



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 13, 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) Andrew Aquino, Seat G
(Z) Robert Dorton, Seat B (Z) Doug Toelle, Seat J
(Z) Jose Martinez II, Seat C (joined @ 5:57) (Z) Sara Harriger, Seat K
(Z) Juanita Webb, Seat D (Z) Angela Foster-Snow, HR Dir.
(Z) Shelissa Thomas, Seat E (Z) June Rogers, Councilmember

Members Absent: Rita Davis, Seat F Kelvin Lee, Seat I
Vacant, Seat H

Also Present: (P) Mike Meeks, Chief of Staff (P) Danyielle Snider, City Clerk

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.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Harriger, seconded by **Mr. Dorton**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda.

Chair Matherly stated that, instead of staff reports under “Mayor & City Staff Reports”, he will have guest speaker Mr. Bret Hood report on the implicit bias training being done at the City.

Hearing no objection, the Agenda was APPROVED.

CITIZENS’ COMMENTS (Limited to 3 Minutes)

Helenmarie Matesi, Fairbanks – Ms. Matesi stated that she was unable to address the City Council the night before due to a problem with her Zoom application. She stated she had wanted to let them know she was pleased that the implicit bias training was being provided to City staff. She stated she looks forward to hearing from Mr. Hood. She thanked the City and the FDC for hosting community conversations for people of color in Fairbanks. She stated it is important for the FDC to encourage dialogue between marginalized people and the Police Department and that by doing

so, it increases the likelihood of equity and justice in the community. She stated that training and difficult conversations are the beginning.

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

MAYOR & CITY STAFF REPORTS

Chair Matherly thanked the Clerk's Office, Public Works, and staff from other departments for the setting up and operating the absentee voting unit outside City Hall prior to the election. He stated that the mobile unit will be put to use at Public Works as a free, drive-through COVID testing site for the community. He stated that it is a collaborative effort with the local Public Health nurses since the testing at the Carlson Center will be closing. He stated that COVID-19 numbers are continuing to increase, and he encouraged wearing a mask. He stated that Dr. Zink reported to him that hospitalizations are low, which is good. **Chair Matherly** stated that Housing and Homeless Coordinator is making great strides with the homeless population, and he spoke of a recent incident with an infected person at the homeless shelter. He stated that services continue to be offered to the homeless, although some people do not take advantage of the resources available to them. **Chair Matherly** stated that he will be meeting with HR in the coming days to begin recruitment for the position of the Chief of Police. He reported that the Acting Chief and Deputy Chief have been outstanding in the interim. He encouraged FDC members to promote voting in the upcoming state and national election. He spoke briefly to the traffic that has been backed up in line at the recently opened Sonic restaurant in Fairbanks, and he stated he has not tried it yet. **Chair Matherly** commended City staff for the administration of the CARES funding, and he stated that, while the City's process is nearly complete, the Borough is just beginning putting CARES funds out into the community. He stated that some of the City's remaining funds will be put toward the drive-up COVID testing.

a) FNSBSD Update, Cari Jacoby

Cari Jacoby, EEO Officer, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District – Ms. Jacoby stated that it is a challenging school year for educators. She reported that there are small numbers of students back in the buildings, and the District continues to work with educators to try to resolve issues they arise. She stated that the HR Department will begin some one-on-one work with community members for help with resumes, interview skills, cover letter writing, etc. Ms. Jacoby stated that numbers continue to rise, which will likely cause students to remain in remote learning.

b) Report from Bret Hood, Implicit Bias Training Instructor

Ms. Foster-Snow introduced Mr. Bret Hood to the FDC. She stated that she has heard from staff that the training has been exceptional; she stated that the training is available to all City staff, City Council members, and Diversity Council members. She provided a great deal of information about Mr. Hood's background to the FDC and turned the floor over to him.

Mr. Hood thanked everyone for hosting him at the meeting. He stated that he spent the last 4 years at the FBI Academy teaching leadership and ethics. He stated that in 2012 he began focusing on implicit bias, and no one at the FBI Academy wanted to take the course because of the difficult

conversations it brings about. He spoke about how he teaches the course with participatory exercises, which instigates conversations amongst attendees. He stated he uses law enforcement and legal cases as examples to help facilitate the course. Mr. Hood stated there are many different types of biases, and the class discusses how to recognize biases and mitigate how those biases play a role in decision-making and behavior. He stated that the course is interactive and discussion-based, and he tries to make it fun and engaging.

Chair Matherly stated he has heard positive feedback from employees, and he looks forward to attending the class the following day. He encouraged FDC members to join in for the implicit bias training. **Chair Matherly** asked Mr. Hood whether he has had good back-and-forth with employees at the training sessions. The Clerk reported that Mr. Hood dropped off the Zoom meeting.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Ms. Rogers shared that International Friendship Day is generally hosted on the third Saturday in October. She stated that it may be a little differently this year, but she encouraged everyone to keep their eyes open for information about the event.

Ms. Harriger shared that the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) elections took place earlier in the day. She recognized that it is also Indigenous Peoples Day, and there were a number of speakers organized by Evon Peter and his team at UAF. She stated that recordings may still be available for people to check out.

Mr. Toelle reminded everyone of the upcoming state and national election.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2020

Ms. Harriger, seconded by **Mr. Aquino**, moved to APPROVE the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2020.

Hearing no objection, the minutes were APPROVED.

DIVERSITY TOPIC OF THE MONTH

a) Fairbanks Black Caucus Report, Wendy Dominique

Chair Matherly spoke highly of Ms. Dominique and welcomed her to speak to the FDC.

Ms. Dominique stated that Mr. Robert Kinnard was on the line, but he dropped off. She stated that the Fairbanks Black Caucus Committee works in conjunction with the Alaska Black Caucus which was established in Anchorage about two years ago. She stated that there was an Alaska Black Caucus in Fairbanks some 20 years ago. Ms. Dominique stated that the vision of the Committee is to relight the touch of the Alaska Black Caucus for the new generation in order to meet the

challenges of the 21st Century. She stated that the mission of the Committee is active involvement in the decision-making process in the community as a contributing partner affecting the lives and livelihood of African Americans. Ms. Dominique stated that the Committee works in areas which help to advance the educational, cultural, political, and economic wellbeing of the African American community. She stated that they act as a liaison and coordinating entity for the various minority interests within the community and state and make available accurate and timely information on relevant issues of concern to minority people. Ms. Dominique stated that the group creates awareness that the struggle to achieve total equality has not yet been achieved, and they emphasize the ever-increasing need for African Americans and minorities to make renewed attempts toward obtaining those goals. She stated that the Fairbanks Committee requests to be included in the process of hiring a new Chief of Police and discussion on police training and recruitment.

Chair Matherly stated that he would like to invite representatives of the Black Caucus back regularly to FDC meetings.

Ms. Rogers thanked Ms. Dominique for presenting information to the FDC and for all her work in the community over the years. She stated she is admired in the community. She spoke fondly of Dorothy Bradshaw and stated that Ms. Bradshaw regularly invited people to become a part of whatever it was that she was doing. She stated there is much to learn from Ms. Bradshaw and Ms. Dominique.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Refresher on Diversity Action Plan Review Process

Chair Matherly stated that Mr. Hood has rejoined the meeting. He asked Mr. Hood whether he has received good feedback and participation from City employees on the implicit bias training. Mr. Hood stated that City employees have been fantastic and have been very open with discussion and debate.

Chair Matherly stated the FDC has been discussing the DAP for months, and so much continues to change. He asked Ms. Thomas and Ms. Williams to provide thoughts on the DAP review.

Ms. Thomas stated that it would be appropriate to get new members up to speed on the DAP, and a refresher would be useful.

Chair Matherly suggested that the November or December FDC meeting be solely dedicated to DAP review.

Ms. Williams stated that she supports that idea, especially being fairly new to the FDC. She stated that being able to sit down and go through the DAP would be advantageous.

Ms. Rogers requested that the City Attorney provide a refresher of the Open Meetings Act (OMA) at the same time.

Chair Matherly stated that he will plan for the November meeting to be dedicated only to the OMA and the DAP.

Mr. Aquino stated that he supports the idea because the last time the FDC reviewed the DAP, there was a different social climate.

b) Community Listening Session

Chair Matherly stated that he would like to hold a Community Listening Session, but he would like to get through the review of the DAP first. He stated that perhaps they could consider a listening session in the first quarter of 2021.

FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Williams stated it was a great meeting and it was nice to see everyone. She thanked the Mayor for popping on for her book launch.

Ms. Thomas thanked Ms. Jacoby, Ms. Hood, and Ms. Dominique for their presentations to the FDC. She thanked everyone for their time at the meeting.

Mr. Aquino thanked everyone for being present. He stated that he is grateful to have one hour a month to be intentional about Fairbanks and diversity.

Mr. Dorton [partially inaudible] stated that it is good to see everyone.

Ms. Harriger thanked the presenters and everyone else for being present.

Mr. Martinez stated it is great to be a part of the FDC to see how they can make positive impacts on the community. He stated he was excited to hear from Ms. Dominique at the meeting.

Mr. Toelle stated he would try to attend the implicit bias training. He spoke to the struggles of small businesses during the pandemic but stated that there is still some tourism in the community.

Ms. Webb thanked everyone for their time and efforts. She stated she looks forward to reviewing the DAP.

Ms. Rogers suggested that the FDC meet two times per month. She commented that meeting once per month may not be enough, and she would like the group to discuss it.

Chair Matherly stated that he would take the request under consideration.

Ms. Foster-Snow stated that if any FDC members wish to attend the implicit bias training in person, it will be at Public Works Wednesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., 2121 Peger Road. She stated that the location for Friday's training is still undecided, and she directed folks to contact her for more information.

Clerk Snider shared that local election results are all tallied, and the summary is posted to the City's website and Facebook page. She stated that results will remain unofficial until the election is certified by the City Council on October 26.

MEETING DATES

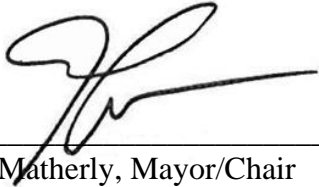
- a) Next Regular Meeting Date, November 10, 2020 [FDC Workshop to Review DAP]

Chair Matherly expressed appreciation to the FDC, and he stated that he loves meeting with everyone.

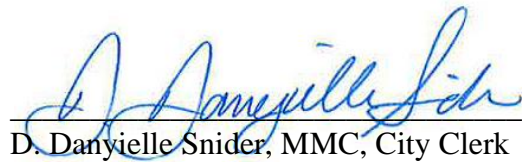
ADJOURNMENT

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

Hearing no objection, **Ms. Foster-Snow** declared the meeting
ADJOURNED at 6:31 p.m.



Jim Matherly, Mayor/Chair



D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS