



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 11, 2020, 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.  
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 at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, with Mayor Jim Matherly presiding and with the following members in attendance:

Members Present: Kennita Williams, Seat A                      Kelvin Lee, Seat I (telephonic)  
Robert Dorton, Seat B (left at 6:45 p.m.)              Doug Toelle, Seat J (arrived at 5:38 p.m.)  
Shelissa Thomas, Seat E                      Sara Harriger, Seat K  
Rita Davis, Seat F                      Angela Foster-Snow, HR Director  
Jeff Walters, Seat H                      June Rogers, Councilmember

Members Absent: Montean Jackson, Seat C                      Vacant, Seat G  
Juanita Webb, Seat D

Also Present: Mike Meeks, Chief of Staff                      D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk

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

**Chair Matherly** called the meeting to order and asked City Clerk Snider to read the FDC Mission Statement.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Chair Matherly** asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Ms. Thomas**, seconded by **Ms. Davis**, moved to APPROVE the Agenda.

**Chair Matherly** called for objection and, hearing none, declared the Agenda APPROVED.

**MAYOR'S COMMENTS & REPORT**

**Chair Matherly** stated that many folks have been ill recently, and he hopes everyone is getting better. He shared that he is ready to appoint someone to fill the FDC vacancy, Mr. Andrew Aquino. He spoke briefly about Mr. Aquino's background and stated he is excited to bring him aboard.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Chair Matherly** reminded everyone that there will be a remembrance in April for the victims of unsolved homicides.

## APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2019

**Ms. Thomas**, seconded by **Ms. Davis**, moved to APPROVE the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2019.

## HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

**Ms. Foster-Snow** shared that there are quite a few vacant positions at the City. She stated there are six lateral police officers in background currently. She stated the City is doing its annual recruitment for firefighters; she explained that they create a pool and pull from it throughout the year when there are vacancies. **Ms. Foster-Snow** stated that recruitment closes April 1, and folks can apply with no experience – just a high school diploma. She stated the Controller position in the Finance Department is open through the end of the month. She shared that the City interviewed four applicants earlier that day for the Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector in the Building Department, and there were a couple strong candidates. **Ms. Foster-Snow** announced that the Mayor has authorized high school interns from West Valley to join departments at the City for the semester; she stated it is fun to have young people around. Finally, she shared that the City Attorney's Office has hired a new Deputy Attorney.

**Chair Matherly** and **Ms. Rogers** spoke briefly about the City's budget and the decline in State Community Assistance (formerly known as Revenue Sharing).

## NEW BUSINESS

- a) Diversity Action Plan (DAP) Overview
- b) March 10 FDC Work Session Agenda
- i) Talking Circle Format
  - ii) Brainstorming Session with Ms. Thomas as Facilitator
  - iii) Public Involvement
  - iv) Potluck

*Items (a) and (b) were discussed together.*

**Ms. Harriger** stated that her recollection of the last discussion is that the work session would be a time to brainstorm ideas, and there would be a follow-up session to draft the action plan.

**Mr. Walters** asked whether feedback was solicited from the public, and, if so, whether there has been any feedback. Clerk Snider stated that she placed a solicitation for feedback on the City website and social media accounts and in the newspaper for three or four consecutive weeks. She stated that no feedback has been received yet. **Ms. Foster-Snow** suggested reaching out to other local diversity groups to see what types of issues they are dealing with or would like the FDC to look at. **Ms. Harriger** suggested reaching out to the City Council to ask for input. Other members

mentioned various community groups that may have feedback to provide. **Chair Matherly** requested that FDC members forward contact information for local groups and organizations to the Clerk so that she could reach out for feedback on behalf of the body. He stated that if members already have a summary of input from other groups, they could provide the Clerk with that instead. **Ms. Foster-Snow** suggested reaching out to not only the City Council but also the Borough Assembly. **Ms. Harriger** requested that the solicitation to the local governing bodies be on FDC letterhead instead of just an email.

Members discussed whether there would be public involvement at the work session. It was decided that, while the work session would be open to the public, the FDC would not take public comment. **Chair Matherly** stated that it may take more than one or two meetings to complete the DAP project.

**Mr. Dorton** spoke to recovery, reentry, and recidivism. He stated that the theme in the state legislature relating to reentry and recidivism this year seems to be “therapeutic”; he stated that the year prior the theme was “lock ‘em up”, and the year before that was “set ‘em free”. He stated he would like the topic to be a part of the discussion. **Ms. Harriger** stated that related organizations should be solicited for input prior to the work session.

**Mr. Toelle** asked about the wording that was posted. Clerk Snider stated that the post to the City website reads, “The Diversity Council Wants to Hear from You! The Fairbanks Diversity Council (FDC) will meet in February to review the City’s Diversity Action Plan, and they would like some feedback from the community! What issues do you, as a member of the community, think are important for the FDC to consider? Please submit your responses to City Clerk Danyielle Snider at [dsnider@fairbanks.us](mailto:dsnider@fairbanks.us) with the subject line “FDC feedback”. The FDC will review feedback at its January 14, 2020 meeting, but the input period will extend through Wednesday, February 5.” She stated that the post will be updated with new dates. **Ms. Rogers** expressed disappointment that folks have not responded to the invitation for input.

**Ms. Harriger** suggested creating a community survey. **Ms. Rogers** suggested that Mayor Matherly speak with the media to help get the word out. **Ms. Thomas** stated the reason for a lack of responses could be because it is the beginning of the year. **Ms. Harriger** asked whether there would be any issue if an organization wanted to help create a survey on behalf of the FDC free of charge. **Chair Matherly** and Clerk Snider replied that they did not see a problem with that. **Chair Matherly** stated he could work on doing a media interview. **Mr. Walters** stated it would be nice to get a major PR article out to the community before the March meeting. **Chair Matherly** stated he would like FDC members to come and speak to the City Council at the February 24 meeting; he stated members could speak under “Special Reports” on the agenda. **Mr. Toelle** suggested submitting a *Community Perspective* article to the News Miner; he also suggested that Mayor Matherly, in his regular communications with citizens, forward issues that may be appropriate to the FDC. **Mr. Walters** spoke in support of getting a TV news story out and, if possible, a front-page news article. He added that it would be helpful to reach out specifically to the local Native organizations; **Chair Matherly** agreed to reach out.

**Mr. Walters** asked what the process would be following the March 10 meeting; he asked whether the City Council would have to approve of changes made to the DAP. **Ms. Harriger** suggested

that the work session be held in a roundtable format, that some general time guidelines be set, and that there be a heavy brainstorming session following the potluck and general familiarization with the DAP. **Ms. Harriger** stated at the end of the session, the group could assign tasks to members or committees and decide when to reconvene to draft the DAP. She stated she understands from the group that no public input would be taken at the work session. She stated she would like to have themes to focus the brainstorming session on. **Mr. Toelle** asked whether the existing DAP would be used as an outline or whether they will be starting from scratch. He requested that Clerk Snider share the language that was posted online with FDC members so they could each share it; Clerk Snider agreed to email it out to members. Members agreed to hold the potluck and work session from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Clerk Snider stated the ordinance that created the FDC states that the DAP will be reviewed every five years. She reported that it has been nearly three years since the DAP was approved by the City Council. She suggested that the FDC use the DAP as an outline for the work session and allow the Chairs and City staff to incorporate the feedback received into that outline prior to the work session. **Ms. Harriger** suggested that each member go through the DAP and identify which goals they believe are achievable for the FDC, similar to setting “SMART goals”. She stated that some of the items in the DAP may fall outside the powers of the body. **Mr. Walters** stated that members should also identify what they believe may be missing from the DAP. He stated he would like to hear City Council input before the FDC begins the DAP project.

Members discussed how best to organize the work session agenda. **Mr. Walters** suggested that each member score each of the DAP tasks according to priority. **Ms. Thomas** reminded everyone that the DAP is a five-year plan that is not meant to be achieved in a short period of time. Clerk Snider stated that she could email priority-ranking instructions for DAP tasks out to members. **Ms. Rogers** raised the FDC’s relationship with the Borough as an issue of importance to be discussed.

In summary, **Ms. Harriger** stated that perhaps three significant topics of discussion for the brainstorming session could be: 1) the FDC’s role/relationship with the Borough, 2) how to turn DAP tasks into “SMART goals”, and 3) revising goals to incorporate community/Council input. No members objected to moving forward in that direction.

### FDC MEMBERS’ COMMENTS

**Ms. Williams** stated it was a good meeting, and she looks forward to March.

**Ms. Thomas** stated she looks forward to March and to celebrating her 50th birthday soon.

**Ms. Davis** had no comments.

**Ms. Foster-Snow** had no comments.

**Mr. Toelle** stated he will be out of town between now and March 10, but he will attend the work session.

**Ms. Rogers** had no comments.

**Mr. Walters** stated that the current Borough Chief of Staff, Jim Williams, was very involved in the initial development of the DAP. He stated that he will reach out to Mr. Williams to ensure the Borough Mayor's Office is aware of what is happening. He stated he will try to attend the February 24 City Council meeting. He asked for follow-up on the diversity training that some of the FDC members attended a few months ago.

**Chair Matherly** stated that he attended a portion of that training. He stated it was good training, but he does not believe it is the right training for City staff.

**Ms. Harriger** stated she was excited about the appointment of Andrew Aquino to the FDC, and she looks forward to March.


**Mr. Lee** had no comments.

### **MEETING DATES**

The next meeting of the FDC will be a Work Session and potluck on March 10, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Matherly** declared the meeting ADJOURNED at 7:07 p.m.



---

Jim Matherly, Mayor/Chair



---

D. Danyielle Snider, CMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS