



DIVERSITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 13, 2026, 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. **Mayor O’Neill** served as the Chair via Zoom, and the following members were in attendance:

Members Present (In Person):

Erica Dillard, Seat A
Terry Norman, Seat E
Herb Butler, Seat J

Members Present (Zoom):

June Rogers, Seat C
Juanita Webb, Seat D
Dorothy Shockley, Seat F
Jake Merritt, HR Director

Members Absent:

Vacant, Seat B
Vacant, Seat G
Vacant, Seat H
Karen Blackburn, Seat I
Deirdre Hamilton, Seat K
Lonny Marney, Councilmember (excused)

Also Present:

D. Danyielle Snider, City Clerk

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

Mayor O’Neill called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. At the Mayor’s request, Clerk Snider read the mission statement and the land acknowledgement.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Members joined Mayor O’Neill in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

J. Rogers, seconded by **E. Dillard**, moved to approve the agenda. There being no objection, the agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2025

J. Rogers, seconded by **T. Norman**, moved to approve the minutes. There being no objection, the agenda was approved.

CITIZENS’ COMMENTS – None

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

This item was not addressed as Chair Blackburn was absent.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Human Library Update

Since event coordinators L. Marney and J. Webb were not present, this item was not addressed.

b) Review of Mission, DAP, and Strategic Discussion

Mayor O’Neill recounted that at the last meeting, the FDC discussed setting the “reset” button through a strategic planning session and stated that she prepared a strategic plan outline. She proposed holding a 4-hour work session on January 31 or February 14 in lieu of a regular meeting. She offered to provide guidance in advance for members to consider prior to the session.

Members discussed the options and decided to meet February 14 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in lieu of a regular February meeting. **T. Norman** stated that she could provide input in advance since she would be unable to attend. **D. Shockley** commented that it would be helpful for members to have guidelines in advance. **J. Rogers** stated that the FDC has reviewed the Diversity Action Plan (DAP) many times over the years but has never developed actionable items as a result.

The group discussed its desire to collaborate and find a good path going forward. **Mayor O’Neill** shared that her intent is to frame the discussion around advocacy, education, and collaboration. She asked members for input on other themes. **H. Butler** recommended that the FDC review the DAP by section and record proposed changes to each before moving to the next. **J. Rogers** stated that a great deal of discussion has been given to ethnicity, but discussions regarding other forms of diversity, such as age, disability, and other aspects, have not been given as much discussion. **Mayor O’Neill** received consensus from the group that civility should be a part of the discussion. **H. Butler** spoke about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and suggested it be a part of the conversation. **J. Rogers** emphasized the need for inclusion and for making people feel welcome.

H. Butler requested that the FDC establish some sort of communication system amongst members. He stated he has no idea who other FDC members are since they meet only once a month and that he would like to overcome that. Clerk Snider confirmed that she could provide a contact list to members but cautioned members that as an advisory body to the City Council, it falls under the provisions of the Open Meetings Act (OMA). She spoke of how the FDC formerly had subcommittees with a set purpose or were assigned to work on special projects. She suggested that something like that, made up of 2-3 members at a time, may accomplish what H. Butler is suggesting. **H. Butler** expressed support for the idea.

D. Shockley stated that an Alaska State Trooper (AST) shooting occurred on January 1, and it may have been something for the FDC to address, although it did not occur in the city. She expressed confusion about the FDC’s role in happenings such as this within the community. **T. Norman** expressed gratitude for D. Shockley raising the issue. She indicated that one of the reasons she wanted to join the FDC is to learn how to handle community issues like that. She stated she would like the FDC to have a voice in the form of issued statements. She expressed confusion about the FDC’s powers and limitations. **Mayor O’Neill** pointed out that the FDC is an advisory body to the City Council and Borough Assembly but added that the FDC’s role is certainly something that can be discussed. She spoke briefly about building a better FDC partnership with the Borough.

D. Shockley asked Mayor O’Neill to clarify the purpose of the education component—specifically, whether it is intended for FDC members or for the broader community. **Mayor O’Neill** suggested that it could be both and that the FDC is charged with educating the community on certain diversity-related things. She spoke about possible partnerships and what that outreach might look like. **H. Butler** questioned whether any FDC members are trained as educators.

Mayor O’Neill thanked members for providing input. She stated she would put together some guidelines for the February 14 meeting.

c) Calendar of Events (informational only)

Mayor O’Neill asked Clerk Snider to speak about the calendar. Clerk Snider shared that the FDC had requested that there be a calendar included on regular agendas so that members could track upcoming community events and so the group could identify and plan for events for the FDC to participate in. She stated that some event dates could not be found and asked anyone with verified information to contact her.

NEW BUSINESS – None

FDC MEMBERS’ COMMENTS

H. Butler commented on what is happening throughout the nation, particularly in Minneapolis, MN. He suggested that FDC members pay attention to the news and share things they feel are important with the body.

D. Shockley stated it is important that people feel safe—especially children. She stated that the present time is a trying time and encouraged vigilance. She stressed the importance of helping police officers and others in positions of power to understand how people are feeling and where they are coming from. She described a personal experience from a few years earlier when she was pulled over by AST and felt intimidated as two officers approached her vehicle.

J. Rogers thanked D. Shockley for her comments. She briefly discussed the FDC’s relationship with the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD). She spoke about the responsibility that lies with the FDC for not having a consistent quorum and lacking follow-through on certain things. She expressed hope that the FDC could make strides in collaboration and work ethic before trying to address larger community or national issues. She stated that since 2013, many FDC meetings have been cancelled due to a lack of participation. She suggested that the FDC should not invite guest speakers or presenters to meetings until there is more accountability from within.

T. Norman stated she feels more committed when there is a stronger sense of purpose and direction. She regretted that she would be unable to attend the February work session. She stated that when members understand the FDC’s role and power in the community, there will likely be a greater commitment amongst members.

H. Butler spoke about the potential of what Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) could do in the Fairbanks community.

Mayor O'Neall thanked members for their comments. She stated this is a good opportunity for the FDC to regroup and decide a path forward. She recognized the dedication of those who spoke.

MEETING DATES

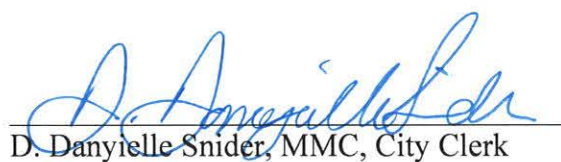
The February 10 regular meeting was rescheduled as a work session on Saturday, February 14 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor O'Neall declared the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.



Mayor O'Neall, Chair



D. Danyielle Snider, MMC, City Clerk

Transcribed by: DS