



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
JUNE 14, 2022, 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.
HELD VIA [ZOOM WEBINAR](#) AND AT
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. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS
5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
6. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES
 - a) Regular Meeting Minutes of May 10, 2022
7. CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Limited to 3 Minutes)
8. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR
 - a) Update from HR Director A. Foster Snow
9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
 - a) Diversity Action Plan (DAP) Review
 - i) Combined Goals 5 and 6 (K. Lee and T. Ledna)
10. NEW BUSINESS
 - a) FDC Resolution No. 2022-01 Approving the Reading of a Land Acknowledgement
 - b) Memorandum of Recommendation from the Fairbanks Diversity Council to the FNSB School Board
 - c) Discussion and Follow-up on May Presentations by the NAACP and FPD
11. FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS
12. MEETING DATES
 - a) Next Regular Meeting Date, July 12, 2022
13. ADJOURNMENT



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 10, 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 (P) and with the following members in attendance [Z = Zoom; P = In Person]:

Members Present: (Z) Timothy Ledna, Seat A (Z) Cheyenna Kuplack, Seat J
(Z) Juanita Webb, Seat D (Z) Rachael Kvapil, Seat K
(P) Wendy Tisland, Seat H (Z) June Rogers, Council Member
(Z) Kelvin Lee, Seat I (P) Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director

Members Absent: Robert Dorton, Seat B Dorothy Shockley, Seat F
Vacant, Seat C Jim Matherly, Mayor
Shelissa Thomas, Seat E (excused)

Also Present: (P) D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk (P) Mike Sanders, Chief of Staff
(P) Ron Dupee, Police Chief (P) Rick Sweet, Deputy Police Chief

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.

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

New member **R. Kvapil** shared that she had lived in Fairbanks for over twenty years and owned a local business, adding that she is also a triathlete and writer.

Chair Aquino asked each member of the group to share about the community they represent and how they plan to further engage with that community as part of the FDC.

R. Kvapil shared that she has close ties with the Latino women's community as well as the Black, Asian, and LGBTQ+ communities, adding that she interacts with those groups on a daily basis through various activities.

J. Rogers shared that she has served with the FDC since its conception, and she currently serves as a City Council member appointed as a non-voting member of the FDC. She stated that she works often with women, elders, non-profit organizations, and business owners, but overall, she feels that she represents the family of Fairbanks.

T. Ledna said he represents single parents and parents of foster children. He added that, as the Reentry Coordinator, he regularly works to help former criminals successfully reenter the community; he added that he serves on the Mobile Crisis Team to aid those with mental health needs. He stated he has considered joining a foster care advisory group, and he has toured the Fairbanks Correctional Facility, learning the good and the bad about the system.

C. Kuplack shared that she is part of the Gwich'in Athabascan community and represents Alaskan Natives. She added that she works for a large Native organization and communicates daily with the people she represents.

J. Webb shared that she spends a lot of time with senior citizens and people who have disabilities as part of her job. She stated she works to bring information about that community to the FDC so that the FDC can stay informed and ensure that the needs of those groups are considered.

K. Lee shared that he represents disadvantaged folks who need a voice and people of color. He stated he operates an organization that provides help to people getting out of the system and those that are struggling with homelessness.

W. Tisland shared that she had been appointed to the FDC by Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Mayor Ward as part of her former employment with the Borough; she stated she would continue to serve as the Borough's representative until a replacement could be hired. She added that she meets monthly with Mayor Ward to keep him informed of the FDC's activities.

A. Aquino stated that he is a first generation Asian-American and is gay, adding that by interacting with those communities he has been able to better understand his own identity. He shared that he intends to further learn about himself by simply engaging with those groups.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

W. Tisland, seconded by **C. Kuplack**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda.

There being no objections, the Agenda was APPROVED.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2022

T. Ledna, seconded by **C. Kuplack**, moved to APPROVE the meeting minutes as presented.

There being no objections, the Minutes were APPROVED.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Emily Kloc, Alaska Coalition for Justice – E. Kloc spoke in support of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) initiative and thanked the NAACP for its work in developing the “Seven Points for a Safer Fairbanks” presentation. She spoke to the organization's purpose and scope throughout Alaska as well as the “8 Can't Wait” initiatives. She added that over 300 agencies across the nation had implemented new policies based upon the “8 Can't Wait” program. E. Kloc stated she believed it was in the Fairbanks Police Department's

(FPD's) best interest to adopt the NAACP recommendations and encouraged the FDC to give its support.

Sue Sherif, Fairbanks – S. Sherif asked that the FDC forward the NAACP recommendations to the City Council, adding that the recommendations were steps towards making a fairer and safer city. She spoke to the implementation of the Crisis Now program and how it has worked to address mental illness, likening the recommendations of the NAACP as a new approach to address minorities. She listed many of the recommendations from the NAACP and expressed hope that the FDC would offer its support and work together to increase public safety.

Cathy Walling, Fairbanks – C. Walling shared her support for the NAACP and thanked the FDC for hearing the NAACP presentation. She emphasized the need for equity and safety for all Fairbanks citizens. She urged the FDC to lend its support.

Julie Smyth, Fairbanks – J. Smyth shared that she had been active in helping draft the recommendations presented by the NAACP, clarifying that she was testifying on her own behalf. She stated that she is of Inupiat heritage and shared that her family has not always had good relations with the FPD. She encouraged the implementation of the NAACP recommendations, adding that they will increase public safety, including the safety of police officers.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Chair Aquino recognized Asian-American/Pacific Islander month. He asked HR Director Angela Foster-Snow to provide an update and note any points of celebration.

a) Update from HR Director A. Foster-Snow

A. Foster-Snow spoke to the FDC's request for a report on the City's hiring demographics and stated that she would provide a report the following month. She shared that the City had recently hired a new female firefighter, female police officer, and female equipment operator. She went on to state that May is also Mental Health Awareness month, and that the City has worked hard to provide additional resources for its employees, including enrollment in the Public Safety Employee Assistance Program.

b) Special Presentation by the NAACP

Montean Jackson introduced herself as having been born and raised in Fairbanks and currently serving as the NAACP President.

Helenmarie Matesi stated that she has lived in Fairbanks for 40 years and is currently serving as the 2nd Vice President of the NAACP and head of its Criminal Justice Committee.

M. Jackson shared the mission of the NAACP and the process used to create the "Seven Points for a Safer Fairbanks" recommendations that the presentation would focus on; she added that they spent over a year developing the document.

H. Matesi shared the following "Seven Points for a Safer Fairbanks" and spoke to each one in greater detail.

1. Expand Bias, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training for the Fairbanks Police Department and City of Fairbanks.
2. Accelerate efforts toward solving cases involving missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, LGBTQ+, 2 spirit and BIPOC individuals, as well as cold cases.
3. Create a Police Civilian Review Board that would: review FPD policies and procedures and report findings to City Council and to the public, hear police complaint cases filed by the public and suggest actions to remedy complaints, and promote trust and accountability between FPD and the community.
4. Enact safeguards including: banning chokeholds; adopting and implementing a Use-of-Force Continuum; requiring an oral warning prior to discharging a weapon; banning shooting at and from moving vehicles; requiring that all reasonable alternatives be exhausted before shooting; and requiring comprehensive reporting for use of force.
5. Develop a training protocol to support the Crisis Now team.
6. Develop a Community Policing Program.
7. Work with the public to create a clear policy regarding access to Body Worn Camera (BWC) recordings.

H. Matesi recognized that the FPD currently has many policies and procedures that are very close to meeting some of the recommendations. She stated that FPD policies need to have more emphasis on protecting the public instead of prioritizing officers. She shared her gratitude for all the members of the committee who worked to develop the document and thanked the local and state organizations that have provided support; she asked the FDC to provide its support.

Chair Aquino asked if the NAACP was asking for formal action from the FDC. M. Jackson stated that the NAACP would like to see the FDC's written support and recommendation for the "Seven Safer Points for a Safer Fairbanks" to the Fairbanks City Council.

C. Kuplack recognized the work behind the presentation, noting that many of the examples of incidents provided were specific to the Municipality of Anchorage; she asked whether the NAACP planned to present to Anchorage. H. Matesi stated that it was not their intention to present to Anchorage but noted that Fairbanks could prevent some of the unfortunate situations that have occurred in Anchorage. **C. Kuplack** asked if they were aware if Anchorage was implementing any of the seven points; H. Matesi indicated that they were.

M. Jackson shared her belief that it is everyone's responsibility to make the community a safe and equitable place to live. She stated that the public looks to the FPD for support and that while the FPD is doing a terrific job, it was the NAACP's goal to see the relationship with the public further improved. M. Jackson added her hope that their recommendations were received with a spirit of open-mindedness and willingness.

Chair Aquino thanked the NAACP for its presentation and asked that they pass any additional materials to the City Clerk.

c) Special Presentation by the FPD

Police Chief Ron Dupee shared that the FPD had met with the NAACP on three separate occasions to discuss each of the seven points presented. He continued by addressing the FPD's response to each of the seven recommendations.

1. DEI Training is currently provided to all officers and other City employees, including a required two-hour online course, as well as an upcoming 16-hour outward mindset course. He noted that there are many other trainings officers must also complete.
2. Investigations into missing and murdered people are treated equally, noting that the department was only hindered by the current staffing levels. He added that out of the six available investigative detective positions, only two of them were currently filled.
3. A Police Civilian Review Board would be in addition to the reviews already performed by the Office of Special Prosecutions (OSPA) for all officer misconduct and shootings. The City has a Factfinding Commission to investigate and review complaints also.
4. Policies and Procedures regarding safeguards have already been reviewed by the NAACP. Chief Dupee addressed the recommendation to ban chokeholds, adding that everyone had the right to use chokeholds when fighting for their life. He noted that FPD officers are no different, and the current policy only allows for chokehold use if the officer has no other choice; he added that use of deadly force is allowable by law. Chief Deputy Sweet spoke to the FPD's current Use of Force Continuum policy, adding it follows the Supreme Court standard. He stated that the FPD reports to the FBI monthly regarding use of force incidents; he added that the FPD keeps those reports on file, as well as additional statistics, above and beyond the requirements of the US Department of Justice. He shared that the FPD conducts a two-level internal review, adding that a Captain position was added for that purpose as well as to provide additional reporting. He commented briefly on the current laws and policies regarding firing at moving vehicles, adding that it is, in most cases, already illegal.
5. Crisis Now has been supported by the FPD since its inception and 75 percent of the officers were currently trained to support the Crisis Now team. The department goal is to have all officers to complete the 40-hour Crisis Intervention Training (CIT).
6. Community Policing Program would be difficult to implement with the current staffing levels at the FPD, however, the department is very active in the community and strives to be involved at many different levels.
7. BWC have been used for many years and the recordings are available through public records requests, noting that there is a policy that dictates what footage can be released and when.

T. Ledna asked how often the Factfinding Commission has been used; Chief of Staff Mike Sanders replied that it is almost never used, but external investigations by third party are done routinely. **T. Ledna** stated he felt that the purpose of the Factfinding Commission appears to be in line with the NAACP recommendations.

Clerk Snider clarified that the Factfinding Commission has not been called upon in some time, noting that there have been discussion on reformatting or recreating the Commission, but no action has been taken in that regard. She stated that the Commission, if called upon immediately, would not be able to meet as it currently has only one member due to a lack of citizen involvement or interest. She added that the FDC could help recruit individuals to serve on boards and committees.

T. Ledna spoke to the recommendation regarding collaboration between the FPD and Crisis Now, adding that there could be better communication between the two organizations. He noted that he did not feel that training officers above the level of Crisis Now members met the spirit and intention of the NAACP recommendations and suggested more interaction and team building between the FPD and the Crisis Now Team.

COS Sanders clarified that the training provided to the FPD is not intended to undermine the abilities of the Crisis Now Team, adding that FPD has been an integral part of the program since its inception. He stated that by training the FPD officers with top-of-the-line intervention training, they are leading the state with the most qualified officers to assist with mental health crises.

C. Kuplack thanked the presenters and the FPD for the background information.

W. Tisland asked when the FPD had last been fully staffed. Chief Dupee stated that it had been more than 18 years since the department was fully staffed.

Chair Aquino asked Chief Dupee to expand on the recommendations that violate certain laws. Chief Dupee stated that the recommendation to fully ban chokeholds violates the current legal opinion that any citizen may use a chokehold when in a deadly force situation. He added that banning them completely puts the officers at a disadvantage to every other citizen. He went on to add that banning shooting at moving vehicles prevents an officer from firing at criminals shooting from a moving vehicle which puts the officers and the public at risk. He noted there was a real situation like that that occurred in the North Pole area.

W. Tisland asked if there was a process that allowed for public input when drafting policies at the FPD, such as the recently enacted Use of Force policy. Deputy Chief Sweet stated that there is not direct input from the public during the drafting process, but they do consider the recommendations of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, who do take public input. He added that the FPD has made recent changes to accommodate some of the recommendations brought forth by the NAACP as well.

T. Ledna asked for clarification on the difference between the NAACP recommendation of a Community Policing program and the Diversity Action Plan's initiative for community-oriented policing. Deputy Chief Sweet stated that they are essentially the same thing, which is more of a policing mindset rather than a program. He added that the FPD is active in the community and participates in many programs. He went on to describe different ways community policing is used.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Diversity Action Plan (DAP) Review
 - i) Combined Goals 5 and 6 (K. Lee and T. Ledna)

T. Ledna explained that while there may be mark-ups that remove language in either goal five or goal six, the language was likely just moved to make more sense in the combined goal. He asked for clarification on what "courageous conversations" meant in its use in the DAP.

A. Foster-Snow shared that it was a term created when the FDC met and held informal discussions on uncomfortable topics outside of regular FDC meetings; she added that it helped raise awareness around many issues.

T. Ledna shared that he felt the FDC should make the Martin Luther King (MLK) Service Day its signature program, adding that he would be willing to personally facilitate the program during his service on the Council. He recommended that the FDC adopt it formally so that it would continue with changes to the membership.

Chair Aquino asked for clarification regarding an MLK Day of Service, and **T. Ledna** explained that it is a nationally recognized program that allows for employees to work with volunteer projects instead of working at their normal jobs or having the day off. He added that it could be more effective if the FDC facilitated it.

R. Kvapil added that she had grown up in a school that exposed children to events commemorating MLK Day instead of taking a day off, and she found it to be very influential. She stated she could see where it could have a positive effect on gaining recognition for the FDC.

Chair Aquino supported the idea and wondered what success would look like. He added concerns regarding the FDC's capacity to support and facilitate an event.

T. Ledna spoke more about his experience with an MLK Day of Service. He asked the FDC to provide input on participating in things outside of monthly meetings, noting that he felt goals five and six both speak to community involvement.

T. Ledna, seconded by **R. Kvapil**, moved to POSTPONE the DAP Review until the next regular meeting.

There being no objections, the DAP Review was POSTPONED.

b) Identify One Measure for Each DAP Goal (for purposes of HR reporting)

Chair Aquino asked that each member be prepared to identify and discuss five measures from the DAP goals to be used by the HR Director for reporting to the FDC.

Due to the loss of a quorum, the remaining agenda items were not considered.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Aquino adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Andrew Aquino, Chair

D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: RR

CITY OF FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Goal	Tasks	Desired Results	Responsibility	By When?
<p>5. Community Outreach and Diversity Promotion. Raise awareness of diversity issues and sponsor or promote activities that create opportunities for the community to engage and develop cross-cultural involvement.</p> <p><u>The Diversity Action Plan Goals 5 & 6 seem to overlap quite a bit. I, Timothy Ledna, think they could be combined and simplified. I would need a little more time to do that (if the whole FDC agreed it should be done).</u></p>	<p>Required – Plan, develop & implement Public Awareness Plans as directed by City Ordinance 5939. Create a procedure on how the committee will handle public input.</p>	<p>Procedure: Verbal concerns, feedback or written concerns shared with DC members and direct public input/concerns submitted to the city clerk will be distributed by clerk to all DC members</p>	<p>Policy & Procedure Committee</p> <p>City Clerk</p> <p>All FDC Members</p>	<p>Procedure Complete</p> <p>Process Ongoing</p>
	<p>Required - Provide citizen forum as directed by City Ordinance 5939. The FDC will provide two public comment periods at FDC meetings. Increase public awareness of meetings and FDC.</p>	<p>A safe and trusted voice and venue for the community.</p>	<p>FDC Members</p> <p>City Clerk</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>The FDC will develop active and continuously monitored communications aimed at interconnecting different groups. Possible media tools to be used are: TV, radio, social media, web pages and email.</p>	<p>Raise community awareness of the importance of acceptance and inclusion of diverse groups in our community</p>	<p>Edu/Outreach/Media /Communications Committee & City PIO</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Survey public to find most effective outreach communication methods.</p>	<p>Raise community awareness of diversity issues.</p>	<p>Edu/Outreach/Media /Communications Committee & City PIO</p>	<p>Not started</p>
	<p>FDC will identify key community leaders and extend invitations to speak at FDC and Fairbanks City Council meetings and other community events on topics of interest. Periodically hold moderated Courageous Conversations and other public forums</p>	<p>Diversity issues are shared in deliberate manner with community leaders, youth and stakeholders. Encourage leaders to spread message(s) in their organizations and circle of influence.</p>	<p>Edu/Outreach/Media /Communications Committee</p> <p>Diversity Council Mayor's Office</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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	FDC representation at local events and activities	Presence at local events such as but not limited to: Juneteenth, WEIO, Intertribal PowWow, Golden Days, International Friendship Day, AFN, MLK, Festival of Native Arts	FDC Members	Ongoing
	Identify and utilize FDC member liaisons with diverse community groups. Identify opportunities to promote FDC message and talking points at open venues such as City Council and Assembly meetings, School Board Meetings and Corporate Share Holder Meetings.	Increase communication and awareness between FDC and native Arts diverse community groups	FDC Members	Ongoing
	Periodically hold moderated Courageous Conversations and other public forums	Gauge public concerns	Diversity Council	Ongoing
	Encourage interested community members to apply for appointment to the FDC	Maintain full, active membership on the FDC	FDC and Mayor	Ongoing

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CITY OF FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Goal	Tasks	Desired Results	Responsibility	By When?
6. Diversity Promotion. Promote diversity related activities in the Fairbanks	Actively support Fairbanks Police Department's community oriented policing (COP) initiative by being present at COP events and endorsing the COP initiative at every opportunity. FDC will submit a Resolution of support to the Fairbanks City Council.	FDC demonstrates support and implementation of Community Oriented Policing effort.	Diversity Council Police Chief	Ongoing support Resolution approved 9/13/16

community in order to increase cross-cultural community involvement.	Identify opportunities to promote FDC message and talking points at open venues such as City Council and Assembly meetings, School Board Meetings and Corporate Share Holder Meetings.	FDC issues and priorities are shared in deliberate manner with community stakeholders. Promote diversity messages and current initiatives to wider, cross-cultural audience.	Edu/Outreach/Media /Communications Committee & City PIO	In progress
	Develop partnerships with external agencies in order to motivate people of different and diverse backgrounds to apply for positions at the City of Fairbanks.	The City of Fairbanks will reach a more diverse pool of prospective applicants who are interested in public service. City workforce diversity will be more reflective of the community. Monthly HR updates	Mayor's Office Human Resources	Ongoing
	Implement a Fairbanks-wide diversity day celebration to include and / or create a city-wide Day of Service on MLK Day. Implement or promote a Fairbanks-wide diversity day celebration.	Improve public awareness of diversity and diversity related issues.	Edu/Outreach/Media /Communications Committee	Ongoing
	Plan and host a community wide diversity forum event/ Courageous Conversations	Improve public awareness of diversity and diversity related issues.	Edu/Outreach/Media /Communications Committee	Ongoing
	Recognize local workplaces that promote diversity. Recognition will be based on objective criteria. Recognition will come from nominations by other organizations and workplaces and will be reviewed by a committee of the FDC.	Improve public awareness of diversity and diversity related issues.	Diversity Council	Not started Ongoing
	FDC members will be invited to participate in key (public safety and supervisory) City of Fairbanks employment interviews.	Increased diverse pool of employees and/or employees having greater awareness of diversity issues	FDC members Human Resources	Ongoing

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RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE READING OF A LAND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AT THE BEGINNING OF FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY
COUNCIL MEETINGS**

WHEREAS, the esteemed Denakkanaaga Elders have crafted and approved of the Land Acknowledgement set out below to be used in various publications, on appropriate signage, prior to meetings and conferences, as well as other suitable uses; and

WHEREAS, a Land Acknowledgement can function as a living celebration of Indigenous communities; and

WHEREAS, a Land Acknowledgement, by itself, is a small gesture, but it becomes meaningful when coupled with authentic relationships and informed action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairbanks Diversity Council directs that the following Land Acknowledgement be read at the beginning of Fairbanks Diversity Council meetings:

We respectfully acknowledge the Dena people upon whose traditional lands we reside. We honor the Dena who have been the stewards of Interior lands and waters for centuries, the Elders who lived here before, the Dena people of today, and future generations to come. We also recognize that Alaskan Native people would traditionally gather here and harvest Native foods.

PASSED and APPROVED this 14th day of June 2022 by the Fairbanks Diversity Council.

Signed:

Andrew Aquino, Fairbanks Diversity Council Chair

Attest:

D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk



MEMORANDUM

To: Jennifer Luke, President, Fairbanks North Star Borough School Board
Through: Fairbanks City Council
From: Andrew Aquino, Chair, Fairbanks Diversity Council
Date: June XX, 2022
Regarding: Board and administrative committee restructure recommendations

During the June 7, 2022 meeting of the FNSBSD school board, the district administration introduced recommendations on the consolidation of board and administrative committees. The recommendations include a discharging of the Board Diversity Committee, with the intention of allowing for more efficiency.

As the Fairbanks Diversity Council strives to lead and champion diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) strategies, we recommend for the school board to retain the Board Diversity Committee. If the district's promotion of DEIA continues to diverge from actual practice, students, their families, teachers and staff become vulnerable to undue harm. While we are thankful for the work produced by the ad hoc committee on committees and the district administration, we remind the school board of the district's tagline — *Excellence & Equity for All*.

Below are benefits of retaining the Board Diversity Committee as an advisory body to the full board. The items presented are not prioritized nor exhaustive. The committee:

- Ensures the diversity and reality of our communities are reflected in every aspect of the district's mission;
- Moves beyond publishing baseline data on the district website, and recognizes data collection and distribution as the first of many actions and measures needed to grow an inclusive and equitable culture;
- Ensures relevance and effectiveness of inclusion strategies are meeting student needs;
- Provides the full board with strategies to promote inclusion;
- Holds the administration, the full board and the district accountable to the mission of advancing DEIA. As all board member duties and decision making abilities are impacted by shared and personal values — conscious and subconscious — the Board Diversity Committee provides feedback and guidance for effective DEIA efforts; and
- Ensures the school board is kept abreast of the rapidly changing landscape at local, state and federal levels on DEIA topics to reach informed and relevant decisions. This can reduce risk and legal liability.

If the School Board accepts the proposed committee consolidation, the Fairbanks Diversity Council offers additional considerations:

- Explicitly implement processes and structures for accountability in this work to ensure DEIA is incorporated in the school board, committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, work groups, et al; and/or
- Invite a Fairbanks Diversity Council representative to join the school board as a non-voting member, although this is not optimal as the K-12 environment holds unique needs.

Should the school board be unable to consider the stated opportunities or intentionally explore other meaningful resources, the Fairbanks Diversity Council recommends striking all language related to DEIA initiatives from district publications, until capacity allows for *Excellence & Equity for All* to become a priority.

The Fairbanks Diversity Council firmly believes in the principles of DEIA and assumes positive intent for discharging the board diversity committee. The Fairbanks Diversity Council also recognizes the inherent devaluing of actual impact. Adopting the proposed consolidation deprioritizes the needs of already minoritized people. If good intentions and efficiency fostered inclusion, the needs for DEIA efforts would not exist, but we find that impactful and effective efforts are needed more now than ever.