

Meeting Agenda
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission
Irene Givens Administration Building
Dr. John Chiles Activity Room
(at Montgomery Hall Park)
1000 Montgomery Ave.
November 29, 2023
6:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Proposed Agenda:

- 1. Approval of Minutes**
DEI Commission – November 8, 2023
- 2. Discussion about Final Report to City Council**
- 3. Other Business**

Adjournment

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMISSION

Meeting

November 8, 2023

6:00 p.m.

Dr. John Chiles Activity Room

Irene Givens Administration Building

PRESENT: Sabrina Burress, Chair
Lindsey Lennon, Vice Chair
Lou Boden
Joamarie “Joa” Garcia
Mark Jeter
Vicki Keyser (remote participant)
Jake Krug
Beth Nelsen
AnhThu Nguyen
Nathaniel “Nate” Riddle
Daniel “Dan” Stuhlsatz
Jennifer Trippeer
Susan Venable
Zavia Willis (remote participant)

ABSENT: Alice Woods, Council Liaison

ALSO PRESENT: Leslie Beauregard, City Manager
Morgan Smith, City Manager’s Office

Chair Sabrina Burress opened the October 11, 2023 DEI meeting.

Sabrina stated “we received a request from Vicki Keyser to participate remotely in November 8, 2023 DEI Commission meeting due to a personal matter that prevents her physical attendance at the meeting. I will now entertain a motion for her to participate.”

Mark Jeter moved to allow Vicki to remotely participate in the November 8, 2023 DEI Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Sabrina asked Vicki to state the location from which she was participating. Vicki responded that she was at 112 Dale Street, Staunton. Sabrina asked the commission and the audience if they could hear Vicki. The response was affirmative.

1. Approval of Minutes:

- a. Jake Krug moved to approve the minutes of the October 11 and October 25, 2023 DEI Commission meetings. The motion was seconded by Nate Riddle and carried unanimously.

Sabrina stated “we received a request from Zavia Willis to participate remotely in November 8, 2023 DEI Commission meeting due to a personal matter that prevents her physical attendance at the meeting. I will now entertain a motion for her to participate.”

Jake moved to allow Zavia to remotely participate in the November 8, 2023 DEI Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Sabrina asked Zavia to state the location from which she was participating. Zavia responded that she was at the Jefferson Madison Regional Library in Charlottesville. Sabrina asked the commission and the audience if they could hear Zavia. The response was affirmative.

2. Public Hearing Briefing and Discussion

Jake stated that it was very positive to see that many people in attendance and that it gave him home that the DEI Commission has a relationship with the community. Lou Boden commended Sabrina and Lesley for their excellent presentation. Susan Venable mentioned that she heard from a citizen that wanted to see the details on the inequities in various departments. Jennifer Trippier asked if the report was going to be made available to the public and was reassured that it would be.

3. Writing Sub-Committee Updates

Lindsey shared that after a hard look at the Commission's bylaws, she realized that the Commission members terms were a two-year appointment, and that they went through June 30, 2024. That means that the report and presentation is not the end, the Commission will still be able to help City Council with a public hearing on the report.

Lindsey provided key dates for moving forward:

- a. December 8, final report will go out with City Council agenda materials
- b. Although timeline states November 15 is draft due date for the Commission, the Writing Committee asks that date move to November 22.

Jennifer asked what other members of the Commission could do to help the Writing team. Lindsey stated that the Writing team would like to go over the recommendations [Attachment A] with the full committee to make sure that everyone agreed and shared the proposed framework going forward. She also stated that they could use help in the editing and proofing stage. It was decided that each sub-committee would copy edit the section they had helped analyze.

Discussion ensued regarding the draft recommendations.

4. Additional Sub-Committee Updates

Logistics and Planning will make updates to the timeline as previously mentioned.

5. Other Business

There was no other business. The next meeting will be at 6 p.m. on November 29.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7 p.m.

**City of Staunton – DEI Commission
Final Report
Draft Recommendations
11/8/23**

Goal A: Invest in a long-term DEI commitment.

Action A-1: Hire or name a DEI Officer position to provide overall oversight of DEI initiatives.

Action A-2: Implement a permanent DEI Commission made up of diverse community members to assist with community building, accountability, and ongoing data collection, synthesis, and integration.

Goal B: Reflect values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in staff representation, policies, and procedures.

Action B-1: Formally review all City hiring practices, policies, and procedures related to DEI, including staff representation, recruitment, and interview procedures.

- Explore recruitment strategies to attract minority applicants and increase overall accessibility.

Action B-2: Develop a standardized DEI-specific onboarding and training for all City employees and Boards/Commissions.

Action B-3: Conduct an accessibility audit of city facilities and public areas.

Action B-4: Ensure public transparency and accountability in DEI initiatives, including commitment to increasing diversity and representation across City staff, and formal updates of DEI outcomes to the community annually.

Goal C: Promote and model values of diversity, equity, and, inclusion for the community and broader region to increase community engagement and foster a stronger sense of belonging.

Action C-1: Address broad communication gaps, and ensure communications are diverse in language, tone, access, and platform.

- Provide bilingual communications and forms used by the City.

Action C-2: Develop an “Equity Network”: Foster and build a network of interconnected community organizations, service providers, and stakeholders who specialize in the areas affected by DEI issues.

- Invest or increase participation in community outreach opportunities to “meet the community where they are.”
- Leverage existing outreach networks including community health workers or outreach events already conducted by community agencies.

Action C-3: Create more inclusive communication to increase access to and knowledge of available services for the community, including language access, and platform and technology needs.

- Build community awareness and education surrounding issues related to health, what health services are available, and how to access those health services.
- Assess and better understand how to improve 2-1-1’s performance, community access, and utilization.
- Develop a centralized directory of support and community services.

Goal D: Prioritize increased opportunities for residents to gain and sustain economic vitality.

Action D-1: Address the need for affordable housing.

- Review local zoning and ordinances that can assist in the creation and maintenance of affordable and safe housing.
- Evaluate the focus of and items on housing within the City of Staunton's Comprehensive Plan 2018-2040 to ensure the actions planned are people-focused and directly address the social factors highlighted within this report.
- Support a collaboration of local organizations to address housing issues within Staunton.
- Continue to support efforts to revitalize Uniontown and the West End.

Action D-2: Enhance public transportation services and non-car options.

- Expand transportation services to increase employment and economic opportunities for Staunton's diverse community members.
- Follow similar recommendations listed in the VDH, Virginia Health Equity Report, 2012 recommendation regarding affordability of transportation and housing.
 - Ensure equitable access to multiple transit options.
 - Ensure new growth and improvements in existing development address public transportation access so that all residents can participate in the local economy and current residents are protected from potential displacement. Transportation opportunities should link all communities with major employment centers.
- Follow similar recommendations listed in the 2021 CAPSAW Needs Assessment Report regarding ensuring sufficient access to public transit systems such as BRITE bus.
 - Examine route design to ensure proper connection to employment areas, hospital and service providers, and grocery centers.
 - Expand service hours to include Sunday and evening hours.
 - Explore and invest in micro-transit opportunities that offer on-demand availability for vulnerable populations, or those living in areas not serviced by current transit routes.

- Create opportunities and sufficient infrastructure for safe cycling and walking to work, grocery stores, etc.

Action D-3: Continue to cultivate industry and business opportunities, with a focus on minority businesses:

- Develop a list of minority-owned businesses within the City.
- Consider specific resource allocations for minority-owned businesses.

Goal E: Support community well-being with an enhanced focus on vulnerable residents.

Action E-1: Address the intergenerational needs of Staunton residents.

- Engage youth in development opportunities.
 - Identify ways to partner with Staunton City Schools (SCS) to support the City's children and families.
 - Encourage mentoring opportunities (especially with MBU) and opportunities for youth to give back to the community and to create an opportunity for innovative local solutions and teaming.
- Conduct or participate in a needs assessment on childcare to have a full understanding of the current childcare needs of City community members, including affordability of care, living wages for providers, and access to benefits.
- Foster opportunities for social engagement for all ages, but especially the aging population.
 - Create a community space for the elderly, youth, and those with severe mental illness.

Action E-2: Build community awareness of the diverse lived experiences of Staunton residents and community needs – including BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and Disability community.

- Develop intentional qualitative research efforts grounded in trust-building and community-building
- Collaboratively engage community members with lived experience, community stakeholders, and agencies with subject matter expertise.
- Invest in programming and events that reflect diverse experiences and provide opportunities for awareness, education, and engagement.

Action E-3: Foster collaboration and coordination between local programs and service providers focused on mental health and health-related services, including developing an understanding of how the City can support the work of these programs.

- Embrace walkability initiatives that promote and increase physical activity.

- Develop policies and programs that consider and address the multiple factors related to health access and physical and mental health outcomes in our community (income, children and childcare, race, crime, stigma, age, transportation, and housing insecurity).
- Work with the Blue Ridge Criminal Justice Board, Blue Ridge Court Services, and local supporters to establish a facility for comprehensive care of citizens exhibiting mental health symptoms in encounters with the police.

Action E-4: Pursue equity in criminal justice.

- Ensure that Blue Ridge Court Services continues to have the resources and support necessary to monitor racial inequity at the Magistrate level of CJS decision-making.
- Expand ongoing analysis of social equity to other levels of CJS decision-making.