

MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY BELONGING, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
6:30 PM TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

Approved October 3, 2023

Commission Members Present: Mareesa Miles, (Co-Chair); Eliana Castro (Co-Chair); Clark Sheldon; Preston Fuller, Moira Jamieson, Carl Watkins

Commission Members Absent: Melyssa Bailey

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

Members of the public present: Kurt Hersey (Treasurer) and Scott Bushey (President) of St. Albans Pride Corps

1. M. Miles began the meeting at 6:32 pm.

- Introductions.
- No additions or changes to the agenda.

2. Approval of Minutes from 8/8/23.

- **C. Sheldon motioned to approve the 8/8/23 Minutes, as presented. Seconded by E. Castro. Motion to approve the minutes passed with all in favor. No discussion.**

C. Watkins joined the meeting at 6:35

3. P. Fuller read the Land Acknowledgement and M. Miles read the BEI Committee Values.

4. No Public Comment on Agenda/Non-agenda items.

5. Updates on initiatives and subcommittees.

- M. Jamieson gave an update on the Community focus groups. Nothing had started yet due to the fact that the school year was just beginning.
- C. Sawyer gave an update on the “Movies that Matter” program. There were still a few moving parts with the theater management. C. Sawyer estimated it will be \$500 to pay for licensing and a film. Some nights when things are slower (like

- Sundays) this program would definitely be a possibility.
- i. M. Miles explored the idea of forming a subcommittee to explore movie suggestions while C. Sawyer worked on the back end. P. Fuller suggested the subcommittee come up with 2-3 movie suggestions, and this idea was generally agreed upon.
- Banner Subcommittee.
 - i. P. Fuller had no updates. C. Sawyer mentioned his discussion with Joanne Crawford, Chief of the Missisquoi Abenaki, and discussed progress with preferred terminology for an Indigenous People’s Month banner. This could be a banner to use on multiple occasions.
 - ii. The Committee supported C. Sawyer’s idea.
 - iii. C. Sawyer also mentioned to the committee that ideas for a new banner should be submitted at least a month in advance for proper printing.
 - iv. E. Castro asked C. Sawyer how the committee could find out more about the demographics of St. Albans to better find high priority banner ideas. C. Sawyer would try to find this data and present it to the committee, while also coming up with a “Usual Banner Schedule.”
 - v. C. Watkins suggested a two month advance of banner ideas so there would be plenty of time. The committee agreed that a two month period was a good standard to keep.
 - vi. E. Castro was concerned that opening banners up to public opinion could introduce a lot of contention, just like people who fly flags. P. Fuller specified that banner ideas will need to be approved by the committee before they will be put up.
 - **P. Fuller motioned to approve the wording of the presented Indigenous People’s Heritage Banner. Seconded by C. Watkins. The motion passed with all in favor. There was no discussion.**
 - BEI Committee Benchmarking Subcommittee.
 - i. C. Sheldon shared what he found in other communities that have BEI or DEI committees. E. Castro shared that there was a recent story in the St. Albans Messenger about DEI and BEI initiatives, and the writer might be a good resource for more information.
 - Needs Assessment Subcommittee.
 - i. M. Miles wondered if this subcommittee should be joined by the Community Focus Group subcommittee. C. Watkins understood the benefits of keeping them separate vs. putting them together. M. Jamieson thought it would be easy to merge the two groups. M. Miles explored letting the Needs Assessment Subcommittee stay dormant for a while. C.

Watkins offered to join the Needs Assessment Subcommittee in the future.

- Pride 2024.
 - i. C. Sawyer gave an update on Pride 2024, for June 7th, 8th, and 9th. A Pride Parade would take place at Taylor Park on the 8th. There was a discussion on including students on the parade preparations. The committee offered to help if it's required in the future.
- 6. Updates on organizational items.
 - E. Castro gave an update on how the committee should run. Things will stay relatively informal while voting still stays formal. This would make the minutes a lot easier to keep track of. The committee unanimously agreed with this idea.
 - **C. Watkins motioned to utilize Robert's Rules for the voting process, but bridging to a more informal method for communication and meeting etiquette, that is agreed upon and respectful for all members. Seconded by E. Castro. Motioned passed with all in favor. There was a discussion on the fact that Robert's Rules might be very important when a lot of members of the public join a meeting, or if hostile parties try to disrupt the meeting.**
- 7. Discuss next BEI Cmte. meeting and agenda items.
 - 6:00 on the first Tuesday of the month worked for the committee (at least for the next three months), and C. Sawyer clarified that these dates are available.
 - **C. Watkins motioned to change the meeting time and date to the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 PM, with adjustments for times when it may conflict. Seconded by P. Fuller. The motion passed with all in favor. There was no additional discussion.**
- 8. No public comment.
- 9. Other Business
 - E. Castro brought up terms ending and applications for new members in the future. There was a discussion on the timeline for applications. E. Castro would likely not be staying on the committee.
- 10. Plus/Delta (optional).
 - The committee commended M. Miles for a fantastic job running the meeting as Co-chair with no advanced notice.
 - C. Watkins appreciated the communication and discussions that the committee had on a regular basis, and for the fact that they can all express themselves.
- 11. M. Miles adjourned the meeting at 7:29 PM.**