



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 8, 2022, 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.
HELD VIA [ZOOM WEBINAR](#) AND AT
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 via Zoom Webinar and at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska with Chair Andrew Aquino (Seat G) presiding (Z) and with the following members in attendance [Z = Zoom; P = In Person]:

Members Present: (P) Timothy Ledna, Seat A (P) Wendy Tisland, Seat H
(Z) Juanita Webb, Seat D (Z) Cheyenna Kuplack, Seat J
(Z) Shelissa Thomas, Seat E (P) Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director
(Z) Dorothy Shockley, Seat F (Z) June Rogers, Council Member

Members Absent: Robert Dorton, Seat B *Vacant*, Seat K
Jose Martinez II, Seat C Jim Matherly, Mayor
Kelvin Lee, Seat I

Also Present: (P) Rochelle Rodak, Deputy Clerk (Z) D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER & READING OF THE FDC MISSION STATEMENT

Chair Aquino called the meeting to order and read the FDC mission statement.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Aquino led the FDC in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

T. Ledna, seconded by **D. Shockley**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda.

There being no objections, the Agenda was APPROVED.

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

Chair Aquino asked the following introductory questions to members: Describe how you might show up representing the FDC with individuals who have divergent viewpoints or strategies. How would you prioritize leading with the FDC's mission and values?

Chair Aquino shared that he has been trying to be more externally aware of each situation while trying to recognize how others perceive his behavior. He added that he would use that information to help find common ground and a way to share the mission and intent of the FDC.

D. Shockley shared her appreciation for Chair Aquino's introductory questions and gave a land acknowledgment. She answered the question by sharing how she strives to be aware of her

situation and her ability to speak freely, adding that she would share the values of the FDC by making others comfortable sharing who they are and where they come from.

W. Tisland stated that she has tried to genuinely consider each person and their viewpoints without judgement and to lead by example by attending FDC meetings and helping the group move forward with its goals.

J. Webb shared that when she regularly interacts with the disabled community, she has tried to pay attention to her audience and seeks out others for follow up in some situations.

T. Ledna stated that he has tried to remain aware of his internal biases, assume positive intentions, and remain humble in the sense that there are more perceptions to each situation than his own when interacting with others in general and on behalf of the FDC.

S. Thomas stated that it is important for her to let others speak freely while actively listening and paying attention to the message her own body language may be sending. She added that she attempts to consider others' multiple perspectives while appreciating their ability to discuss situations that may bring them to the FDC.

J. Rogers agreed with many of the others' comments, adding that she too tries to be an active listener in all situations while keeping the idea that our community is part of a much larger family.

C. Kuplack stated that she tries to recognize all people and their values when representing the FDC, while encouraging people to use their voices as a source of strength.

A. Foster-Snow shared that she attempts to be humble and listen to what people are trying to say while making people aware that the FDC is a resource and members want to hear from them.

Deputy Clerk Rochelle Rodak stated that her role is to listen and facilitate communications between the public and the FDC, which requires that she withhold judgement and communicate her role clearly to anyone she is interacting with on the FDC's behalf.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Chair Aquino shared that Abigail North had resigned from the FDC and that Mayor Matherly would be reviewing applications on file. He went on to recognize International Women's Day, sharing that it is important to learn how to intersect different communities. He gave an example of an early female liberation leader who was later criticized for segregating the women who marched with her by ethnicity and race.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2022

W. Tisland, seconded by **C. Kuplack**, moved to APPROVE the meeting minutes as presented.

There being no objection, the minutes were APPROVED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Resolution No. 4981, Reading of Land Acknowledgment at City Council Meetings.

D. Shockley, seconded by **Chair Aquino**, moved to change the FDC's recommendation on City Council Resolution No. 4981 by replacing its former recommendation with one endorsing the original language of the resolution.

D. Shockley shared that she had been successful in meeting with the Executive Director and Chair of the Denakkanaaga Council. She indicated that they were reluctant to accept the amended version of the land acknowledgment, noting that they had discussed the original language in detail with former City Council Member Shoshanna Kun; she reported that by not naming the Ch'ena tribe, the acknowledgment was more inclusive rather than singling out one tribe. She added that they seemed perplexed that the acknowledgment had not gone through the FDC prior to being introduced by the City Council. **D. Shockley** shared that she thought it had also been done backwards and that, in the future, it would be helpful for the FDC to vet items prior to going before the City Council. She went on to extend the Denakkanaaga invite for FDC members to attend their meetings and gatherings and their desire to form a working relationship with the FDC. **D. Shockley** concluded by stating that she preferred the amended version of the land acknowledgment but would like to respect the opinions of the Denakkanaaga Elders by recommending that the City Council accept the original version of the land acknowledgment.

Chair Aquino shared his desire to recommend the original language to the City Council, adding that he would like to entertain the option of developing an FDC land acknowledgment in the future.

J. Rogers thanked **D. Shockley** for having the meeting with Denakkanaaga and spoke to the process regarding the land acknowledgment. She stated that former City Council Member Kun had very good intentions when she brought the resolution forward and that some City Council Members had expressed a desire for the FDC to provide a recommendation prior to voting.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE MOTION TO CHANGE THE FDC'S RECOMMENDATION ON CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 4981 BY REPLACING ITS FORMER RECOMMENDATION WITH ONE ENDORSING THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE OF THE RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Ledna, Webb, Thomas, Shockley, Aquino, Tisland, Kuplack

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Dorton, Martinez, Lee

Chair Aquino declared the MOTION CARRIED.

b) Diversity Action Plan (DAP) Review

i) Proposed changes to Goals 3 and 4 (submitted by C. Kuplack and Chair Aquino)

T. Ledna, seconded by **S. Thomas**, moved to APPROVE the proposed changes to Goals 3 and 4 of the DAP.

C. Kuplack explained the changes made to Goal 3 and asked A. Foster-Snow about how often hiring procedures are reviewed; she asked whether the new Chief of Staff had been given the opportunity to review the processes. **A. Foster-Snow** shared that the procedures had been worked through in the past but there was opportunity to update, adding that the FDC could have the opportunity to review and provide suggestions. She shared that the Affirmative Action Plan had been presented to the FDC in prior years, and she indicated that it could be done again to inform current members. **A. Foster-Snow** shared that future developments and strategies could be brought to the FDC for their information and input, adding that recruitment and retention is a complicated process with all the various unions represented at the City.

J. Rogers asked if there had been much involvement from the FDC in the interview process. **A. Foster-Snow** stated that S. Thomas had participated multiple times and Chair Aquino had also participated recently. She added that the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD) and the Fairbanks Fire Department (FFD) may repeatedly ask the same people to participate due to their familiarity with the process, but she encouraged anyone who is willing to volunteer. **S. Thomas** shared that she had participated in the last four or five interviews, noting that the City administration had been very easy to work with regarding scheduling. She added that the FPD had been making an effort to be more diverse, but it is difficult given the lack of diversity amongst applicants. **Chair Aquino** stated that participation is a great tool to help educate FDC members on the hiring process so that they can make more informed decisions and recommendations.

A. Foster-Snow shared some of the issues regarding hiring and retention at the City, including the high cost of training for many of the public safety positions.

D. Shockley expressed concern that reviewing the goals annually would not provide enough accountability; she suggested that the group consider a formal evaluation process. **Chair Aquino** stated that he believed the review process had been approved with DAP Goals 1 and 2, adding that the FDC still needed to provide the metrics they wished to see reported.

W. Tisland stated that it would be helpful to give A. Foster-Snow the opportunity to provide some reports that may already be available so that the FDC could decide which reports they prefer. **A. Foster-Snow** stated that she could provide reporting for employees as well as applicants.

Chair Aquino asked if updated reporting could be added as an agenda item when changes occur. **A. Foster-Snow** indicated that it would be possible; she stated, however, that she would also like to preface any and all reporting with the various recruitment and hiring restrictions and requirements in place within each bargaining unit. She indicated that she could present that information to the group at a future meeting.

Chair Aquino, seconded by **D. Shockley**, moved to AMEND the proposed changes by striking the land acknowledgement from page 8 in the packet.

Chair Aquino called for objection on the motion to AMEND, and, hearing none, the motion CARRIED.

Chair Aquino, seconded by **W. Tisland**, moved to DIVIDE THE QUESTION and consider Goals 3 and 4 separately.

Chair Aquino called for objection to the motion to DIVIDE THE QUESTION, and, hearing none, the motion CARRIED.

T. Ledna, seconded by **D. Shockley**, moved to APPROVE the proposed changes to Goal 3.

Chair Aquino read through the proposed changes.

Chair Aquino called for objection on the motion to APPROVE the changes to Goal 3, and, hearing none, the motion CARRIED.

T. Ledna, seconded by **C. Kuplack**, moved to APPROVE the proposed changes to Goal 4.

Chair Aquino summarized the original proposed changes.

A. Foster-Snow shared that the Administration would like to see the FDC recommend at least one annual training for all City employees.

S. Thomas, seconded by **W. Tisland**, moved to AMEND Goal 4 by adding a requirement of the FDC to recommend at least one annual training opportunity for all City employees.

Chair Aquino suggested formatting for the additional item to mirror that of Item 1 of Goal 4.

T. Ledna excused himself momentarily.

Chair Aquino called for objection to the motion to AMEND, and, hearing none, the motion CARRIED.

Chair Aquino called for objection on the motion to APPROVE the changes to Goal 4, and, hearing none, the motion CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Diversity Action Plan (DAP) Review

i) Proposed changes to Goal 5 and 6 (submitted by T. Ledna)

T. Ledna stated that there had not been many changes to be made other than possibly combining the two goals as they are very intertwined and similar. He noted that he thought the FDC had missed an opportunity to participate in the MLK Day of Service.

Chair Aquino stated that it would be appropriate for T. Ledna to contact K. Lee and discuss combining the two goals as well as any other proposed changes, as the vote would not happen at this meeting. Deputy Clerk Rodak stated that it would be appropriate to vote on whether to combine Goals 5 and 6.

C. Kuplack, seconded by **T. Ledna**, moved to combine Goals 5 and 6.

Chair Aquino called for an objection to the motion, and, hearing none, the motion CARRIED.

A. Foster-Snow stated that City employees are encouraged to participate in the MLK Day of Service each year. **T. Ledna** stated that it could be more successful if the FDC organized an event to help facilitate individuals who would like to participate but may not take initiative to do so on their own. He indicated that he would bring more information on this idea to the next meeting.

FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS

T. Ledna encouraged members to visit the Fairbanks Community Bingo website at www.fairbankscommunitybingo.com. He expressed the need for volunteers at the Fairbanks Community Bingo events which occur every second Friday of each month starting on April 8, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at Murphy's Hall in the Immaculate Conception Church. He thanked J. Rogers for her participation in gathering prizes for the last event.

J. Rogers shared that the Reentry Coalition would need volunteers for the Fairbanks Reentry Simulation that would happen at the Birch Hill Ski Lodge on April 28, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

D. Shockley noted that the coming week had historically been a very big time of celebration in Fairbanks and hoped that people would come out and participate in the Interior Native New Year events.

C. Kuplack shared that the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) Symposium would occur on April 12-13 and would be held both virtually and in person at the UAF Ballroom.

W. Tisland shared that her former position at the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) as the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Officer is open for applications through March 13, 2022.


MEETING DATES

Chair Aquino stated that the next regular meeting would be held on Tuesday, April 12, 2022.


ADJOURNMENT

T. Ledna, seconded by **D. Shockley**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

There being no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.



Andrew Aquino, Chair



D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: RR