

MEETING MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY BELONGING, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
6:00 PM TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2025

Approved July 1, 2025

Committee Members Present: IN PERSON: Anais Olshan VIA ZOOM: Carl Watkins (Co-Chair); Melyssa Bailey; Moira Jamieson-Brooks (Co-Chair)

Committee Members Absent: Victoria LaRose; Preston Fuller

City Staff present: IN PERSON: Katie Haseltine (Minute-Taker); Chip Sawyer (Director of Planning and Development)

Members of the public present: None

- 1. Begin recording and Open Meeting. C. Watkins began the meeting at 6:07 pm.**
 - a. Introductions - None.
 - b. Reading of Land Acknowledgement and BEI Cmte. Values - C. Watkins reads.
 - c. Public Comment - None.
 - d. Discuss agenda order, additions and deletions - A. Olshan would like to discuss a threatening social media post about Los Jefes. C. Watkins decides to move this after the approval of meeting minutes.
- 2. Approval of Minutes.**
 - a. Motion by M. Bailey to approve the 5/6/25 BEI Minutes as presented. Seconded by A. Olshan. No discussion. M. Jamieson-Brooks leaves meeting at 6:11 PM. The approval of 5/6/25 minutes will be tabled until the next meeting when there is a quorum.**
- 3. Los Jefes Social Media Post**
 - a. A. Olshan summarizes that she had seen a Facebook post from someone apologizing that she had threatened to report an employee of Los Jefes to ICE. She wasn't sure if there is any response or support the committee could provide.
 - b. M. Bailey knows a couple other Facebook groups that promote the business and encourage people to dine at their establishment as often as they can.
 - c. C. Watkins wonders if the committee or Downtown St. Albans could put a response out. C. Sawyer would reference the Declaration of Inclusion adopted by the City Council on 11/14/2022 as well as the Fair and Impartial Policing Policy adopted in 2021. He notes that they don't have facts of the situation to draw from, so it wouldn't be in the City's best interest to respond directly to this situation.
 - d. C. Watkins wonders if the City can do a post to highlight and remind the community of the Declaration of Inclusion and the Fair and Impartial Policing Policy. C. Watkins adds that silence can sometimes be perceived as being complicit.
 - e. M. Bailey thinks that being Pride month, this could be a good opportunity to remind the community of these things already in place. C. Sawyer adds that Juneteenth could be another reason behind the action of sharing the information.
 - f. C. Sawyer will work with C. Watkins to get a couple posts out about this to the

community.

4. Pride and Juneteenth event reviews.

- a. C. Watkins notes that Scott Bushey is not in attendance to discuss Pride events.
- b. C. Watkins also notes that they received a message from Winnie Wilkinson sharing that they've decided to cancel Juneteenth celebrations due to concerns for safety in the current political climate.
- c. C. Sawyer would still like to discuss Juneteenth in the future and if the committee has any interested in being involved. C. Watkins would like to discuss the potential for reserving some funding for them next year in case they might need some help getting the event off the ground. M. Bailey also wonders if the committee can support much like the committee supports Pride events.
- d. C. Watkins does add that the committee can organize events if they'd like, but would be hesitant take anything on given the size of the committee and the busy personal and professional lives of members. C. Watkins is more than happy to support community members who would like to organize specific events.

5. Updates on initiatives

- a. Movies that Matter
 - a. C. Watkins represented the committee for the showing of Wizard of Oz. There was a great turnout and some brief conversations about how the LGBTQIA community really resonated with Dorothy in this movie.
- b. Community welcoming activities
 - a. C. Watkins tables discussion for next meeting when more members are present.

6. Continue discussions from last meeting

- a. Community member concerns.
 - a. C. Watkins asks M. Bailey to share what was discussed at the Police Advisory Board meeting. M. Bailey attended to hear more about the Fair and Impartial Policing Policy. She learned that this is what the City can stand on and that outside of that, there isn't much the City can do. M. Bailey reiterates wanting to remind and share this with the community.
 - b. C. Watkins is hesitant to share this in tandem with the Declaration of Inclusion noting that the current political climate could sway the interpretation and conversation of the content. The main concern is that it would generate a lot of policing conversation. C. Sawyer suggests two different posts, on Facebook and Front Porch Forum.

7. Other business.

- a. C. Sawyer is unavailable at the next meeting, July 1st. He suggests putting out an email to the group to see about a date to reschedule.

8. Discuss next BEI Cmte. Meeting and agenda items. - None

9. Plus/Delta.

- b. C. Watkins shares a Delta that there was no quorum tonight. C. Watkins asks if the open seat on the committee has been shared recently. C. Sawyer said that they had gotten a couple interested applicants, but they didn't pan out. A. Olshan, M. Bailey, and C. Watkins will share on their social media platforms that there is an open seat.
- c. M. Bailey shares a Plus that the Pride festivities were outstanding, plus the No Kings

March had a great turnout as well. Between the two events, M. Bailey shares a Delta that after the No Kings protest she was standing at the edge of Taylor Park with a couple other people and a vehicle screamed out at them multiple times. C. Watkins acknowledges that it is unfortunate that happened, and reminds that we all need to be respectful.

10. Adjourn.

- a. C. Watkins adjourns meeting at 6:50 PM.**