



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 13, 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 5:37 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 Dorothy Shockley** (Seat F) presiding (P) and with the following members in attendance [Z = Zoom; P = In Person]:

Members Present: (Z) Timothy Ledna, Seat A (P) Rachael Kvapil, Seat K  
(Z) Juanita Webb, Seat D (Z) June Rogers, Council Member  
(P) Andrew Aquino, Seat G (P) Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director  
(Z) Cheyenna Kuplack, Seat J

Members Absent: *Vacant*, Seat B Wendy Tisland, Seat H (excused)  
Sonja Kokrine, Seat C (excused) *Vacant*, Seat I  
Shelissa Thomas, Seat E (excused) David Pruhs, Mayor (excused)

Also Present: (P) Rochelle Rodak, Deputy City Clerk

### **CALL TO ORDER & READING OF THE FDC MISSION STATEMENT**

**Chair Shockley** called the meeting to order and read the FDC mission statement and land acknowledgement.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Chair Shockley** asked R. Kvapil to lead the FDC in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**R. Kvapil**, seconded by **A. Aquino**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda.

**R. Kvapil**, seconded by **A. Aquino**, moved to AMEND the Agenda to hear item 10(a) directly following the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights presentation.

**Chair Shockley** called for objection to the APPROVAL of the Agenda, as Amended and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

### **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of November 8, 2022.

**R. Kvapil**, seconded by **A. Aquino**, moved to APPROVE the meeting minutes as presented.

**Chair Shockley** called for objection to the APPROVAL of the meeting minutes as presented and, hearing none, so ORDERED.

## **CITIZENS' COMMENTS** (Limited to 3 Minutes)

Helenmarie Matesi, NAACP – H. Matesi spoke regarding the NAACP's presentation in May to the FDC regarding the "7 Points for a Safer Fairbanks" and asked if the Council required more information from her. She indicated that she had been waiting for a follow-up session. She read into the record her latest correspondence to the FDC, adding that she had yet to receive a response.

**T. Ledna** stated that there may have been a miscommunication regarding his need for further information from the NAACP and that his letter of recommendation had been drafted for the FDC's consideration and was included on this meeting's agenda.

**Chair Shockley** confirmed that the Council would be discussing T. Ledna's letter of recommendation to the Fairbanks City Council later in the meeting and that she would contact H. Matesi regarding the decision.

## **PRESENTATION BY THE ALASKA STATE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

Rob Corbisier, Director of ASCHR – R. Corbisier provided the definition of "civil rights," as stated in the Alaska Constitution, as well as the organization's mission and vision statements. He went on to explain their process of investigating discrimination claims and provided statistics for the claims from 2016 through 2021. He expressed his excitement to partner with the FDC and the hope that the two groups could work together to better inform citizens of their rights and access to assistance when facing discrimination.

Following the presentation, **Chair Shockley** asked the Council for questions.

**A. Aquino** asked for more information regarding substantial evidence and determination of severity of claims.

R. Corbisier compared substantial evidence to probable cause or reasonable doubt, in as much as they are needed to prove a claim. He went on to explain that while one severe act of discrimination or harassment may be enough to warrant a claim, so could minor offenses if repeated over an extended period of time.

**R. Kvpil** asked about the distinction between service animals and emotional support animals and what business owners can ask or do to gain clarification.

R. Corbisier explained that true service animals are those that have received training to assist with a disability and that business owners can ask if the service animal has been trained. He added that regardless of training, business owners are not expected to allow disruptive or aggressive animals. He went on to clarify that there are minimal protections for emotional support animals, mostly regarding housing discrimination.

**T. Ledna** asked if the State of Alaska had provisions regarding discrimination against individuals attempting to use warming or homeless shelters. R. Corbisier stated that he had not come across that specific situation but that he would look into it and send a response.

*Clerk note: Due to an amendment to the Agenda, New Business was heard next.*

## NEW BUSINESS

- a) City Council Work Session with FDC on the Diversity Action Plan

**Chair Shockley** asked Deputy Clerk Rodak to provide clarification.

Deputy Clerk Rodak explained that the Fairbanks City Council had postponed approval of the Diversity Action Plan (DAP) until the regular City Council meeting of January 9, 2023. She added that the City Council had mentioned that the original DAP had taken a number of months to adopt and that they would like the opportunity to ask questions and gain insight to the intent of the amendments to the Plan prior to approval. She further explained that the preferred date for a Work Session would be the following Monday, December 19, 2022, noting that it would be best if the current Chair, Vice Chair, and former Chair could attend.

**Chair Shockley** asked about the time of the Work Session, and Deputy Clerk Rodak stated that it would begin at 5:30 p.m. prior to the regular City Council Meeting in Council Chambers.

**Chair Shockley**, confirmed that the Vice Chair and former Chair would be available, adding that she would also be able to attend.

Deputy Clerk Rodak stated that she would schedule the Work Session and told the FDC they should be prepared discuss the amendments made to the DAP.

## REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

**Chair Shockley** shared that she presented to the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights earlier in the day.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Subcommittee Recommendation on the NAACP's "7 Points for a Safer Fairbanks"

**A. Aquino**, seconded by **R. Kvapil**, to ACCEPT the Recommendation on the NAACP's "7 Points for a Safer Fairbanks" to be presented to the City Council.

**J. Rogers** asked if Mr. Ledna would be available to speak to the recommendation at the upcoming Work Session.

**A. Aquino** clarified that the topic of the Work Session with the City Council is limited to the DAP.

**Chair Shockley** called for a voice vote on the motion, and all members voted in favor.

- b) FDC Purpose and Policies

**Chair Shockley** asked for clarification on the topic. Deputy Clerk Rodak explained that the documents before the Council included part of the Fairbanks General Code (FGC) that outlined the composition and duties of the FDC as well as the FDC's own approved rules of procedure.

**Chair Shockley** asked for comments and questions regarding Sec. 2-231 and heard none. She addressed Sec. 2-232 and asked how the number of voting members had been determined.

**J. Rogers** stated that it had originally been a larger group and had been reduced due to the difficulty in obtaining a quorum. She added that there had been discussion about reducing the group further so that more could be accomplished realistically.

Deputy Clerk Rodak shared that the Council had originally been comprised of 15 voting members and was reduced to 11 to assist in making a quorum. She gave additional clarification on the documents before the Council, adding that the highlighted portions of the duties and rules of procedure were areas that the FDC had previously approved but were not currently practicing.

**A. Aquino** asked about the process of appointing FDC members and why that could not be done more inclusively with the FDC rather than only the HR Director and Mayor.

**J. Rogers** stated that former Mayor Eberhart had wanted to appoint members to the Council in hopes that the FDC would have a better chance of fully representing the Fairbanks community and to ensure longevity of the FDC in general. **J. Rogers** added that recruitment by the FDC members has always been encouraged.

**A. Foster-Snow** added that both former Mayors Eberhart and Matherly had been very involved in determining the applicant's commitment to the FDC and the part of the community they represented. She added that Mayor Pruhs would also be very thorough and committed to the success of the FDC.

Clerk Snider added that the cooperation between the City and the FNSB had proven difficult in regard to timely appointments to vacant Borough seats, stating that the increase in vacancies heavily impacted the difficulties of obtaining a quorum. She pointed out that W. Tisland retired from her position at the FNSB and has been waiting for several months for the Borough to find a replacement as the Borough representative.

**J. Rogers** spoke to previous conversations regarding the number of voting members and suggested that the FDC consider holding a special meeting, possibly less formal, to discuss these types of changes.

**A. Aquino** suggested that less formal gatherings may be a good place to learn more about the FDC's role, as well as provide a good platform for vetting potential candidates.

**D. Shockley** shared her appreciation for A. Aquino and J. Rogers' recommendations for a less formal special meeting.

**J. Rogers** added that the last informal meeting they held, with former Mayor Matherly, had been a pivotal point for the FDC, but the forward motion had been hampered by the pandemic.

**C. Kuplack** asked if a new survey regarding meeting times could be presented to the members of the FDC, stating that it may play a factor in attendance.

**A. Aquino** stated that the previous poll indicated that the current meeting time had been the favored option, but very few members had participated. He noted that he would be in favor of a new poll, given the number of new members that have joined.

**J. Rogers** shared that the meeting date and time had been questioned many times, adding that it continually remained as-is, but she added her support for another poll.

Deputy Clerk Rodak shared that the FGC only requires the FDC to meet on a quarterly basis, adding that the Council could vote to change the meeting frequency as well.

**Chair Shockley** shared that she had interest in meeting every other month instead of once per month and that the 5:30 p.m. meeting time may be difficult for some.

Deputy Clerk Rodak stated that, if so directed, the Clerk's Office could initiate a new poll to address meeting dates, times, and frequency.

**Chair Shockley** indicated that she would like a poll sent to members and added that perhaps it could be changed to not directly follow City Council meetings. Hearing no more comments regarding Sec. 2-232, she asked for comments regarding Sec. 2-233.

**A. Aquino** requested that FDC members take time, outside of the meeting, to read through the documents presented, make notes, and come to the next meeting prepared to give comments or recommendations.

**Chair Shockley** stated that she would allow for that and asked members to be prepared to discuss the documents in detail at the next meeting.

### **FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

**Chair Shockley** asked that Deputy Clerk Rodak call on each member to briefly introduce themselves.

**J. Webb** shared that she had served on the FDC for a bit of time, adding that she enjoyed working on the FDC and looked forward to continuing to get to know everyone. She stated that she worked for the Tanana Valley State Fair as the Vendor Coordinator.

**J. Rogers** shared that she had been on the FDC since its inception, adding that she had not been a City Council member when she started. She noted that after her term on the City Council, she intends to apply for reappointment to the FDC.

**T. Ledna** shared that he had been a resident of Fairbanks for three years and served as a mental health clinician at Alaska Behavior Health and on the Mobile Crisis Team.

**R. Kvapil** stated that she is a minority business leader and had been recruited to the FDC by J. Rogers. She added that she really enjoys serving on the FDC because, even though she lives within many of the diverse communities, she is better able to see the needs of the City as a whole.

**C. Kuplack** shared that she is Gwich'in Athabascan, a member of the Gwichyaa Fort Yukon Tribe, and the Communications Director at Doyon Limited. She added that she is excited to serve on the FDC and is ready to learn more in her new role as Vice Chair.

**A. Foster-Snow** stated that she is the Human Resources Director for the City of Fairbanks and that she has been serving on the FDC since 2015, adding that a lot of important work has been done by the body. She shared her hope that the FDC will be able to reach and assist more community members in the future.

**A. Aquino** shared that he is a Project Manager for the President of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, adding that he has served on the FDC since 2020. He went on to say that his purpose for being on the FDC is to learn more about other needs and wants from identities that do not necessarily align with his and how they intersect.

**Chair Shockley** shared that she is an Upper Koyukon Athabascan from the Tanana Rampart Manley area and is currently semi-retired. She noted that she had been aware of the FDC's creation in 2014, and she is very excited to see the FDC become more visible within the community.


### MEETING DATES

a) Next Regular Meeting Date, January 10, 2023

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

  
Dorothy Shockley, Chair

  
D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: RR