

CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

Minutes of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Commission Meeting

February 11, 2025

3:00 PM

Council Chambers & Zoom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

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

Roll Call Present: Phil Backlund, Tylene Carnell, Kandee Cleary, Teresa Divine, Nancy Goodloe, Amber Hoefer, M. Eliatamby-O'Brien, Alex Mandujano, and Serena Turney.

Also present: Nicole Klauss, DEI Commission staff member; Charlita Shelton, CWU liaison; Rhonda Schmidt, ESD liaison; Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager; Rich Elliott, City Mayor; Kelle Vandenberg, Arts & Economic Development Manager; and 4 members of the public (1 in person and 3 via Zoom).

2. Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Amber Hoefer moved to bump item 4.C Discussion On Our Commitment To Community to 4.A. Commissioner Phil Backlund seconded the motion. **Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioner Serena Turney had not yet joined the meeting).**

Commissioner Kandee Cleary moved to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Eliatamby-O'Brien seconded the motion. **Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioner Serena Turney had not yet joined the meeting).**

3. Approval of Minutes from January 14, 2025 Commission Meeting

Commissioner Phil Backlund moved to approve the minutes from the January 14, 2025 DEI Commission Meeting. Commissioner Tylene Carnell seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion approved 8-0.**

4. New Business

A. Discussion On Our Commitment To Community

Commissioner Amber Hoefer opened the discussion and mentioned some members of the community are nervous or afraid with the current political landscape and asked, as a DEI Commission how do we acknowledge the harm they are experiencing. Are there things the DEI Commission can do to support the City Council? Look at other cities such as Spokane to see what they are doing.

Commission Backlund suggested promoting training opportunities such as the Know Your Rights trainings.

Mayor Rich Elliott spoke about his perspective on policy statements and mentioned the City runs the risk of raising its profile. If the commission wants to advise the Council to

consider looking at a resolution or statement, that is an option, but he asked the commission to think about the outcome. It will likely be divisive and take multiple meetings. Will it shine further attention on the community and bring more challenges?

Commissioner Hoefer said the intent is to look at minoritized groups that are hurting and let them know they belong in Ellensburg. Commissioner Eliatamby-O'Brien said the goal of a statement would not be to change hearts and minds, but to let people know the community is here for them.

Goodloe suggested continuing to work on a draft resolution. Hoefer suggested having large community leaders such as CWU, City, and EPD come together to be bold.

Mayor Elliott conveyed appreciation of the DEI Commission members for their service to the City and suggested there may be ways for Councilmembers to be more visible in the community and talk to different groups.

Commissioner Turney said the commission itself might help people by showing the City still values DEI.

Teresa Plue and Charlita Shelton spoke during public comment.

Goodloe suggested thinking about how the commission can accomplish what it wants to accomplish and suggested inviting Councilmembers to listening tours.

A subcommittee was formed to discuss ideas ahead of the next meeting and includes Commissioners Hoefer, Mandujano, Divine, and Cleary.

B. Review & Approve Grant Timeline And Application

Klauss provided an update on the 2025 grant program application and reviewed the changes from the 2024 application. The changes include updated dates and language about applicant eligibility.

Commissioner Eliatamby-O'Brien asked for the definition of a board member to be added to the application.

Commissioner Cleary moved to approve the 2025 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commission Grant Application with the addition of the definition of board member. Commissioner Backlund seconded the motion. **Motion approved 8-0.**

C. Discuss Multicultural Day At The Market

Commissioner Divine reported planning is underway for Multicultural Day at the Market, set for May 3. The Commission's event budget would likely pay for table fees. Divine is looking for vendors and will send out a note about how vendors can sign up.

Goodloe reported the Multicultural Day at Unity Park will likely happen in the fall when CWU students are back.

5. Previous Meeting Motions & To-Do List Review

There were no updates.

6. Liaison Reports

Ellensburg School District liaison Rhonda Schmidt reported the district held a Zoom Q&A session about rights around schools and what information can be released.

7. Subcommittee Reports

Commissioner Eliatamby-O'Brien and Commissioner Hoefer reported on attending the Ellensburg Creative District Steering Committee meeting.

8. Commission Member Reports

There were no commission member reports.

9. Staff Report

Klauss reported the date for the 2025 retreat will be October 17, 2025. Two commission members' terms will be up in May.

10. Public Comments

Chair Goodloe called for public comment online and in person. There was no public comment.

Next Meeting March 11, 2025

Topics: Continue discussion from February meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Nicole Klauss

Drafted: 2/13/2025

Approved: 3/11/2025