

**Minutes**  
**St Albans City Belonging, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Meeting**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**St Albans City Hall, 100 N. Main Street, St Albans, VT, 05478**  
**6:30pm, July 11th, 2023**

*Approved July 11, 2023*

**Members Present:** Zoom: Carl Watkins, Clark Sheldon, Melyssa Bailey, Eliana Castro, Preston Fuller, Mareesa Miles, Moira Jamieson-Brooks (Alternate, arrived at 7:18pm)

**Members Absent:** None

**City Staff Present:** In Person: Chip Sawyer (Director of Planning and Development), Quinnlan Steele (Minute-Taker)

**Members of Public:** None

**Begin recording and Open Meeting**

- E Castro opened meeting at 6:31pm
- P Fuller read the Land Acknowledgement and BEI Committee Values

**Approval of June Minutes**

- M Miles moved to approve June minutes, as presented.
- C Watkins seconded
- All were in favor

**Takeaways from June meeting**

E Castro opened this section with her thoughts and comments on the last meeting. She explained that the reframing of the committee's role helped her better understand how it can work with the city and what it can really accomplish.

Many members agreed with Castro's point of view and expressed their appreciation for her words and for the committee as a whole. Members seemed optimistic that with a better-defined function the committee could work more pointedly to accomplish its goals.

**Orientation for new members**

C Sawyer explained the role of city committees, policies and procedures, and communications with city staff to new members. The full text can be read [here](#). This presentation covered the board's role within the city, policies and procedures, and communications with board chair and city staff.

Role of BEI: The BEI is an advisory board, so its role is to advise City staff and the City Council on ways the City can demonstrate the values of belonging, equity and inclusion. This could include presenting projects to the city council, promoting voices of historically marginalized groups in their meetings, or things along those lines.

Policies and Procedures: All public boards need a quorum to pass motions. For The BEI that's four members. However, due to open meeting law, if four or more members want to meet to discuss BEI business, they must do so in a public meeting with an agenda posted at least 48 hours beforehand, with the exception of emergency meetings. This makes having subcommittees of less than four people ideal. The committee also must have a consistent, transparent, fair way of making decisions.

- In this section E Castro brought up the idea of bringing more people into meetings to get input from the community. This introduced the larger idea of how community members could get in contact with the committee between meetings. Many ideas were proposed (BEI email or social media) but the discussion was ultimately tabled for another meeting.

Communication with Board Chair and City Staff: The board chair and city staff will often send out administrative information to the committee and members are also welcome to share informational resources with the committee at any time but larger discussions should wait until public meetings.

### **Overview of Subcommittees & Volunteering**

E Castro set out the plan for this section. Each sub-committee would explain its role and relevance to the BEI committee so new members could find subcommittees to work with. C Watkins asked committees to share their numbers to make sure new members wouldn't push them over quorum.

Banner Subcommittee: This subcommittee's role is publicly promoting BEI values within the community. This began with various banners throughout the city but has expanded to other projects. E Castro noted that with these other projects the subcommittee might want to break off into several more focused subcommittees.

Benchmarking Subcommittee: This subcommittee looks at what other local groups are doing in similar BEI spaces to see what the BEI committee can do here.

Needs Assessment Subcommittee: This subcommittee evaluates what information related to BEI the city monitors. C Sawyer explained that the city doesn't record much but the county, state, and federal gov track more information related to diversity. M Miles also explained that the committee has recently been at a bit of a standstill, unsure of what info is relevant to the BEI committee.

## **Next Meeting and Agenda Items**

E Castro listed ideas for next meeting's agenda items:

- Establishing consistent ways for making decisions
- New sub committees that may need to be created
- Discussing ways for the community and committee to interact
- Discussing meeting format and time.

C Watkins noted that the election for the role of Co-chair could also be an agenda item for the next meeting.

## **Plus/Delta**

Members shared their plus and delta for the committee. The plus was a positive thing they're happy about, the delta a change they're excited for. Many members were happy to be involved with the committee and were excited to see how upcoming plans impact the committee.

E Castro adjourned the meeting at 7:45pm.