



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
SEPTEMBER 10, 2019 – 5:30 P.M.
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA



The City of Fairbanks recognizes that our community is a diverse one, with a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, cultures, beliefs and orientations and recognizes this diversity as an asset and resource for our community. The establishment of a Fairbanks Diversity Council can provide the City Council and Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly with advice and recommendations to promote equal opportunity for all members of the public.

1. CALL TO ORDER & READING OF THE FDC MISSION STATEMENT
2. ROLL CALL
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Limited to 3 Minutes)
6. MAYOR'S COMMENTS & REPORT
 - a) Update on City Council Review of City Boards and Commissions
7. CALENDAR OF EVENTS
8. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES
 - a) Regular Meeting Minutes of July 9, 2019
9. HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT
10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
11. NEW BUSINESS
12. FDC COMMITTEE REPORTS
13. FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS
14. MEETING DATES
 - a) FDC Work Session for Diversity Action Plan Review, Saturday, September 21, 2019
 - b) Next Regular Meeting Date, October 8, 2019
15. ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming Committee Meetings:

Education & Outreach and Accessibility Committee COMBINED Meeting – Thursday, September 19, 4:00 p.m., City Hall*

*The agenda item for this meeting will be discussion on the pros and cons of live-streaming FDC meetings

collection by the state. He stated he enjoyed the Public Safety Commission (PSC) meeting earlier that day.

Hearing no more requests for comment, **Chair Matherly** declared Citizens' Comments closed.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS & REPORT

Chair Matherly stated that the reason the FDC did not dig further into the jury discrimination and data collection issue is because former member Marna Sanford did some research and thought it was too big an issue for the FDC. He stated he does not know enough about the subject to opine on it, but the FDC may address it. He stated that he will talk with Ms. Harriger and Ms. Jackson to see if they believe the FDC should address it. **Chair Matherly** stated that the City Council recently asked the administration for a review of all City board and commissions; he stated that staff and Council will go through each City board and commission to determine viability, whether changes need to be made, etc. He asked FDC members to think about things and bring any ideas forward. He explained that after the review, the Clerk's Office will hold training sessions for new board and commission members. **Chair Matherly** stated that his thoughts have been with firefighting teams across Alaska and stated that the Alaska has the largest amount of fires in all the U.S. He cautioned folks to use extreme caution so as to avoid starting fires. He shared that Fairbanks Memorial Hospital has opened up a respite room for people in need of relief from the smoky air.

Mr. Lee arrived, and the FDC had a quorum. Approval of the Agenda was addressed here.

Chair Matherly shared that Police Chief Reeder intended to be at the meeting, but her movers arrived earlier in the day so she was not able to attend.

FIVE-MINUTE PRESENTATIONS (Representatives from: City Council, Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), Military, Indigenous People, and FNSB School District)

Mr. Rucker stated that the FNSB School District is hiring for the upcoming year, and HR has been swamped trying to fill vacancies. He stated the District is still looking at policies on diversity and inclusion, and the School Board may take a look at policies and administrative regulations around September.

Chair Matherly reported that there was some emotion at the previous evening's Council Meeting over the tax cap issue and discussions about the Governor's vetoes. He stated he was instructed by the City Council to send a letter to the state legislature supporting overriding the Governor's vetoes. He indicated that his biggest issue with the vetoes was the significant cuts to the UAF budget. He encouraged the Interior Delegation to support only a \$5 million cut to UAF instead of a \$140 million cut.

Mr. Lee stated that he will attend the next Borough Assembly meeting.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Chair Matherly stated that Golden Days events are happening the weekend of July 20. He shared that the Intertribal Powwow also coming up.

Mr. Rucker asked whether the FDC will have a presence at the Golden Days parade.

Ms. Jackson stated that the Juneteenth Celebration was an awesome event, and she saw some FDC members there. She stated that the buttons Ms. Foster-Snow and Ms. Snider made for FDC members to wear got lost and requested that more buttons be made. She stated that she believes the buttons were a success. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that more buttons can be made and that FDC members can pick them up at City Hall to wear at the Golden Days parade, even if the FDC does not host a table.

Ms. Rogers shared that the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO) is coming up soon, but she is not sure of the dates.

Ms. Harriger reminded members that the American Red Cross Chief Diversity Officer will be at the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center for a community presentation on July 15; she stated he invited the FDC to meet him for coffee at 10:30 a.m.

Clerk Snider stated that WEIO will be July 17 – 20.

Mr. Rucker reminded everyone that the National Coalition Building Institute will hold another District-sponsored immersion training in September. He requested that anyone who is interested email him at david.rucker@k12northstar.org.

Clerk Snider shared that the recent candidate open house hosted by the City of Fairbanks, the FNSB, and the City of North Pole was a success. She announced that candidate filing for all three local governments will open on Monday, July 15 and will close on Monday, July 29.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of April 9, 2019
- b) Regular Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2019

Mr. Toelle, seconded by **Mr. Rucker**, moved to APPROVE both sets of meeting minutes.

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

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Ms. Foster-Snow shared that there are still some vacancies at the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD), but the department is getting some great applicants. She stated that two offers for hire have been given within the past week and that one of the candidates for Chief of Police has applied and has been given an employment offer. She announced that two lateral hires will be joining the force within the next few days. She stated that the City Council approved a signing bonus for the Dispatch Department, and it has been met with a great response. She stated that dispatch training is extensive, so getting people on board who have some experience and require less training is good. She shared that Dispatch should have all 8 vacancies filled within the next three months.

Ms. Foster-Snow stated that the Deputy City Attorney position will be opening, and there is an accounting position open in the Finance Department. She shared that the job application process can be done online and invited those interested to visit the City's website.

Chair Matherly and **Ms. Foster-Snow** spoke to the collaboration between Chief Reeder and the Anchorage Police Department for hiring and training of FPD officers.

DIVERSITY TOPIC OF THE MONTH

Chair Matherly stated that there is no topic for July. He stated that if members are interested, the FDC can discuss the jury issue as the topic of the month for August.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Jackson stated that at the last meeting, two young ladies spoke to the FDC. She stated that Ms. Rogers provided outreach to them to connect them with someone at the News Miner. **Ms. Jackson** questioned what is expected of the FDC when people come and present issues. She commented that she would not like to see people walk away without having their expectations fulfilled.

Ms. Harriger wondered if the FDC should keep a record of recurrent issues or particularly urgent issues. She stated that if issues were tracked, the FDC may be able to funnel concerns through to the City Council.

Ms. Thomas stated that does not answer Ms. Jackson's question. She suggested that it would be nice to have a follow up from a member of the FDC who could do research and provide resources.

Chair Matherly stated he could check with Chief Reeder to see if she has followed up with the two young women who spoke at the last meeting.

Ms. Rogers agreed that maybe there could be a system in place for follow-up. She recalled a previous situation, and stated that the help that came to the family was from people on the Council and people in the audience.

Ms. Jackson suggested that FDC members ask individuals what they would like to see happen at the end of their testimony and that people should not feel their concerns are falling on deaf ears.

Clerk Snider suggested that members who feel that follow-up is needed after hearing the testimony of a public member raise the issue during their comments near the end of the meeting. She stated that the FDC can then determine whether an action is appropriate, whether a referral is needed, or whether City staff may be able to help. Members concurred with Clerk Snider's recommendation.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Appointment of Second Vice Chairperson

Chair Matherly stated that he is not prepared to appoint a Second Vice Chairperson. He asked that the item be placed on the August FDC agenda.

b) Memorandum Acknowledging FDC Purpose and Role

Ms. Harriger stated that the memo came about to reiterate the role and purpose of the FDC. She read the memorandum into the record. She stated that it is intended as a springboard for discussion on whether the FDC needs to address any issues. Members discussed other ways the memorandum could be used to help educate FDC members and the public on what the FDC does.

Mr. Rucker pointed out that a correction regarding a majority vote may be needed in the third acknowledgement. Clerk Snider concurred and stated the correction would be made.

Ms. Thomas stated that the last meeting was recorded by an audience member in a vicious manner. She asked what the policy is on recording meetings. Clerk Snider stated that FDC meetings are open to the public, and the public has a right to record during public meetings. **Ms. Jackson** suggested that it may be helpful to provide a disclosure to inform attendees that meetings may be recorded. She also suggested that FDC members be asked to read and sign the memorandum of acknowledgement upon appointment to the FDC.

Ms. Rogers pointed out that this discussion certifies that the FDC does not operate behind closed doors. She stated she is happy the FDC is not being accused of holding private meetings.

Ms. Thomas stated that the last meeting was recorded, posted, and painted in a derogatory way, and she was concerned for the FDC. She stated the way the video was edited may cause a person to think the FDC is doing some malicious things.

Ms. Harriger suggested that this may be a common problem, and she believes the best way to address it is to be even more transparent and livestream FDC meetings.

Chair Matherly stated that some people have harmful intentions, and the FDC cannot control that. He stated that video streaming may be something the FDC would like to consider. **Mr. Greenlaw** stated that accessibility is under the purview of the FDC and that he believes streaming the meeting is a good idea. **Ms. Thomas** stated that it is a social media era, and she supports the idea.

Chair Matherly stated that as Chair, it is difficult to keep order at times when people are emotionally charged. He stated that the responsibility to maintain order falls upon him, and he apologized. He stated that the memorandum is a good reminder of what is expected of the FDC.

Ms. Thomas questioned how others are expected to maintain a standard of behavior when FDC members cannot set an example. She asked whether there are consequences for unruly behavior.

Chair Matherly stated that he needed to be excused for a family emergency. **Ms. Harriger** took over chairing the meeting.

Clerk Snider responded to Ms. Thomas' question regarding consequences for poor member behavior. She stated that in such situations, the FDC could make a recommendation to the Mayor for a warning or a reprimand or make a recommendation to the City Council for removal. She stated that FDC members can only be confirmed and removed by the City Council.

Ms. Webb stated that FDC members bear some responsibility to keep each other in check. She stated that two members spoke up at the last meeting to remind others about rules and decorum.

Ms. Harriger stated the situation is part of the reason for the memorandum. She stated the memo should be a part of the FDC in the future. She stated she wants the FDC to be a well-oiled machine that gets things done.

Mr. Greenlaw requested that the memorandum be emailed to each member.

Ms. Jackson stated she would like to know whether an explanation will be provided to the City Council that all new members will be required to sign the memorandum. **Ms. Harriger** indicated that could be added to the memorandum. **Ms. Rogers** stated that it is common to see a signed agreement or commitment from new members when they enter an organization or join a board. She stated she does not believe it will be viewed negatively.

Mr. Rucker, seconded by **Ms. Jackson**, moved to APPROVE the Memorandum of Acknowledgement and forward it to the City Council.

Ms. Jackson, seconded by **Mr. Toelle**, move to AMEND the memorandum by adding item #7 to state that all new and current FDC members will sign in acknowledgement of the memorandum.

Ms. Harriger took a voice vote on the motion to AMEND the memorandum by adding item #7. The motion PASSED unanimously.

Ms. Rogers stated that she would like to see the word “deliberative” added to item #3 as a descriptive term to the FDC as a body. **Mr. Rucker** expressed concern with the term deliberative. He stated that it may be too much since the FDC is an advisory body.

Ms. Harriger stated she would like to see some language about the FDC being a safe place for people to talk. **Ms. Webb** stated she believes that item #6 already indicates the same.

Ms. Thomas again expressed concern there were no consequences for what occurred at the last meeting. **Mr. Rucker** stated that one-on-one conversations were had after the last meeting. He stated that it was a heated moment for those involved, and as soon as other members spoke up at the meeting, there was a change in demeanor.

Ms. Harriger called for objection to APPROVING the Memorandum of Acknowledgement and forwarding it to the City Council, and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

Clerk Snider stated that she will send the memorandum to members via email, and members may return signed memos to the City Clerk’s Office.

FDC COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Toelle stated that there will be no July or August Accessibility Committee meetings.

Ms. Harriger asked whether the July Education and Outreach Committee meeting should be canceled due to lack of agenda items. **Mr. Rucker** spoke in support of cancellation, and no members objected to cancellation.

FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Webb stated that the Governor's cuts to UAF were big and that 28 of the Governor's vetoes affect the disability community. She stated she heard that the women's shelter has had to turn people away; she stated a lot of services throughout the community will be shut down. She stated she fully supports putting together a resolution on the discrimination in jury selection issue. She also expressed support for following up with people who testify to the FDC.

Mr. Toelle stated that UAF is getting the spotlight for the Governor's budget cuts, but many services and arts programs are also being cut. He stated he is happy the Mayor is doing something about it. He stated that as of recently, he is no longer with Access Alaska and he is dealing more with his tourism business.

Ms. Jackson echoed Ms. Webb's comments about the state budget and stated the recent forum at Pioneer Park was very eye-opening. She spoke to the ripple effects that will occur throughout the state affecting senior citizens, the homeless population, women and children, and more. As a follow-up to the last FDC meeting, she read the following statement about tolerance: *Tolerance helps us to accept differences and frees us from being judgmental. It is recognizing that all people have feelings, needs, hopes, and dream. Tolerance is an appreciation for diversity, whether of culture or temperament. It leads to unity. It is being patient and forgiving while others make mistakes, while calling on discernment to know when to stand up for justice.* **Ms. Jackson** stated that people make mistakes, and forgiveness is divine. She expressed hope that everyone can come to the table, put passions to the side, and be an involved part of the collective.

Ms. Thomas stated she works with military families moving to Fairbanks, and one of their concerns is that Fairbanks is an isolated place where there is nothing to do. She spoke in support of the community pulling together to help Fairbanks grow. She indicated that with substance abuse being prevalent, it is important for youth to have things to do. She spoke to the need for more family activities in Fairbanks.

Mr. Lee stated he has been a member of the FDC for some time, and it has been a pleasure. He stated he would like the FDC to continue to be a part of something great, and he likes the idea of hearing peoples' concerns and following up with them.

Ms. Harriger thanked everyone for the discussion and stated there have been some good ideas.

Ms. Rogers stated she has heard many comments about the Governor's vetoes, and she encouraged everyone to contact state legislators, and she spoke to the need for people to establish working relationships with those who are making decisions that affect the state. In regard to Ms. Thomas' comments about community activities, she stated that everyone has an obligation to inform others of the activities that are already established in the community and promote a list of positive community activities.

Mr. Greenlaw stated that he is currently in Kotzebue where the temperature is 85 degrees. He stated that he hears people say there is not a lot to do in Fairbanks, but he stated there are a lot of community activities. He noted that the Governor's vetoes will impact marginalized communities and students. He stated the FDC will need to keep its ears open for those who will be impacted. He stated he is glad to hear a letter is being sent from the Mayor and City Council in support of overriding the Governor's vetoes.

Mr. Rucker expressed concern that even if the legislature works out a deal over the next few months, it will mean cuts to the most vulnerable populations, the homeless and the poor. He stated that police will have to learn how to deal with individuals who may not be taking needed medications. He stated that the new Chief of Police mentioned that she is interested in that type of training for the force, but he believes it needs to become a priority in light of the cuts.

Ms. Harriger asked whether the FDC would like to take some sort of action in regard to the state budget.

Ms. Jackson stated that she would like to continue receiving updates on what the City Council and City administration is doing. She asked Ms. Rogers to supply any updates at next meeting.

MEETING DATES

a) The next Regular Meeting of the FDC is scheduled for Tuesday, August 13, 2019

Ms. Harriger suggested that the DAP review work session be held from 9 a.m. – noon on September 21. No members objected to the meeting date. **Ms. Harriger** requested that members mark their calendars.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Toelle, seconded by **Ms. Thomas**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

Hearing no objection, **Ms. Harriger** declared the meeting
ADJOURNED at 7:40 p.m.

Jim Matherly, Mayor/Chair

D. Danyielle Snider, CMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS