



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 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: Lisa Slayton, Seat B Sara Harriger, Seat K
Juanita Webb, Seat D (telephonic) Jeff Walters, Seat M
Kathryn Ottersten, Seat E Kelvin Lee, Seat O
David Rucker, Seat G June Rogers, Councilmember
Stephen Greenlaw, Seat I (@ 5:42 pm) Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director

Members Absent: Zee Nace, Seat A (excused) Douglas Toelle, Seat J
Montean Jackson, Seat C (excused) Rita Davis, Seat L
Svetlana Nuss, Seat F Vacant, Seat N
Rosalind Kan, Seat H

Also Present: D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk Mike Sanders, Housing & Homeless
Mike Meeks, Chief of Staff Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER & READING OF THE FDC MISSION STATEMENT

Chair Matherly called the meeting to order and read the FDC mission statement. He welcomed new members and stated that there is not yet a quorum.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Matherly led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

This item was addressed after Citizens' Comments when a quorum was achieved.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Limited to 3 Minutes)

Linda Schandelmeier, 1988 Kittiwake Drive, Fairbanks – Ms. Schandelmeier spoke of an opportunity for collaboration between the FDC and the newly-formed Progressive Network, a loose collaboration of groups who may have similar goals. She stated that the network is trying to connect as many groups as possible by including representatives from various groups in the area. She stated she has more information for those interested, and she left handouts for FDC members.

Ms. Rogers suggested that Ms. Jackson may be a good FDC liaison to the network since she has already been speaking with Ms. Schandelmeier.

The FDC obtained a quorum at 5:42 p.m.

Robert Kinnard, 827 17th Avenue, #142, Fairbanks – Mr. Kinnard introduced himself as a school board candidate and stated that he is a lifelong Fairbanksan. He spoke to his desire to maintain good, quality educators and strong diversity within the school district. He invited members to contact him.

Mr. Walters commented that Mr. Kinnard is very involved in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day event in January, and he commended him for his work.

Chrya Sanderson, 3498 Rosehip Drive, North Pole – Ms. Sanderson stated that she is running for school board. She stated that she has been employed at the district for 35 years and that she is currently an Alaska Native tutor with 81 students.

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

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

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Chair Matherly reminded everyone of the October 20 International Friendship Day event at the Pioneer Park Civic Center from noon – 5 p.m. Clerk Snider passed around a sign-up sheet for FDC participation at the event.

Ms. Ottersten stated that she would be a guest on “Problem Corner” the following morning; she stated that it is a good opportunity for people to call in and speak with her. Members shared information about upcoming local candidate forums.

Ms. Harriger stated that there would be a screening of “The Anonymous People” on September 18 at 6 p.m. at the Morris Thompson Cultural & Visitors Center.

Ms. Slayton stated that October is Sexual Violence Awareness Month, and it would be good to have a public service announcement from the City to help raise awareness, particularly from the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD).

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of July 10, 2018
- b) Regular Meeting Minutes of August 14, 2018

Mr. Walters, seconded by **Ms. Ottersten**, moved to APPROVE the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 10, 2018 and August 14, 2018.

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

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Ms. Foster-Snow stated that numerous positions have opened up within the last month. She stated that the City has had difficulty getting interest in the vacant Civil Engineer/Building Inspector position. She stated that there are always FPD and Dispatch positions open and that the Dispatch Director position may open up in the next 30 days. She stated that an FDC member will need to sit on the hiring panel for the Dispatch Director position and suggested that the FDC decide at the next meeting who should sit on the panel. **Ms. Foster-Snow** introduced Mike Sanders to speak about his recent efforts as the Housing & Homeless Coordinator.

Mr. Sanders spoke to the importance of housing; he stated that if a person loses housing, everything else begins to slip away. He stated that over 40% of Americans are living paycheck-to-paycheck, and when he first moved to Fairbanks, he could not believe how many homeless people live here year-round. He provided 2017 statistics on the number of people who used housing and homeless services and how many of those individuals were unemployed or underemployed. He provided a handout and brochure for about the Housing and Homeless Coalition. He shared that there is great collaboration in Fairbanks.

Chair Matherly stated that Mr. Sanders has really helped bridge gaps between agencies to help people find the resources they need.

Mr. Sanders spoke about the Coordinated Entry System and stated that Fairbanks will be the first Alaskan community besides Anchorage to use the system. He stated that the Coordinated Entry System is a collaborated effort that allows the sharing of information to help provide resources to people. He spoke about the 2017 Symposium on Homelessness event and to the Rapid Rehousing program which helps someone experiencing homelessness to obtain housing within 30 days of entering the program. Mr. Sanders stated that people can get back on their feet and be on their own in 3-4 months if supported properly. He stated that he is a City employee funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust with a three-year funding guarantee; he stated that the Trust has indicated that they are willing to fund an additional three years.

Ms. Ottersten asked Mr. Sanders about services for youth. Mr. Sanders spoke to the various local programs and organizations geared to help youth. He stated that the most vulnerable person in the community is a pregnant teenager who is homeless. He shared that there is an effort to increase youth services in the community.

Mr. Lee stated that it has been great to see how Mr. Sanders has brought everyone together to corral the energy and combine resources. He stated that Mr. Sanders has made a big difference in the last two years.

Mr. Rucker questioned whether there are enough beds in the City for everyone who needs them. Mr. Sanders replied that there are enough beds, but the challenge is getting people to use them when they need them. He spoke to the 2018 point-in-time survey that was done in January and stated that there were over 40 people who had no shelter. He listed some reasons why an individual may not want to go to a shelter: way of life, addiction, or mental illness. Mr. Sanders spoke to different groups who meet the homeless where they are and provide them with food and clothing and build a rapport, which helps gain trust.

Mr. Greenlaw asked about the percentage of the homeless population living in vehicles. **Mr. Sanders** replied that it is difficult to nail down the number of homeless people living in vehicles. He shared that another positive result of the Symposium on Homelessness was that Fairbanks was recommended for a Federal Technical Assistance grant. He stated that he recently found out that Fairbanks has been selected to receive the grant, and several agencies will be visiting to help provide local agencies with more permanent support. He indicated that they would like to expand services outside the City limits which will help to open up USDA funds. **Mr. Sanders** stated that a recent survey resulted in an overwhelming response that another symposium should be held to focus on health and social services.

DIVERSITY TOPIC OF THE MONTH

Chair Matherly stated that Morgan Clay with the Alaska Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention was going to present on Suicide Awareness, but the presentation fell through. He spoke to suicide not being discriminatory and stated that the important thing is to look for warning signs and ask questions. He shared how suicide has affected him personally and shared that he, Mayor Ward, and Mayor Kassel signed a joint proclamation declaring September 9 – 15, 2018 Suicide Awareness Week. **Chair Matherly** stated that he participated in an event over the weekend called “One Homeless Night.” He stated that it was a fundraising event, but to some outsiders it may have looked like a group of people getting together, painting boxes, and having fun. He stated that there were some negative comments and criticisms on Facebook, so he wanted to make sure that people understood that it was a serious event with no intention of mocking the homeless. He stated that he plans to participate in the event again next year.

Ms. Ottersten related some of her own experiences and spoke to the importance of being there to support others. She stated that letting people know you are there for them can make a huge difference in a critical moment.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Nomination and Appointment of Vice Chairperson and Second Vice Chairperson

Chair Matherly stated that Montean Jackson and Sara Harriger had been nominated for Vice Chair and Second Vice Chair, respectively.

Ms. Slayton, seconded by **Mr. Walters**, moved to CONFIRM the appointments of Montean Jackson and Sara Harriger to the positions of Vice Chair and Second Vice Chair, respectively.

Chair Matherly called for objection to the motion to CONFIRM the appointments and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Diversity Training for FDC Members

Ms. Foster-Snow asked members to do some research on training they would like to propose and bring ideas back to the group. She stated that training could be used for City employees also.

Members discussed various training ideas, and **Ms. Rogers** indicated that she would like to see some training that would provide a better understanding of different cultures. **Mr. Greenlaw** recommended Diane Benson.

Chair Matherly asked each member to think of some names of people who could provide some training and some ideas about training.

FDC COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Update on FDC Facebook Page

Chair Matherly stated that when the idea of an FDC Facebook page was being discussed, he may not have understood all the ramifications. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that she supports an FDC Facebook presence, but an official page would require all the content to be monitored and subject to the open records law. She stated that the administration has consulted with the City Attorney and with the Public Information Officer (PIO), and the City does not have the resources to monitor an FDC Facebook page. She added that if one City Board/Commission is allowed to have a Facebook page, the City would have to allow all the others to have one. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that the recommendation is to close the current FDC page, and open an unofficial page separate from the City of Fairbanks.

Ms. Rogers stated that she believes that would muddy the waters. She commented that she does not understand how it could truly be separated from the FDC. **Chair Matherly** explained that an unofficial Facebook page would not be sponsored by the City and would not contain the City logo.

Ms. Harriger stated that an unofficial page could be created along with a statement saying so. She stated that if that is what the group is going to do, the existing page should be shut down immediately. Members briefly discussed how best to go about having a presence on Facebook.

Ms. Slayton asked about the presence of the FDC on the City's website and indicated that she would like to see its presence enhanced. **Ms. Foster-Snow** suggested that PIO Teal Soden and Clerk Snider present the new website to the FDC at the next meeting. She stated that perhaps the FDC could make recommendations and suggestions about the site at that time.

FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Greenlaw apologized for being late. He stated that his first meeting was a great experience, and he learned a lot. He shared a little about himself with the group.

Ms. Harriger stated that she was very impressed by Mr. Sanders' presentation. She stated that she believes socio-economic issues are a good thing for the FDC to look at.

Ms. Rogers thanked everyone for attending and stated she appreciates all the diverse opinions at each meeting. She stated that the genuine concern everyone has for each other is appreciated.

Mr. Rucker stated that he wanted to join the FDC partly to help represent people who relocate to Fairbanks from the states. He shared that he is the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer at the at Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) School District, and his job is to deal with

discrimination issues relating to students and employees at the district. He stated that he will be leading the Diversity Committee for the school district; he stated that their next meeting would take place on September 27.

Mr. Lee welcomed new members. He stated that he enjoyed the conversation about the direction of the FDC.

Ms. Foster-Snow welcome new members and guests. She stated there is a lot of good work ahead.

Mr. Walters welcome new members and guests. He mentioned the cards that were passed around for former members Amber Taylor, Herb Butler, and Marna Sanford; he asked everyone to sign the cards. He thanked Mr. Sanders for the presentation. He asked about the City's Policy Review Committee and requested that it be discussed at the next meeting. **Mr. Walters** requested that the FPD give a report to the FDC on a quarterly basis. He wanted to ensure that an FDC member would sit on the hiring panel for the next round of police officer interviews.

Ms. Slayton thanked everyone for attending; she commended Mr. Sanders for his presentation. She referenced the Southern Poverty Law Center's map of the U.S. which tracks the location of active hate groups. She pointed out that there were no groups shown in Alaska in 2015, but now there are four. She stated that three of the groups are in Fairbanks. She stated that the Diversity Council is important, and although things are looking up in some ways, these types of groups are still surfacing.

Ms. Ottersten stated that she cannot imagine anywhere she would rather be on September 11. She stated that the 9/11 tragedy is a supreme example of what happens when hate takes over and people depersonalize each other. She stated that she has lost friends because of hate. She stated that she is glad the FDC talks and listens.

Ms. Webb welcomed the new members and stated that she was encouraged by the evening's discussion.

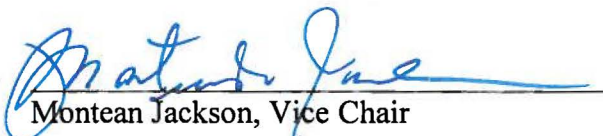
MEETING DATES

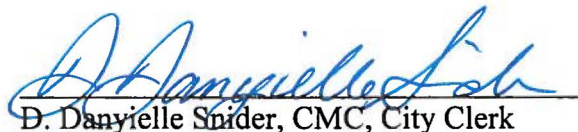
The next Regular Meeting of the FDC is scheduled for Tuesday, October 9, 2018.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Hearing no objection, **Chair Matherly** declared the meeting
ADJOURNED at 7:27 p.m.


Montean Jackson, Vice Chair


D. Danyielle Snider, CMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS