



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 8, 2020, 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.



HELD VIA ZOOM WEBINAR AND AT 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 via Zoom Webinar and at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, with Mayor Jim Matherly presiding (remotely) and with the following members in attendance [Z = Zoom; P = In Person]:

Members Present: (Z) Kennita Williams, Seat A (Z) Kelvin Lee, Seat I
(Z) Robert Dorton, Seat B (Z) Doug Toelle, Seat J (joined @ 5:41)
(Z) Jose Martinez II, Seat C (joined @ 5:41) (Z) Sara Harriger, Seat K (left @ 6:27)
(Z) Juanita Webb, Seat D (Z) Angela Foster-Snow, HR Dir.
(Z) Shelissa Thomas, Seat E (Z) June Rogers, Councilmember
(Z) Andrew Aquino, Seat G (joined @ 5:45)

Members Absent: Rita Davis, Seat F Vacant, Seat H

Also Present: (P) Mike Meeks, Chief of Staff (left @ 6:10) (P) Danyielle Snider, City Clerk
(Z) Mike Sanders, H&H Coord. (left @ 6:05) (P) Ron Dupee, FPD Lieutenant
(P) Richard Sweet, Acting Police Chief

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 everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Limited to 3 Minutes)

There were no citizens' comments.

MAYOR & CITY STAFF REPORT

Chair Matherly stated that he needs to leave the meeting early, so he provided his comments to the FDC right away. He stated that Ms. Foster-Snow would chair the remainder of the meeting. He shared his excitement that the City's CARES funding program is now in phase two, and he commended the City Finance Department, Executive Assistant Teal Soden, and the CARES funding committee for their hard work. **Chair Matherly** stated that the election is coming up quickly, and he reminded everyone to vote. He encouraged everyone to mask-up, and he spoke to his efforts in getting businesses to promoting mask wearing. He spoke briefly to the resignation of the Police Chief and stated that officer training will continue. **Chair Matherly** excused himself from the meeting at 5:43 p.m.

Ms. Foster-Snow shared that the City hired six new firefighters, and three of them are paramedics. She stated that the Fire Department is having more success with recruitment than the Police Department.

Mr. Aquino, seconded by **Ms. Harriger**, moved to hear New Business right away since some people need to leave early. There was no objection.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Nomination/Election of New Second Vice Chair

Clerk Snider explained the process according to the Fairbanks General Code.

Mr. Dorton, seconded by **Ms. Thomas**, nominated Ms. Williams to the position of Second Vice Chair. **Ms. Williams** accepted the nomination.

Ms. Foster-Snow called for objection to the appointment of Ms. Williams as the new Second Vice Chair, and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

b) Hiring of City Police Chief

Ms. Foster-Snow shared that the City will follow the same hiring process as the last time a Chief of Police was hired. She stated that the position may not be posted for some time as there are some items the Administration is working through with the Police Department. She stated that when it is time to post the position, it will be posted internally first, then it may be opened to the public. She stated a selection committee would be selected, and she listed several community members who were a part of the last process. **Ms. Foster-Snow** spoke in detail to the candidate screening and selection process and stated that finalists will participate in a public forum like the last time. She explained that the FDC plays an important role in the process, and the Mayor takes recommendations before making a final selection.

Ms. Harriger asked whether the City plans to have the same selection committee. **Ms. Foster-Snow** replied that it will be up to the Mayor.

Mr. Martinez asked what the reason would be for delaying the hiring process. **Ms. Foster-Snow** replied that there are some things internally, including training, that are addressed before a new Chief comes on board.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

Hearing no objection, the Agenda was APPROVED.

Ms. Foster-Snow asked Mike Sanders, City Housing and Homeless Coordinator, to provide a report to the FDC.

Mr. Sanders discussed what the Homeless Coalition has been doing to help those experiencing homelessness in the community during the pandemic. He commended No Limits for providing housing for COVID-positive individuals. He shared information about activities and staffing in the Housing and Homeless Coordinator office.

Ms. Foster-Snow asked Acting Police Chief Sweet and Lt. Dupee to provide a report to the FDC.

AC Sweet introduced himself and provided some information about his background. He stated that Lt. Dupee is currently acting as Deputy Chief. He stated they are working on backfilling positions until a new Chief of Police is selected. He stated that Mayor Matherly and Chief of Staff Meeks have given the department an action plan, and the department is working on developing a training plan to fill in gaps in officer training. AC Sweet reported that he and the lieutenants have come up with an 18-month training plan for the department, and he listed several of the trainings that entails. He spoke in detail to verbal judo and CIT training and stated the importance of communication-type training. He stated that two officers went through the “train the trainer” CIT program to help facilitate future training. AC Sweet stated they have looked into implicit bias training, but the pandemic has prevented it from happening. He stated that instead they found an online training that will be required for officers to complete. He spoke about what is involved with de-escalation and use of force training, and he stated that they are looking into updating the program they have used in the past. He stated he met recently with the NAACP and the Native movement to discuss some of the department’s plans. AC Sweet spoke to some of FPD’s efforts to update equipment such as bodycams and tasers.

Lt. Dupee added that the 18-month training calendar is important for FPD to help maintain adequate officer training.

AC Sweet stated the department is putting efforts toward reinvigorating community outreach, and he listed several goals he has for FPD.

Lt. Dupee stated that if FDC members have events that they would like an officer to attend, to reach out to the department. He stated they would be happy to attend if their schedules will allow.

AC Sweet offered to meet with FDC members individually upon request.

Ms. Thomas asked whether FPD has looked into software that would store bodycam footage in the cloud. AC Sweet stated that they are looking to transition to cloud-based storage. Ms. Thomas asked whether AC Sweet has reached out to the Black Caucus in Fairbanks; AC Sweet replied that he has not yet, but he will.

Ms. Webb thanked AC Sweet for the report. She asked whether there would be an in-person CIT training course offered after the officers participate in the 2-hour online CIT training. AC Sweet stated that the CIT training is a 40-hour course, and they have trained officers to facilitate the follow-up training. He stated the implicit bias training is the 2-hour course.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

City Clerk Snider shared that absentee and early voting for the October 6 Municipal Election would begin on September 21.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2020

Ms. Thomas, seconded by **Mr. Toelle**, moved to APPROVE the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2020.

Hearing no objection, the minutes were APPROVED.

- b) Regular Meeting Minutes of August 18, 2020

Ms. Thomas, seconded by **Mr. Aquino**, moved to APPROVE the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2020.

Hearing no objection, the minutes were APPROVED.

DIVERSITY TOPIC OF THE MONTH

- a) Community Listening Session

Ms. Foster-Snow stated that the outcome of the recent meeting with the NAACP and the Native movement is that there may be value in a community listening session in partnership with the FDC. She stated that the two groups are willing to participate, and perhaps other groups may want to join or have ideas for the listening session.

AC Sweet stated it was a good meeting. He spoke in support of a listening session and stated it is all about perception. He indicated that he would like the session to focus on both the positive and the negative. He commented that the challenge is bringing a police solution to a mental health issue and how to gain access to counselors. AC Sweet stated there was some discussion on defunding, and he spoke to the low staffing levels at FPD. He stated that many times a mental health crisis is masked by what appears to be criminal behavior. He indicated that it would be nice to have a mental health professional available to officers in such cases to step in after officers have the situation under control. He stated it can be frustrating to officers when they do not have enough time for follow-up with an individual after an incident.

Mr. Dorton suggested peer support showing up on scene to assist police. He stated it would be a nice partnership with the police.

Ms. Thomas asked whether officers would deem a situation safe before asking peer support to step in. AC Sweet replied affirmatively. **Ms. Thomas** asked whether officers could give

individuals a phone number on the spot to call for peer support. She stated that the outpatient detox program begins October 1, but it is only an outpatient, day service. AC Sweet spoke to community resources for such situations; he stated he would like to see a positive hand-off from an officer to peer support or a person with mental health expertise.

Ms. Foster-Snow asked whether the FDC would like to host or schedule a community listening session. **Ms. Thomas** stated it is something the FDC can work on. **Ms. Foster-Snow** asked the FDC whether they would like to have the listening session in place of or outside of a regular meeting. Members supported the idea of holding a session outside of a regular meeting. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that the chairs can discuss and iron out the details.

FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Williams stated she cannot wait until everyone can meet together again. She stated she is excited to see what she can do to help in her new role as Second Vice Chair.

Mr. Dorton stated it seems the FDC should meet more often than once a month. He stated there are many goals to work towards.

Mr. Lee stated he misses everyone, and he looks forward to seeing everyone again. He commended Ms. Foster-Snow for how well she ran the meeting.

Mr. Martinez stated he looks forward to continuing to learn more about the impact the FDC can have on the community.

Mr. Aquino stated he hopes to receive a list of FDC committees and members. Clerk Snider stated that the committees have been dormant in 2020; she stated she can send out a list of where everything was prior to that. She stated that committees may be addressed in upcoming discussions about the Diversity Action Plan (DAP).

Ms. Webb thanked Ms. Williams for stepping up as Second Vice Chair. She thanked City staff who provided updates at the meeting and thanked others for their support of the FDC.

Ms. Rogers thanked everyone for the meeting and the information presented. She stated that AC Sweet's comments were very positive, and his report was exceptional.

Ms. Foster-Snow asked Ms. Jacoby from the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) if she wanted to provide any comments. Ms. Jacoby stated that the School Board continues to meet and discuss school closures. She stated she would be happy to take questions from the FDC back to the FNSBSD.

Ms. Foster-Snow encouraged everyone to take precautions due to the pandemic. She stated she is still out of town, but she is available to FDC members.

Ms. Thomas thanked everyone for their time and input at the meeting. She stated it is good to hear that FPD's training is continuing. She expressed hope that everyone stays safe.

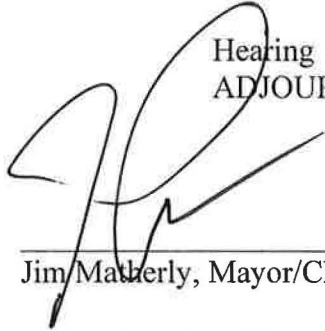
MEETING DATES

The next Regular Meeting of the FDC will be held on October 13, 2020. Members briefly discussed review of the DAP and supported the idea of a reintroduction to the Plan before diving back into a full review.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Hearing no objection, **Ms. Foster-Snow** declared the meeting
ADJOURNED at 7:01 p.m.



Jim Matherly, Mayor/Chair



D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS