

AGENDA DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMISSION

February 3, 2026

Hybrid Meeting In-person and via Zoom



Accessibility

The City of Ellensburg strives to make our services, programs, and activities readily accessible.

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**CITY OF ELLENSBURG
DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMISSION AGENDA
Council Chambers
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926
And remotely via Zoom
Tuesday, February 3, 2026
3:00 PM - Regular Meeting**

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call of Members**
 - 1.A DEI Commission Meeting Grounding (Read)
- 2. Approval of Agenda (No Public Comment)**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.A Approval of Minutes from January 13, 2026
- 4. New Business**
 - 4.A Recap on Joint Study Session (discussion)
- 5. Liaison Reports** Dr. Elvin Delgado and Ruben Cardenas - CWU; and Rhonda Schmidt - Ellensburg School District
- 6. Commission Member Reports**
- 7. Subcommittee Reports**
- 8. Staff Report**
 - 8.A Staff Report
- 9. Public Comment** PUBLIC COMMENT RULES FOR ALL MEETING PARTICIPANTS
 1. Each speaker's comments are to be limited to 3 MINUTES and must state their name and city of residence.
 2. Speakers are cautioned not to engage in conduct that disrupts, disturbs or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the DEI Commission meeting.
 3. Comments must be related to the commission's business or over which the Commission has control.
 4. Speakers may not identify themselves as candidates for elective public office or make any statements which assist or discuss the campaign of a candidate for elective office or discuss or campaign for or against a ballot proposition.
- 10. Adjournment** Next meeting is March 10, 2026



For more information on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission, contact Public Information Officer Nicole Klauss at 509-925-8657.

DEI Commission Meeting Grounding: What We Mean by DEI

Diversity: We recognize and celebrate the wide range of backgrounds, experiences, identities, and perspectives that make our city unique.

- For example: Unity Park's grand opening included a variety of performances that reflected the cultural richness of our community.

Equity: We understand that not everyone starts from the same place, and acknowledge the unique needs of different groups and residents. We strive to identify and help remove barriers that prevent people from having full and complete access to opportunities and resources, so everyone has the ability and self-determination to thrive.

- For example: DEI grants have supported small, local businesses and events that center underrepresented voices.

Inclusion: We strive to create spaces where people from all walks of life feel welcomed, safe, respected, and invited to be an active part of the community.

- For example: Conversations with Parks & Rec have led to more inclusive restroom options for different families and visitors.

Accessibility: Everyone deserves the opportunity to take part in community life, so we work to address and remove barriers (ex. physical, language, social, and communicative) so everyone can fully take part in community life.

- For example: We've encouraged the city to use interpretation services and listening devices in meetings so more people can engage.

Belonging: We all want to feel like we're part of where we live and make our home—seen, valued, respected—and that our contributions are welcome. Belonging is at the heart of a healthy community.

- For example: We've supported heritage month proclamations, Juneteenth celebrations, and partnerships that build bridges between groups.

CITY OF ELLENSBURG
Date of Meeting
Time of Meeting
Place of Meeting

Minutes of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Commission Meeting
January 13, 2026
3:00 PM
Council Chambers & Zoom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Nancy Goodloe called the meeting to order at 3:16 p.m.

Roll Call Present: Phil Backlund, Kande Cleary, Nancy Goodloe, Amber Hoefler, and M. Eliatamby-O'Brien.

Also present: Nicole Klauss, staff member assigned to the DEI Commission; Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager; Dan Carlson, Community Development Director; Stacey Henderson, Planning Manager; Ruben Cardenas, CWU Associate Vice President liaison; Ramona Bryant, League of Women Voters of Kittitas County; applicant Cody Natland; applicant Jeffrey St. John; applicant Judd Ike Grey; applicant Amber Darting; 3 members of the public (2 in person and 1 online).

Applicants Amber Darting, Jeffrey St. John, and Judd Ike Grey provided introductions. The other applicant provided an introduction at the previous meeting.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Cleary moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Backlund seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion approved 4-0.**

3. Approval of Commission Minutes from December 9, 2025 Meeting

Commissioner Backlund moved to approve the meeting minutes from the December 9, 2025 DEI Commission meeting. Commissioner Cleary seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion approved 4-0.**

4. New Business

A. The Commission received an overview of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update from Community Development staff member Stacey Henderson. Commissioner Cleary volunteered to act as the DEI Commission liaison to consult on the climate chapter. Commissioner Backlund volunteered to act as the DEI Commission liaison to consult on the housing chapter.

B. Chair Goodloe led a discussion about proclamations. The proclamations subcommittee will be making the proclamations shorter and trying to get final versions to staff earlier. Goodloe is waiting for direction from the Mayor about whether they will be read at Council meetings again.

C. Staff requested the Commission move the February DEI Commission to Tuesday, February 3 due to a quorum issue. Commissioners all indicated they could be present on the new date. Staff will update City calendars.

D. Chair Goodloe provided a brief overview of the upcoming Joint Study Session With City Council on Tuesday, January 20. There will be a brief update from City staff on Chapter 1.88 and the majority of the time will be spent looking at DEI Commission activities so the City Council can provide some direction on what they want to see from the Commission. Staff shared a list of items that will be printed on large posters for the activity. Commissioner Hoefer asked for copies of the DEI Commission's annual report be available for Councilmembers.

5. Liaison Reports

CWU liaison Ruben Cardenas reported:

- There is a Peace March on January 21 at noon on campus. It is open to everyone and will start at the Wildcat statue outside of the Student Union and Recreation Center (SURC).
- There is a MLK remembrance program on January 21 at 6 p.m. in the SURC Theatre.
- CWU SLICE is doing service in the community all week for MLK Week of Service.
- Jennifer King will be doing a presentation at CWU on Feb. 5. King was the first black female coach in NFL history.

6. Subcommittee Reports

Grant Subcommittee: Staff reported the five DEI grant recipients submitted their reports on their project and reimbursement requests. Reports were included in the packet.

7. Commission Member Reports

Commissioner Hoefer attended a meeting with City staff and Commissioner Eliatamby-O'Brien regarding the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Goodloe will be serving as a Council liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission this year.

Commissioner Eliatamby-O'Brien has been in contact with the Multicultural Center at CWU discussing a possible event for this year. Eliatamby-O'Brien also brought up the idea of a block party, which was previously suggested by Tylene Carnell.

8. Staff Report

Staff Reported:

- Blank name plate stands were ordered for all commissioners or Councilmembers to use. This was not taken from the Commission's budget.
- The Library's 116th birthday celebration is on January 20.
- The Library offers Friday Tech Time for technology help. Contact the reference desk.

- Free Collage Club Collaborative Workshop on January 27.
- Reminder City facilities are closed on January 19 for MLK Jr. Day.

9. Public Comments

Chair Goodloe called for public comment.

- William Coleman provided public comment.

10. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

Nicole Klauss, staff member assigned to the DEI Commission

Drafted: 1/14/26

Approved:

DRAFT



Meeting Date: February 3, 2026
City of Ellensburg

Diversity Equity & Inclusion Commission Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Recap on Joint Study Session (discussion)
Submitted by:
Department: City Manager

Suggested Motion/Action:
Hold a discussion about the Jan. 20 joint study session with City Council.

Background/Summary:
The DEI Commission held a joint study session with the Ellensburg City Council on Tuesday, January 20. During the study session, the City Council discussed the work of the commission and participated in a dot voting exercise to visually indicate priorities for the work of the commission. The dot voting included items listed under [Chapter 1.88.060 Duties and Responsibilities](#) of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commission. For the purposes of this meeting, Commission members should be prepared to:

- Share thoughts from the joint study session.
- Discuss: Are there recommendations for Council about things to generate ideas as next step?
- Review the attached photos from the study session and talk about the topics with green dots
- Discuss strategies to reach folks that aren't being reached

Previous Council Action:
N/A

Analysis:
N/A

Financial Impact:
N/A

Budget Adjustment: No

- Attachments:**
1. A
 2. B
 3. C
 4. D1

- 5. D2
- 6. D3
- 7. D4
- 8. D5
- 9. E

A. Advise city council on actions needed to sustain and improve diversity, equity and inclusion in the city of Ellensburg;

Actions by Commission:

- Proclamations*
- Recognition Days*
- Commission Liaisons to EDA, CWU, and ESD
- Participate on focus groups and committees (Unity Park design, flag and banner policy, etc.)

Broaden Scope

Maint. made history

* Denotes activity/funding approved by Council

Access focus?

B. Examine the practices and procedures of the city of Ellensburg to identify strategies to create processes and services which recognize the needs and differences of all who live and work in, or visit, Ellensburg;

Broad

- Briefing on various city projects and services; Commission advised on accessibility and barrier removal (i.e., Ellensburg Academy, sustainability, transit, sidewalks and ADA transition plan, translation, Housing Action Plan, interpretation for events, parks Infrastructure, EPD Community Survey results, hiring procedures, surveys, web accessibility, etc.

I appreciate advisory, but would prefer encouragement of participation

all elements All

All commissions do this - does it need to be in ordinance?

C. Review and recommend amendments that incorporate the values of diversity, equity and inclusion into the city of Ellensburg comprehensive plan;

- Comprehensive Plan – Chapter 9*
- Amending of Chapter 9*
- Review Elements of Comp Plan*

Change language to be compliant w/o losing intent - broader focus

I'd still like to see a manager of language that was discussed w/ BRUCE ANGELB

* Denotes activity/funding approved by Council

D. Recommend for council adoption a community engagement plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

This is great stuff
decides for itself
community participation
"welcome Watson"

1. Developing activities such as forums, community gatherings, and events to promote mutual understanding and that encourage residents to connect with one another;

Community connections
Neighborhood Block Parties
- City promotional packets

- Human Library (grant)*
- Belonging in the Burg World Café*
- Farmer's Market or Unity Park Multi-cultural Day (planned)*

* Denotes activity/funding approved by Council

Projects - Neighbors

* getting more people involved
not an answer provided but should be thought of

D. Recommend for council adoption a community engagement plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

How do you reach the 45% that voted against DEJ?

2. Identifying partner groups or organizations to sponsor regular cultural celebrations;

- Juneteenth Celebration (partnership with CWU, EDA, etc.)*

Partner Events

* Denotes activity/funding approved by Council

Robust Comm. Effort

Large Reps-groups

D. Recommend for council adoption a community engagement plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

to occur

3. Creating strategies to distribute information to people of different cultures (e.g. bilingual resources, disability resources, culturally appropriate ways);

- Event Flyer Translation
- Interpretation Services – advise staff and Council
- Land Acknowledgement
- Statement*

intent?

To what end?
Focus → when + where?

* Denotes activity/funding approved by Council

D. Recommend for council adoption a community engagement plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

4. Implement outreach strategies for improving city services relating to DEI;

• **Listening Tours***

Listening
to Larger
Groups

breakshot
depth of
engagement.

** Denotes activity/funding approved by Council*

D. Recommend for council adoption a community engagement plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

5. Advise the city council regarding the impact of policy and budgetary choices on marginalized communities; and

- Grants to Community Organizations for Programming
- Flag policy

I think this a community involvement encouragement. Pushing participation by all community members.

E. Present recommendations to the city council on how to achieve the duties and responsibilities outlined in this section. Reports to the council may be made as progress occurs, but no less than bi-annually.

- City Council Policy Memos
- Annual Report to Council
- Spending Plan Approved by Council*
- Provide ^{comment} ~~public~~ comment to Council on various topics

? regarding part of this → always open to everyone?

** Denotes activity/funding approved by Council*



Meeting Date: February 3, 2026
City of Ellensburg

Diversity Equity & Inclusion Commission Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Staff Report
Submitted by:
Department: City Manager

Suggested Motion/Action:
Listen to staff updates.

Background/Summary:

- Enroll in the Ellensburg Academy! The 2026 Ellensburg Academy is a two-session class designed to teach Ellensburg residents about the inner workings of Ellensburg’s local government. Join this free program to get involved and become a more informed and engaged resident! Enrollment is open to residents 18 and up. Class is in session from 6-9 p.m. on March 11 & March 18, 2026 at Hal Holmes Community Center, 209 N. Ruby St., Ellensburg.
Enroll: www.ellensburgwa.gov/academy
- City facilities are closed on Monday, February 16, 2026 for Presidents' Day. The City Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 17, 2026.

Previous Council Action:
N/A

Analysis:
N/A

Financial Impact:
N/A

Budget Adjustment: No

Attachments:
None