

MEETING MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY BELONGING, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
6:00 PM TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2024

Approved May 7, 2024

Committee Members Present: Carl Watkins (Via Zoom); Mareesa Miles, (Co-Chair); Vikki La Rose (Via Zoom); Preston Fuller; Melyssa Bailey;

Committee Members Absent: Anais Olshan; Moira Jamieson-Brooks

City Staff present: Paul Olshan (Minute-taker); Chip Sawyer (Director of Planning and Development)

Members of the public present: Winnie Wilkinson; Kurt Hersey; Scott Bushey;

1. M. Miles began the meeting at 6:03 PM.

- Introductions
- M. Miles proposed changing the agenda order (leaving the updates on coming events for after the subcommittees)

2. Approval of Minutes

- **C. Watkins motioned to approve the March minutes, as presented. Seconded by P. Fuller. The motion passed with all in favor. No discussion.**
- **M. Bailey joined the meeting at 6:07 PM.**

3. M. Miles read the Land Acknowledgement and BEI values.

4. Discuss policy for equity initiative funding recommendations

- C. Sawyer introduced this topic and started a discussion on the funding set aside for equity initiatives. There were recalculations of fees due to how much space TATU2024 required. This would require \$730 instead of the \$530 that the motion was made for last month. C. Sawyer specified that there's approx. \$2,500 left to use before June 30th. There was a discussion on how much was spent in previous years and what might happen in the future.
- C. Watkins was concerned about running out of money early in the year due to not having any guidelines on how to approve funding in the future. The

committee was in agreement with this concern.

- M. Miles asked if they could come up with a draft of what this would look like.
- **S. Bushey and K. Hersey joined the meeting at 6:23.**
- C. Watkins said he would draft a set of averages for how much the committee could spend regularly.

5. Discuss 2025 City Plan

- M. Miles began the discussion on the 2025 City Plan. C. Sawyer specified what input is being requested for the plan.
- V. La Rose emailed her thoughts for the City Plan and had a lot to say on what should be included. C. Sawyer wanted committee members to send him input on the City Plan, and he would give a summary of people's thoughts at the next meeting.
- M. Miles brought up how important youth input would be on the City Plan. There was a broader discussion on various ways the plan could be updated. From ward-based get togethers to block parties.
- V. La Rose shared her thoughts on the City Plan and would give C. Sawyer an updated list of questions and answers from the City Plan survey.

6. **K. Hersey gave a public comment.** He had difficulty accessing a local business with a service dog which was not ADA compliant. The opinions and experiences of disabled people need to be included in the BEI's thoughts for the City Plan.

7. Updates on Initiatives and Subcommittees

- **Movies That Matter.** M. Bailey gave an update on the Movies That Matter subcommittee. The movie would be Love Simon and there was a brief discussion on who should be in the panel, as well as a mention of an after party. P. Fuller brought up the inclusion of gay men of the Boomer generation who survived the AIDS epidemic being a part of the panel.
- **TATU2024.** V. La Rose gave an update on the TATU2024 itinerary, including guests, raffle prizes, tickets, and more.
- **Needs Assessment and Benchmark Subcommittee.** C. Watkins gave a brief update about when this can be discussed in the future.
- **Annual Recognition and Informational Web Pages.** M. Miles mentioned that this subcommittee did not meet but this will be addressed in the future.

8. Updates on Pride and Juneteenth

- W. Wilkinson recommended a \$1,600 investment in drummers, dancers, and a tent. She also gave the committee an update on the Juneteenth event. Drummers and dancers would be set up on the pavilion. W. Wilkinson messaged various

speakers for the event as well.

- There was a discussion on the Juneteenth subcommittee meeting in the future and how the spending should be recommended.
- **M. Miles motioned to recommend the use of city funds to pay for the Juneteenth musical/dancing event at \$895.00. The other payments should be considered later on. C. Watkins mentioned how important Juneteenth is as a new holiday that it be celebrated openly. Seconded by V. La Rose. The motion passed with all in favor. No additional discussion.**
- M. Miles started the discussion on Pride. K. Hersey and S. Bushey gave further updates on funding, parade floats, and more.

9. Plus/Delta

- C. Watkins mentioned that he loved how much the committee attacked these events and got things done, even with how hard they are to organize. He also wanted to be clear that it's okay for members to disagree with one another.
- M. Bailey mentioned that she loved how much everyone discussed these issues. She also noticed White Supremacist stickers on the light pole near the Hannaford that should be taken down.
- V. La Rose apologized if her thoughts were not clear or easy to understand earlier in the meeting.

10. M. Miles adjourned the meeting at 8:08 PM.