

CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

Minutes of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Commission Meeting

January 9, 2024

3:00 PM

Council Chambers & Zoom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call Present: Nancy Goodloe, Phil Backlund, Tylene Carnell, Kandee Cleary, Teresa Divine, Amber Hoefer, and Mayra Colazo.

Also present: Nicole Klauss, Public Information Officer (Recording Secretary); Lucinda Carnell, CWU liaison; Rhonda Schmidt, ESD liaison; Ramona Bryant, League of Women Voters; and Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager.

Commissioner Divine moved to approve an excused absence for Commissioner Mandujano. Commissioner Cleary seconded the motion. **Motion approved 6-0.**

2. Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Carnell moved to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Backlund seconded the motion. **Motion approved 6-0.**

3. Approval of Minutes from December 12, 2023, Meeting

Commissioner Divine moved to approve the minutes from the December 12, 2023, DEI Commission Meeting. Commissioner Cleary seconded the motion. **Motion approved 6-0.**

4. Previous Meeting Motions And To-Do List Review

A. Previous Meeting Motions: The previous meeting motions were reviewed.

B. To-Do List: The 90-day goal list was updated.

Updated 90-Day Goals:

- Plan Juneteenth event **Amber, Nancy, Teresa, and Kandee (*Amber and Teresa will be out of town, but can help plan*)**
- City will recognize Trans Day of Visibility: Highlight trans folks in our community and their contribution to Ellensburg **Tylene & Teresa**
- Develop an accessible onboarding program for new commission members (within first six months – *by end of March 2024*) **Mayra, Phil, and Nicole**
- Develop the strategies and partnerships to support diverse residents to apply to City boards to better reflect our diverse community (**combined with above**)
- CWU/City collaboration to engage students with off-campus resources **Lucinda and Nancy**

- Continue World Café conversations and expand topics of discussion **Lucinda, Nancy, Alex, and Kandee. Update: Lucinda and Nancy will work on setting next event date.**
- Develop partnerships for planning a multicultural event to celebrate the opening of Unity Park that focuses on music, food, dance, etc. **Nicole (to coordinate with staff), Phil, Tylene, and Alex**
- Schedule a date for a Juneteenth celebration and form a planning committee with community volunteers **Amber and Nancy**
- Explore coalition partnership idea with the Dispute Resolution Center and others **Amber, Nancy, and Phil**
- Meet with the Farmer's Market and Night Market organizers to discuss a multicultural day at the Farmers Market and possibly sponsoring vendors **Teresa, Kandee, and Mayra**
- Develop a spending plan for 2024. **Nancy**
- Put listening tour data into a document for review, and discuss how to use the data **Phil, Alex, and Mayra**

5. Liaison Reports

Lucinda Carnell reported the CWU Annual Diversity Awards event is March 7 and nominations are due by February 1. Rosa Clemente is an invited speaker this year. February is Black History Month and Raymond Santana, one of the exonerated five, is speaking at CWU on February 1.

Rhonda Schmidt said every two years the state gives students a healthy youth survey. Sixth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth graders took it and results should be available in March. It addresses issues about how students experience school. On January 2, ESD had an all-teacher training day and half was professional development around English language learners; 7% of students at ESD are receiving English language learner support.

6. Subcommittee Reports

Commissioner Colazo reported:

- The Unity Park Action Team is meeting to finalize art proposals. The groundbreaking target date is April. There will be a fence around the construction site and weatherproof community art will be on the fence.
- The Listening Tour Subcommittee is meeting January 31 to finalize the group of listening tours and the new chair.
- The next listening tour is February 1st at 11 a.m. at CWDR.

Commissioner Hoefer reported:

- She had a meeting with Kelle Vandenberg about the Arts & Equity Alliance. The group is looking for a board member. Let Hoefer or Vandenberg know if interested. They are looking for involvement from people with non-dominant identities.
- Latino Legislative Day is January 22. Register to attend in Olympia.

7. Commission Member Reports

Chair Goodloe mentioned the City Council has a vacancy and is accepting applications until February 12.

Commissioner Divine reported:

- “The Central Park Five” Documentary will be shown on January 30 in the CWU SURC Theatre at 5 p.m.
- Yakima is doing a Black History Month on the 31st so she will attend to see what they do and make connections for Juneteenth.

Commissioner Carnell reported:

- Helen House and Trans Rural Lives hosted an event at Gallery One and had 35 people attend. It was a fundraiser and opportunity to recognize stories. Trans elders (50+) shared stories with younger folks in the community.
- The safe spaces program hosted three trainings before the holidays at Gallery One, CWDR, and for faculty at the high school. Helen House will host a safe spaces training the second Tuesday of the month from 2-3:30 p.m. for businesses or organizations that can only send a few employees to training at a time. Three businesses (1 in the Upper County and two in Ellensburg) reached out to get scheduled for safe spaces training.
- KCYouth is planning a field day event for the end of the school year.
- The pizza klatch facilitator’s schedule changed so Carnell took over the event. There were 25 kids over 2 lunch periods.

8. New Business

A. Discuss Rapid Response Team

Goodloe reported the City Council made the decision to remove Zoom comments on non-agenda items, but they may reconsider it. Other ways for people to communicate with the Council include email, writing letters, or attending Council meetings to provide public comment in person. A Councilmember asked for clarification on whether the DEI Commission’s recommendation to keep virtual public comment was on non-agenda items.

There was a suggestion to submit comments and review ahead of them being read, but Goodloe said the logistics would be hard for staff.

Commissioner Carnell spoke in favor of keeping the comments on non-agenda items because any decision to limit people’s engagement with the City allows the hateful people to win. There could be legitimate concerns brought up at the meetings. Carnell asked when hate speech happens, is there a plan to create a space to talk about it to learn how someone might be impacted? A space could provide those impacted with a voice, but it also provides those who want to make change a place to get tools.

Commissioner Colazo said it is important to allow community members to bring non-agenda items to Council. Commissioner Hoefer would rather create a space for voices and disrupt harm by cutting a person off rather than limiting comments.

There was a suggestion to have the Council/Mayor say something in the moment (if hate speech occurs) such as, "We respect all individuals in our communities."

A rapid response team could have a phone/communication tree that could set up a space to address the community it impacts. A rapid response team needs to have 1) an acknowledgement of the incident and 2) an action or next step such as a place to come together. Goodloe will have a conversation with the City manager and mayor about the rapid response team. Goodloe indicated the Commission would finalize this recommendation at the February meeting.

Klauss will draft a memo to the City Council on behalf of the DEI Commission asking them to reconsider their decision on limiting virtual comments to agenda items only.

B. Ellensburg Ally Group Discussion

The discussion was brief and tied in with item 8A. Goodloe asked how the DEI Commission can build relationships in these communities so they can respond when something happens.

9. Staff Report

Klauss reported:

- Goodloe would be attending the Affordable Housing Commission meeting on 2/7/24 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers for an introduction and one additional member could attend
- A reminder to check City emails; if you are having access issues, connect with IT.
- Attendance resets this month. A member could be removed if three or more unexcused absences at regular meetings in a calendar year. Requests for excused absences from regular meetings should be submitted for inclusion as Board or Commission agenda items by emailing Nicole or Nancy, preferably prior to the absence. You can also make requests at the meeting prior to your scheduled absence.
- EPD Safety Survey is live. Printed copies are available at City facilities in English and Spanish.
- Next meeting we will have Jeremy Johnston from Community Development here to talk about the next round of Comprehensive Plan amendments, including the DEI Chapter. Please review chapter ahead of the meeting.
- Klauss out Jan. 10-16, 2024.

12. Preview Next Meeting February 13, 2024

- Jeremy Johnston Comprehensive Plan Amendments
- Discussion about when to release 2024 grants

Meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

Nicole Klauss

Drafted: January 18, 2024

Approved: February 13, 2024