

MINUTES

Belonging Equity & Inclusion Committee Meeting
Tuesday, September 13th, 2022 6:30 - 8:00 PM
St. Albans City Hall and VIA Zoom

Board members present: Leah Christopher (Chair); Reier Erickson (Vice Chair); Reese Kelly; Mareesa Miles (Via Zoom); Preston Fuller (Via Zoom); Eliana Castro (Via Zoom)

Board members absent: Clark Sheldon

1. Call to Order

Leah Christopher called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

2. Land Acknowledgement - Reier Erickson

Reier Erickson delivered the land acknowledgement.

3. Agenda Introduction & Review

Leah Christopher introduced the meeting agenda.

4. Public Comment on Agenda/Non-Agenda Items (limit 2 minutes per person)

No public comment.

5. Consider approval of September 13, 2022 Minutes (D&V)

Reese Kelly motioned to approve September minutes.

Reier Erickson seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

6. Action Items – Banner Content Recommendation (D&V)

Leah Christopher introduced the agenda's action item. Reese Kelly and Reier Erickson discussed the banner content recommendation. Reier Erickson suggested changing the banner monthly and gave the example that the month of November could feature indigenous peoples' month in November. Leah Christopher and Reier Erickson also discussed previous banner ideas.

Reese Kelly and Reier Erickson discussed how to set boundaries with banner contents, and choosing what to represent every month. Reese Kelly suggested forming a subcommittee to be in charge of the banner and decide what can and can't be represented by it.

Eliana Castro brought up the previously discussed idea of a more permanent banner with a slogan specific to St. Albans. She mentioned the benefits of highlighting the community and backing the history of the town. Preston Fuller agreed with the idea of finding a slogan that resonates with the city.

Mareesa Miles brought up the question of how to get the community to engage with the symbols used in banners and the statements made.

Reese Kelly agreed that this is helpful but there should be a subcommittee and there should be a process and policy for symbols put up by the city.

Reese Kelly motioned to establish a subcommittee to create a proposal for the committee regarding banner content and processes.

Preston Fuller seconded.

The Committee discussed the logistics of forming a banner subcommittee. Reier Erickson suggested having no more than three people as members. The Committee decided an informal task force would be more desirable than establishing a formal subcommittee. Mareesa Miles and Preston Fuller volunteered. Leah Christopher asked about potential deadlines, and Eliana Castro suggested setting the deadline for January. The Committee agreed with this.

Leah Christopher took a moment to summarize the discussion. Mareesa Miles and Preston Fuller will be working on the banner and what that looks like in terms of content and process. Reese Kelly and Reier Erickson offered to provide background material. Next reporting out will be in December, with a tentative deadline set for January.

Leah Christopher motioned to form a subcommittee.

Not seconded, motion not passed.

7. Goal-setting, benchmarks & measurements of success (D&V)

Leah Christopher reviewed the progress on the Declaration of Inclusion process. She also discussed what meeting schedule would be most effective, given that the BEI Committee would meet election night on Nov. 8th, while the City Council would meet Nov. 14th.

Eliana Castro asked what the plan was for the November meeting, since the election is a busy time. Leah Christopher said the options for the November meeting were to hold an abbreviated meeting via Zoom, cancel the November meeting, or cancel the November meeting and encourage Committee members to attend the Nov. 14th City Council meeting, which will have the Declaration of Inclusion on the agenda. After further discussion, it was agreed upon to cancel the November BEI Committee meeting and encourage Committee members to attend (in-person or via Zoom) the November City Council meeting.

Eliana Castro expressed that she didn't want to leave the election season unacknowledged, since a woman of color running is an event that should be acknowledged. Reese Kelly suggested taking a bit of time to think about delivering ideas to the City, and for writing a statement recognizing the importance of a woman of color running in the election.

Eliana Castro brought up the necessity of checking in with these candidates on whether or not they want attention called to themselves.

Reese Kelly said that he would like to set some foundations for the new year. Leah Christopher suggested dedicating the entirety of the December and/or January meetings to the goal setting agenda item. Preston Fuller asked to plan this for the January meeting. The board further discussed their ideas for this. The final decision reached was to include brainstorming ideas related to the topic in December and then have a more detailed goal setting discussion at the January Committee meeting.

8. Public Comment on Agenda/Non-Agenda Items (limit 2 minutes per person)

No public comment.

9. November 8, 2022 BEI Committee Agenda Items

Future potential agenda items:

- Preselection of individuals available for weekday daytime engagement (participating in the City's hiring process related to a position, etc.)
- How would the BEI committee like to contribute to the City's hiring process?
- How might the land acknowledgement statement be further integrated in the City?
- Channel 15 Northwest Access
- SAPD autism and other patches – what would the Committee like its role to be, if any?

10. Other Business

Reese Kelly brought up the question of meeting with the Mayor and City Manager and where this works with the newly agreed upon agendas through January 2023. Leah Christopher and Reier Erickson suggested deferring this conversation until after January, to accommodate the Committee's goal setting efforts. The committee agreed to a March or April timeframe. Leah Christopher will communicate to the Mayor and City Manager about the desired new timetable.

11. Adjourn

Leah Christopher adjourned the meeting at 7:46 pm