

MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY BELONGING, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
6:00 PM TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2023

Approved December 5, 2023

Committee Members Present: Mareesa Miles, (Co-Chair); Eliana Castro (Co-Chair); Clark Sheldon; Carl Watkins; Preston Fuller; Melyssa Bailey

Committee Members Absent: Moira Jamieson

City Staff present: Paul Clapps (Minute-taker); Arleigh Young, Planning & Development Coordinator

Members of the public present: Anais Olshan

- 1. E. Castro began the meeting at 6:01 PM.**
 - Introductions.
 - There were no additions or deletions for the agenda.
- 2. The committee voted to approve the minutes from the October Meeting, as presented. The motion passed with all in favor and no additional changes or discussions.**
3. M. Bailey read the Land Acknowledgement and Core Values Statement.
4. A. Olshan gave an introduction and told the members why she's interested in being a part of the BEI committee.
5. Discuss Needs Assessment.
 - C. Watkins gave the committee an update on the Needs Assessment and that the subcommittee couldn't meet between meetings. There would be an update at the next meeting.
6. Discuss "Movies that Matter."
 - P. Fuller mentioned that emails were sent to Kelly about this subject, but with Chip Sawyer's absence, there's no news or actionable items. The city currently owns the theater and the Parks and Recreation Department of the city is working

hard to fix and clean it up.

- P. Fuller also mentioned that the first movie showing shouldn't be something divisive, it should be inviting to the general public. P. Fuller specifically mentioned showing a movie that pushes the importance of community.
- M. Miles mentioned that Chip Sawyer connected her with people who could help set up the screening and choose a movie.
- E. Castro recommended "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" the recent biographical film on Fred Rogers. P. Fuller also recommended "A Man Called Otto."
- C. Sheldon and E. Castro brought up printing flyers for the Movies That Matter.

7. Updates on other initiatives and subcommittees.

- **Community focus groups.** C. Watkins clarified that the Community Focus Groups Subcommittee would need to wait for the Needs Assessment to be done, so there is no progress to report.
- **Benchmarking Subcommittee.** C. Sheldon mentioned that he'd still like to create a spreadsheet or system for this subcommittee. E. Castro offered to put that on her plate. E. Castro and C. Sheldon will be stepping down from the committee in December, so this will need to be carried into a more long term plan after the holidays.
- **Pride 2024.** Kurt and Scott were not at this meeting, so there were no current pride updates.
- **Informational web pages for special occasions.** C. Watkins mentioned, as a web designer, that this could be a great possibility for any future events. Even if it's something small (like the Juneteenth website as an example). C. Watkins would follow up on this.
- **Banner Subcommittee.** M. Miles gave an update on the newly proposed banner from Chip Sawyer, and she also mentioned that the committee should start talking about the May Indigenous Heritage Week Banner as well.

8. Discuss board vacancies and appointment process.

- E. Castro updated the committee on vacancies. The City Council would likely vote on these applicants in December.
- P. Fuller asked if any committee members knew anyone who could be recruited to apply. C. Watkins thought that reducing the size of the committee could be a good "interim" decision so that it can be expanded later when there's increased interest. E. Castro also believed that once the committee became more active in the future, there could be more applicants and more public interest.

9. Public Comment on Agenda Items (limit 2 minutes per person).

- No public comment.

10. Other business.

- C. Watkins voiced his interest in a vice chair or co-chair position, especially with vacancies opening up. He'd like to get as much information from departing members as possible so there could be an easy transition to the next committee members.

11. Discuss next BEI Cmte. meeting and agenda items.

- The next meeting would be December 5th, and there could be more applicants. There will be follow-ups from Chip Sawyer and M. Miles as well. Vacancies and applicants should be added to the next agenda, as well as subcommittee updates. C. Watkins will have Needs Assessment updates by the next meeting.

12. Plus/Delta (optional).

- C. Watkins's plus was that it's great the committee has space to discuss difficult topics, but to also remind committee members not to be afraid to bring up these difficult topics.
- E. Castro's thought that it was positive that there are still people interested in the committee. Her delta was that she apologized for being a bit scattered and she'd like to be more on-task next time.
- M. Miles really appreciated E. Castro's ability to run the meeting even while being sick. She'd like to be a bit more organized for the next meeting, and to encourage other members to be more prepared.
- P. Fuller really appreciated all of the people on the committee (and he thought the Witch Dance and Spooky Saturday was great). His delta is that he'd like to do more with the Movies That Matter.
- E. Castro reminded the committee that the City Council would meet next week and that members could attend.

13. E. Castro adjourned the meeting at 6:44 PM.