

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

*Approved August 6, 2024*

**Committee Members Present:** Carl Watkins, Co-Chair; Anais Olshan; Preston Fuller (Via Zoom); Moira Jamieson-Brooks (Via Zoom);

**Committee Members Absent:** Mareesa Miles, (Co-Chair); Vikki La Rose; Melyssa Bailey;

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

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

1. **C. Watkins called the meeting to order at 6:03pm.**
  - No introductions.
  - No additions and deletions to the agenda.
2. C. Watkins updated the committee on the new agenda (with the removal of the subcommittees) leading into the approval of minutes. **The May minutes were approved as presented with a unanimous vote.**
3. C. Watkins read the Land Acknowledgement and BEI Committee Values.
4. There was no public comment.
5. Continue discussion on policy for equity initiative funding recommendations.
  - C. Watkins started the discussion on equity initiative funding policy recommendations. There was a handout that included changes. C. Watkins gave an overview and a few examples of how this request can be utilized in the future when funding is required.
  - C. Sawyer recommended that the procedures allow for the BEI Committee to make funding decisions at meetings. He specifically pointed to the Considering Alternatives part of the request, which would require time outside of a meeting. This was discussed thoroughly by the BEI members.
  - C. Watkins felt comfortable enough to make future decisions with this request

document available to BEI members.

- **S. Bushey and K. Hersey joined the meeting at 6:14pm.**
- C. Watkins would provide a more abbreviated version to present to the committee in the future, which could be used for quicker decision making.
- The BEI members agreed to review the 2023-2024 funding in the future.

#### 6. Review of Pride Weekend.

- S. Bushey and K. Hersey gave an update on the good turnout for Movies That Matter and how it impacted Pride. The event was a big success. They then discussed the rest of the weekend, specifically the success of the Drag Show and other events. There were estimates of 700-1000 people who attended that day. There will be a Pride summit with all the state-wide pride organizations to discuss future plans.
- S. Bushey and K. Hersey thanked the BEI Committee for helping to facilitate the Pride Weekend events. Pride events have already been scheduled and booked for next year.
- A. Olshan really appreciated the Pride Weekend and loved that there were different events for everyone, especially for people who were not interested in large crowds or loud music.
- W. Wilkinson was a guest speaker and she appreciated the feedback that everyone gave her, and mentioned the connections she made with people at the event. She brought up how much she's learned from her family and from pride events.

#### 7. Review of Juneteenth

- C. Watkins began the discussion on the Juneteenth celebration. W. Wilkinson mentioned that it was a success on many levels. There was a keynote speaker who drove all the way from Waterbury, as well as many other local government officials and support from the hospital. There would be a focus group at City Hall on July 10th.
- W. Wilkinson thought the weather was very significant in a symbolic way that the attendees appreciated, even if it was hot and raining.
- 802 Soul Kitchen was there as well with delicious food with leftovers that got donated to the Samaritan House after. The drummers have been booked for next year.
- For the future, W. Wilkinson mentioned that preparations would start much earlier for 2025 and banners would be printed ahead of time to make it easier.
- C. Watkins specifically said that this was a very successful year for the BEI Committee in terms of allowing members of the community to feel like they belong. W. Wilkinson specified that there would be a celebration for having a successful year. K. Hersey mentioned that St. Albans is very lucky to be able to

host both Pride and Juneteenth events instead of being forced to combine them together.

- There was a discussion on the momentum and impact that has built from hosting these events. K. Hersey also mentioned that these events have helped to facilitate other organizations and connections to set up in Franklin County.

#### 8. Subcommittee Structure

- There was no desire by the committee members to change the subcommittee structure at this moment.
- P. Fuller gave an update on Movies That Matter and the future of this project. He recommended avoiding July, August, and December due to city-wide events and scheduling conflicts. The next would be in September and he specifically asked for help discussing themes and films for the future.
- P. Fuller brought up suicide prevention as the next theme, as well as addressing community members that have been deeply affected by this issue. W. Wilkinson asked for a movie specifically about hispanic heritage and migrants in the US. P. Fuller mentioned that this could be something discussed at the next meeting.
- There was a discussion about having local and state legislators join in meetings and discuss bills they're passing or writing. W. Wilkinson brought up the Public Safety Forum meeting at the end of June and how there was an opportunity for more discussions to be had.
- M. Jamieson-Brooks suggested having a living document with suggested movies for Movies That Matter.

#### 9. Plus/Delta (optional).

- K. Hersey commended the BEI on how productive and proactive the new committee was in making community members feel welcome.
- C. Watkins definitely missed having the other members attending. But he felt welcome to give his ideas and participate, which is meaningful to him.
- W. Wilkinson gave examples of how she feels like St. Albans is a melting pot and a miniature Burlington in a lot of ways.

10. Next meeting was confirmed for August 6th, 2024.

**11. C. Watkins adjourned the meeting at 7:31pm.**