics, one African-American, one Asian, four Alaska Natives, one Alaska Native/African-American, and one Native American. He shared that 80% of temporary employees are minorities, and the department hires from the pool of temporary employees. Director Jacobson stated that Public Works employees are dispatched from union halls and make up five main divisions: administrative, streets, fleet, garbage, and facilities. He spoke briefly about what each division does. He spoke to how much he respects and values his staff, and he stated that he wishes the positive work environment could be replicated.

**Ms. Jackson** commended the department for making Fairbanks look so clean.

Members discussed with Director Jacobson the diverse composition of Public Works staff. Director Jacobson spoke to the healthy employee retention at the department but stated that it has not always been that way. He spoke to some previous issues and stated that he has had to let some bad employees go.

**Ms. Harriger** asked Director Jacobson if he has shared his department's success story with other City departments. Director Jacobson stated that he has not done anything formally, but City Department Heads meeting regularly for staff meetings. He stated that cultural change can be positive and less work in the long run if department heads put in the time. He spoke highly of the Public Works facility and equipment and to the wise planning of City leaders for the department.

**Ms. Taylor** excused herself from the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a) June 12 Work Session Wrap-up

**Chair Matherly** thanked everyone who attended the FDC work session in June. He stated that he learned a great deal about each member who attended. He stated that there has been some turnover in FDC membership, and he took some blame for the group getting a little off track. He distributed a summary of what came out of the work session. He spoke to the need to have assigned tasks and reminded everyone that the Diversity Action Plan (DAP) provides guidelines for what FDC tasks. He spoke to the importance of FDC member participation in public safety interviews for supervisory positions at the City. **Chair Matherly** stated that each member has a passion—something that sparks them—but he would like the group to decide on items to take on or support as a body. He referenced the tasks listed on the back page of the handout.

**Ms. Ottersten** stated that a lot of local groups have facilities and suggested that the FDC have some travelling meetings. Members discussed groups in Fairbanks and the idea of holding meetings at different locations. **Ms. Harriger** stated that empty seats at meetings may be caused by a lack of communication or by not offering what people want. **Mr. Walters** stressed the need to fill vacant seats and get more people to apply to serve; he stated that the FDC needs to take an organized approach in reaching out to various groups.

**Ms. Slayton** questioned what the FDC does and stated that there seems to be a lack of action by the body. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that the primary responsibility of the FDC is to make recommendations and give guidance to the City Council; she added that the FDC has taken a stand on a number of issues and has given a recommendation to the Council on two pieces of state legislation. **Ms. Webb** stated that there are several new members on the FDC and that she has not seen the body advise the City Council on anything since she joined the group. She stated that she has no intention of leaving the FDC, and she believes there are many things the FDC can do. She stated that she would like FDC meetings to be productive. **Ms. Jackson** stated that all members have to take on tasks and assignments. She stated that she believes the first order of business is outreach and to bring other groups to the City of Fairbanks. **Chair Matherly** promised that he would start letting the FDC know about events he will be attending so members can represent the City with him. **Ms. Harriger** suggested that a simple way to reach out would be for each member to invite one or two people to the next FDC meeting; **Chair Matherly** tasked each member with inviting someone to the August FDC meeting.

**Ms. Ottersten** spoke to the FDC Facebook page and offered that Facebook Live be put to use, if legally feasible. **Mr. Walters** stated that listening is a big part of what the FDC does so it can hear what is going on in the community. He stated that the City Code and the DAP provides direction on what the body is supposed to be doing. He stated that members have a right to be at the hiring table, and they are not taking opportunities; he added that the group needs to be active. **Ms. Jackson** stated that the FDC needs to focus on accomplishing the items set forth in the DAP.

**Ms. Nace** stated that it would be interesting to get involved with the different gender sexuality alliances either at the high schools or at UAF. She stated that it would be beneficial to invite them to FDC meetings or send FDC members to their meetings. **Chair Matherly** encouraged Ms. Nace to get some contacts for the groups. He stated that he would like to see military and university representation on the FDC; he added that he would also like to see Borough representatives at FDC meetings. Regarding subcommittees, **Chair Matherly** stated that the City has a policy review committee, and he suggested having someone from the FDC attend their meetings.

**Ms. Harriger** asked about Alaska Native representation on the FDC. She spoke to targeting communities that need to be represented on the FDC. She added that serving as a voice for the community is a very important thing.

**Chair Matherly** reminded everyone to bring someone to the next meeting and to try to think of other local groups; he suggested that members also bring food for a potluck at the next meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Appointment of Vice Chairperson and Second Vice Chairperson

**Chair Matherly** and **Mr. Walters** spoke to the duties of the Vice Chairperson. **Mr. Walters** stated that September will be his last meeting as the Vice Chairperson. **Chair Matherly** asked

members to consider serving as a chairperson; he stated that appointments can be made at the next meeting.

### FDC COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### a) Committee Assignments for Members Nuss and Nace

**Ms. Jackson** questioned whether the FDC should take another strategic look at the various committees. **Mr. Walters** stated that the item should be added to the next agenda.

**Chair Matherly** directed that Ms. Nace be placed on the Education and Outreach Committee. **Ms. Foster-Snow** shared that the Facebook page group will meet Friday, July 13 at noon.

**Ms. Webb** stated that the Policy and Procedure Committee has not met and has no chairperson. **Mr. Walters** stated that he would be interested in moving to the Policy Committee in August. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that she would like to have a meeting to work on an inclusion statement. She stated that it may be a good idea to have one or two FDC members attend City Policy Review Committee meetings. **Ms. Harriger, Ms. Webb, and Mr. Walters** expressed interest in attending City Policy Review Committee meetings.

### FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS

**Ms. Nace** stated that it was good to focus on action, and it was a productive conclusion.

**Ms. Slayton** apologized for not making it to the June work session. She stated that she has a library book anyone is welcome to about the Billie Holiday song, "Strange Fruit." She stated that she is sorry to see members go and thanked them for their hard work; she welcomed new members.

**Ms. Jackson** stated that she would like the FDC to put forth a resolution or a statement in support of recognizing Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a City holiday as other government entities do. She stated that there were a large number of sexual assault cases recently closed; she stated she would like the FDC to receive data on the cases and be informed about the process to close them.

**Chair Matherly** stated that the City has tried to address the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday issue in the past, but it is difficult since the City is under agreement with several unions. He stated that it is an important day, and City employees may use the day as a community service day.

**Ms. Webb** welcomed new members and stated that it was a productive meeting. She expressed hope that the FDC could move forward with action.

**Ms. Ottersten** stated that the last meeting was excellent and well thought out. She stated she is looking forward to creating an FDC Facebook page. She commented that she is interested in telling the rest of the world that Fairbanks is a great place to be.

**Ms. Harriger** stated that it has been an interesting and fun meeting; she stated that she wishes she could have attended the last meeting. She asked about the best way to communicate with other FDC members between meetings; members indicated that the best way to communicate is through the City Clerk. **Ms. Harriger** stated that she is looking forward to getting to know and working with other FDC members.

**Mr. Walters** welcomed Ms. Harriger. He restated several items for the August meeting agenda. He requested that Mayor Matherly send letters to past members thanking them for their service. He stated that after new members are appointed and seated, he would like to have legal training on the Open Meetings Act. He stated that he would also like to have a meeting with a facilitator to guide FDC members through a mediation or training so that they could get to know each other.

**Ms. Foster-Snow** asked for clarification on whether the group would like to serve ice cream at the Golden Days event. **Chair Matherly** stated that he would like the group to serve ice cream and distribute flyers. **Ms. Foster-Snow** suggested that FDC members take a tour of the Fairbanks Police Department and Dispatch Center at a future meeting.

Helen Marie Matesi clarified that the candidate forum at the fair would be for state candidates. She stated that the date for the local forum would be announced later.

**Ms. Slayton** stated that she would like to have about 10 minutes at next meeting to talk about diversity training for the group. She stated that she would like to have some in-depth training for the FDC at the City's expense after all new members are appointed.

### MEETING DATES


The next Regular Meeting date for the FDC is scheduled for Tuesday, August 14, 2018.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Ms. Jackson**, seconded by **Ms. Harriger**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

Hearing no objection, **Chair Matherly** declared the meeting  
ADJOURNED at 7:34 p.m.

  
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Mayor Jim Matherly, Chair

  
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D. Daniëlle Snider, CMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS