

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

*Approved September 3, 2024*

**Committee Members Present:** Carl Watkins, Co-Chair; Anais Olshan (Via Zoom); Preston Fuller (Via Zoom); Maresa Miles (Via Zoom); Moira Jamieson-Brooks (Via zoom); Vikki La fRose (Via Zoom)

**Committee Members Absent:** Melyssa Bailey;

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

**Members of the public present:** None

1. **C. Watkins called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.**
  - No members of the public or new members for introductions. No additions to the agenda.
2. Approval of Minutes
  - **A. Olshan motioned to approve the July Minutes as presented. Seconded by P. Fuller. The motion passed with all in favor. M. Miles abstained since she was not there. No additional discussion.**
3. Reading of Land Acknowledgement. C. Watkins proposed reading the Land Acknowledgement and Values together as a “pledge.” The BEI members all read the Land Acknowledgement and Values together.
4. **M. Jamieson joined the meeting at 6:06.**
5. No Public Comment
6. C. Watkins began the discussion on Nominations and selection of Co-Chair or Vice Chair.
  - He recommended a Vice Chair model since there wasn’t much interest in members being Co-Chairs.

- C. Watkins nominated P. Fuller for Vice Chair, and while P. Fuller appreciated the sentiment, he wanted to make sure to elevate a voice of a marginalized community to Vice Chair and he didn't want to speak for other people.
  - M. Jamieson offered to step up as Vice Chair if nobody else was interested.
  - **P. Fuller nominated M. Jamieson. Seconded by M. Miles. The vote passed with all in favor. M. Jamieson was voted as Co-Chair. No additional discussion.**
  - The committee appreciated M. Miles filling in as a Co-Chair in the previous interim period.
7. Continue discussion on policy for equity initiative funding recommendations.
- C. Watkins led the group through the expenses of the fiscal year (July 2023-June 2024) and there was a group discussion on how the committee felt about the expense report.
  - C. Watkins felt proud that the BEI was able to showcase the diversity of our community. He also reviewed the BEI financial request approval form and the additions to numbers four and seven.
  - C. Sawyer specified that there should be allowances to make a snap decision and financial requests should be able to be nimble and flexible.
  - C. Sawyer surveyed the committee, now that it's a new fiscal year, as to which upcoming events they'd like to fund or use financial resources for. The committee proposed a community event or something that could use these funds, Movies That Matter especially.
  - M. Jamieson recommended partnering with local non-profits for events during Domestic Violence Awareness Month or Houselessness Awareness Month. C. Watkins agreed and added those to the agenda for next meeting for discussion.
  - **V. La Rose joined the meeting at 6:29.**
  - C. Sawyer brought up the fact that the pandemic changed the way the community held events and met residents. This is the "belonging" part of the committee's charter. The Committee was interested in holding events that might help residents socialize and meet each other.
  - There was further discussion on the equity funding recommendations.
8. Discuss Movies That Matter
- P. Fuller discussed the next movie theme which would be teenage suicide prevention, and the movie selected was "The S Word." He was looking for panelists to run a discussion on suicide prevention and experiences with loss due to suicide.
  - A. Olshan mentioned that her supervisor used to be the director of First Call at Howard Center and there was a discussion on who would qualify for this panel

and the desired representation, like those with lived experiences of loss due to suicide. C. Watkins mentioned his own experience with depression and suicidality.

- P. Fuller presented the trailer for “The S Word” for the next Movies That Matter. There was a discussion on the timing of this movie and the seriousness of Suicide Prevention.
- M. Miles wanted to make sure that a mental health professional would be there to advise people who need help. P. Fuller mentioned that a member of NCSS would be there.
- **The Movie was approved through a vote. V. La Rose voted nay. She voiced that she wanted to be more involved in deciding what movies would be selected and for what reason.**
- P. Fuller estimated there would be 5 movies per year and they cost between \$200-300 for the licensing fee. P. Fuller wanted input from other BEI members for suggested panel members and more ideas. P. Fuller also asked for at least two months' notice for a movie proposal. C. Watkins proposed putting it on the agenda for the next meeting.
- C. Sawyer recommended a committee or subcommittee member coming to the BEI with a proposal that can be voted on or approved. The BEI generally approved of that idea. M. Jamieson volunteered to be on a subcommittee.
- V. La Rose mentioned that there needs to be more work done for marginalized groups of people and how the BEI can directly affect them. She does not want to be on the subcommittee but she wants to be a voice for it. C. Watkins volunteered for the Movies That Matter subcommittee.
- There was a conversation on how the BEI gives input and makes decisions together.

#### 9. Updates on initiatives and subcommittees

#### 10. No other business

11. The next meeting was scheduled for the day after Labor Day. The committee agreed to attend that meeting. C. Watkins might not be available or might just attend virtually due to personal reasons.

#### 12. Plus/Deltas

- M. Miles had a plus that M. Jamieson was willing to step up and take up a role when she needed to step back.
- M. Jamieson was thankful for V. La Rose’s directness and vulnerability with her input.

- C. Watkins liked that the committee could have difficult conversations like that. He apologized for voting on the new Chair/Vice chair when members were absent.

**13. C. Watkins adjourned the meeting at 7:20 PM.**