



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
OCTOBER 14, 2025, 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.
HELD VIA [ZOOM WEBINAR](#) AND AT
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA



FDC MISSION STATEMENT: The City of Fairbanks recognizes that our community is a diverse one, with a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, cultures, beliefs and orientations and recognizes this diversity as an asset and resource for our community. The establishment of a Fairbanks Diversity Council can provide the City Council and Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly with advice and recommendations to promote equal opportunity for all members of the public.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: We respectfully acknowledge the Dena people upon whose traditional lands we reside. We honor the Dena who have been the stewards of Interior lands and waters for centuries, the Elders who lived here before, the Dena people of today, and future generations to come. We also recognize that Alaskan Native people would traditionally gather here and harvest Native foods.

1. CALL TO ORDER (Reading of Mission Statement and Land Acknowledgement)
2. ROLL CALL
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES
 - a) Regular Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2025
6. CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Limited to 3 Minutes)
7. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR
8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
 - a) Human Library Update – Event Coordinators: Marney, Webb
Noel Wien Library, New Date??
 - b) Calendar of Events (informational only)
 - c) Discussion on Land Acknowledgement Recommendation
9. NEW BUSINESS
10. FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS
11. MEETING DATES
 - a) Next Regular Meeting Date, November 18, 2025 (rescheduled from November 11)
12. ADJOURNMENT



FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 9, 2025, 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.



HELD VIA [ZOOM WEBINAR](#) AND AT
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

The **Fairbanks Diversity Council (FDC)** met on the above date to conduct a Regular Meeting via Zoom Webinar and at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska. **Chair Karen Blackburn** (Seat I) was physically present, and the following members were in attendance:

Members Present (In Person):

Erica Dillard, Seat A
June Rogers, Seat C (arrived at 5:33)
Juanita Webb, Seat D
Herb Butler, Seat J
Deirdre Hamilton, Seat K
Jake Merritt, HR Director
Lonny Marney, City Council Member

Members Absent:

Jennifer Hartford, Seat B (excused)
Vacant, Seat E
Dorothy Shockley, Seat F (excused)
Vacant, Seat G
Vacant, Seat H
David Pruhs, Mayor

Also Present:

D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER (Reading of Mission Statement and Land Acknowledgement)

Chair Blackburn called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. **J. Webb** read the mission statement, and **H. Butler** read the land acknowledgement.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Blackburn led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

J. Webb, seconded by **H. Butler**, moved to approve the agenda. There being no objection, the agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of July 8, 2025
- b) Regular Meeting Minutes of August 12, 2025

J. Rogers, seconded by **D. Hamilton**, moved to approve both sets of meeting minutes. There being no objection, both sets of meeting minutes were approved.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS – None

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Chair Blackburn stated that she met with Clerk Snider earlier that day, and they discussed FDC history and new ideas. She stated she would like to look into getting the FDC on social media and explore different options for funding. She indicated she would like the FDC to have a tag line and unified branding and suggested an update of the FDC logo. She spoke about ways to create community visibility for the FDC and partnerships with other local organizations.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Election of New Vice Chair

Chair Blackburn asked if there were any volunteers to serve as vice chair. Clerk Snider explained process. **J. Webb** suggested that it may be invigorating for the FDC to have new members step up.

D. Hamilton asked about the duties of the vice chair. Clerk Snider summarized the typical duties. **D. Hamilton** nominated J. Rogers. **J. Rogers** declined. She explained that she has served on the FDC since 2014, and she currently has many commitments. She indicated that it is not a good time for her to add more obligations. She stated that she would commit to remaining on the FDC and helping, but that she could not take on the role of vice chair.

D. Hamilton volunteered. Seeing no other volunteers to serve as vice chair, **Chair Blackburn** called for objection to appointing D. Hamilton as vice chair. No members objected.

b) Human Library Update – Event Coordinators: Marney, Webb Noel Wien Library, September 20, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

L. Marney stated that the event is only a week away and he does not think there are enough “books.” **J. Webb** confirmed that there were not enough volunteers and recommended the Human Library be postponed. She presented a draft flyer for the event for the FDC to review. She reported that she and L. Marney met with Josh at the Noel Wien Library. She shared that October is global diversity awareness month, and she suggested moving the Human Library date to October 18. Other members indicated that is the date for the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) convention, so it would not work. Members agreed to pursue October 25 as the event date. **J. Webb** spoke about the flyer and discussed her vision for how the Human Library would be conducted. **L. Marney** added that the event would not be worth the FDC’s time if there isn’t more participation. **J. Webb** stated she would like to get 20 books scheduled; she indicated that she has been trying to personally invite people to be books.

H. Butler questioned how the library would work and whether a book would just show up and wait for someone to bring up a topic. **J. Webb** stated that the book would choose the topic in advance—an aspect of their life. **H. Butler** remarked that any topic in his life would take way longer to present than the allotted time. **J. Webb** stated that might be an issue because there must be a time limit. She explained that she foresees a timekeeper/helper in each room. **H. Butler** asked how books would be introduced. **J. Webb** suggested a bio or a brief introduction before the groups split off. **H. Butler** recommended that multiple topics be allowed. **J. Webb** commented that she does not want to repeat what happened the last time, where only three people showed up. **J. Rogers**

shared her opinion that it does not need to be about tragic or negative events and cautioned on channeling other folks' memories in a way that is not their own.

J. Merritt stated he believes there is a disconnect amongst the FDC regarding the Human Library topic. He stated that the event would involve 20 human "books" that can be "checked out" so that people may learn and ask questions in a safe place. **D. Hamilton** asked who the audience would be, and **J. Webb** replied that it would be whoever attends.

H. Butler stated that he would offer two topics for himself: the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and the Natural Gas Pipeline. He commented that the only information about those things available to the public is from newspapers and other publications. **J. Webb** indicated that she has a different perspective on the event, and she read the descriptive paragraph from the Human Library flyer. She stated that the intent is for it to be diversity-based. **H. Butler** stated that he is having a hard time envisioning library patrons who are interested in a diversity topic. **L. Marney** responded that the young man who runs the Noel Wien Library is very interested. **H. Butler** shared that he is a prolific reader, but if he had not gotten involved with diversity councils, he would not have any interest in diversity. **J. Webb** stated she feels it will be a safe place for people to ask questions that they cannot ask elsewhere. **H. Butler** stated he is struggling with knowing what topic to choose without knowing his audience.

Chair Blackburn summarized how she envisions the event based on the discussion:

- Books have preset topic(s)
- Interested individuals check out the books they are interested in
- There will be a rotating schedule so that everyone has a chance to be "checked out"
- Topics are the personal preference of the "book"

Chair Blackburn gave examples of what she would talk about if she was a book and stated that people will be interested because individuals want to get to know one another. **L. Marney** stated that it will be a learning experience for everyone. **D. Hamilton** asked how often the FDC will hold a Human Library event. **J. Webb** stated that she would like to do it at least twice a year and maybe quarterly eventually.

Chair Blackburn stated that the date has tentatively been set for October 24, from noon to 4 p.m. She stated she would see if some members at the Northern Hope Center would be interested. **J. Rogers** asked if the informational paragraph on the flyer was something that had been used previously. **J. Webb** stated that she drafted the paragraph from information she found online.

c) Calendar of Events (informational only)

Chair Blackburn stated the calendar needs to be updated and asked the group if there were other events that should be added. **J. Webb** stated she feels it is good to list all events; **J Rogers** agreed.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Discussion on Land Acknowledgement Recommendation

Clerk Snider provided a history on the FDC's past recommendations to the City Council regarding the reading of a land acknowledgement and the City Council's action regarding such. **J. Merritt**

pointed out that the land acknowledgement is posted on the wall outside of Council Chambers. **J. Rogers** shared that Councilmember Therrien reads the land acknowledgement at each City Council meeting.

H. Butler, seconded by **E. Dillard**, moved to postpone the discussion on the land acknowledgement recommendation to the next meeting. There being no objection, the item was postponed.

FDC MEMBERS' COMMENTS

H. Butler shared that in his most recent phone call with his son in L.A., they discussed the possibility of getting picked up by ICE agents because of how they look. He stated that his friends across the state are all discussing the same issue because they all have brown skin, black hair, and brown eyes. He stated he did not know agents were in the community until someone was recently picked up in Fairbanks. He shared that the topic will most likely be discussed amongst the Native people at each meeting throughout the year and that resolutions might be offered.

J. Rogers thanked everyone and stated she is glad to see the FDC continue to move forward. She reiterated that her commitment to the FDC is strong.

D. Hamilton indicated that she is nervous about serving as the vice chair.

J. Webb thanked D. Hamilton for stepping up to serve as vice chair.

E. Dillard asked whether the FDC was planning to do something for Indigenous Peoples Day and whether all items on the calendar were indicative of the FDC's participation in an activity or event. Clerk Snider replied that the FDC does not participate in all the events or items on the calendar.

All other members present indicated they had no comments.

MEETING DATES

- a) Next Regular Meeting Date, October 14, 2025 [NOTE: November 11 meeting falls on Veterans Day. Cancel or reschedule?]

Following a brief discussion, members decided to reschedule the November 11 meeting for November 18 and to hold a potluck instead of a regular meeting on December 9.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Blackburn declared the meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Karen Blackburn, Chair

D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS

JANUARY

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OCTOBER

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DECEMBER

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JANUARY

Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday (Jan 20)

FEBRUARY

Black History Month

Presidents Day (Feb 17)

Festival of Native Arts (Feb 27th - Mar 1)

MARCH

Disability Awareness Month

Women's History Month

TCC Annual Convention (Mar 10 - 13)

APRIL

Autism Awareness Month

MAY

Mental Health Awareness Month

Senior Recognition Day Luncheon (May 8)

Mother's Day (May 11)

Memorial Day (May 26)

Race Against Racism (May 31, 11 a.m.)

JUNE

Pride Month

Juneteenth Celebration (Jun 14)

Father's Day (Jun 15)

Juneteenth (Jun 19)

JULY

Independence Day (Jul 4)

Golden Days (Jul 12 - 19)

World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (Jul 16 - 19)

Midnight Sun Intertribal Powwow (Jul 18 - 20)

Tanana Valley State Fair (Jul 25 - Aug 3)

SEPTEMBER

Labor Day (Sept 1)

OCTOBER

Indigenous People's Day (Oct 13)

AFN Convention (Oct 16-18)

Alaska Day (Oct 17)

International Friendship Day (Oct 18)

NOVEMBER

Veterans Day (Nov 11)

CITY HALL RECURRING COALITION MEETINGS

Reentry Coalition - 1st Thursday/mo, 10 a.m.

Crisis Now - 2nd Friday/3 mo, 1 p.m.

Housing & Homeless Coalition - 3rd Wednesday/mo, noon



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Matherly and City Council Members

THROUGH: Fairbanks Diversity Council

FROM: D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk



SUBJECT: **Updated** FDC Recommendation on City Council Resolution No. 4981

DATE: March 9, 2022

Updated Recommendation:

At its Regular Meeting of March 8, 2022, the Fairbanks Diversity Council voted unanimously to recommend the approval of City Council Resolution No. 4981 in its original form. Three voting members were absent.

Original Recommendation:

The City Council referred the following resolution to the Fairbanks Diversity Council on November 8, 2021, with a deadline to report back to the City Council by January 17, 2022:

Resolution No. 4981 – A Resolution Approving the Reading of a Land Acknowledgement at the Beginning of Regular City Council Meetings.

At its Regular Meeting of January 11, 2022, the Fairbanks Diversity Council voted to recommend the approval of City Council Resolution No. 4981 with amendments. The motion PASSED by a vote of 6 Ayes to 2 Nays. Three voting members were absent.

RESOLUTION NO. 4981

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE READING OF A LAND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AT THE BEGINNING OF REGULAR CITY
COUNCIL MEETINGS**

WHEREAS, the esteemed Denakkanaaga Elders have crafted and approved of the Land Acknowledgement set out below to be used in various publications, on appropriate signage, prior to meetings and conferences, as well as other suitable uses; and

WHEREAS, a Land Acknowledgement can function as a living celebration of Indigenous communities; and

WHEREAS, a Land Acknowledgement, by itself, is a small gesture, but it becomes meaningful when coupled with authentic relationships and informed action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairbanks City Council directs that the following Land Acknowledgement be read at the beginning of Regular City Council meetings:

We respectfully acknowledge the Dena people upon whose traditional lands we reside. We honor the Dena who have been the stewards of Interior lands and waters for centuries, the Elders who lived here before, the Dena people of today, and future generations to come. We also recognize that Alaskan Native people would traditionally gather here and harvest Native foods.

PASSED and **APPROVED** this ____ day of March 2022.

Jim Matherly, Mayor

AYES: Rogers, Therrien
NAYS: Clark, Gibson, Marney, Cleworth
ABSENT: Matherly
FAILED: March 14, 2022

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

Paul Ewers, City Attorney