

**Leesburg Diversity Commission
February 2, 2021
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes**

- Location:** Leesburg Town Hall, Lower Level Conference Room 1
- Commissioners Present:** Devon Carter (via Webex), Dana Kunzelman (via Webex), Vanessa Maddow (via Webex), Jasmin Martinez-Harris, Linda McCray, Jean-Joseph Poisson, Mary Randolph,
- Commissioners Absent:** None
- Others Present:** Vice Mayor Fernando “Marty” Martinez (via Webex)
Betsy Arnett, Public Information Officer
Officer Michael Drogin, Leesburg Police (via Webex)
- Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Introductions

- As this meeting was the first meeting with new commissioners Carter, Kunzelman, and Maddox, members of the commission introduced themselves.

Election of Officers:

- Ms. Arnett opened the floor to nominations for Chair. Commissioners Martinez-Harris nominated Commissioner McCray. There were no further nominations. Commissioner McCray was elected unanimously.
- Ms. Arnett turned the meeting over to Chair McCray
- Chair McCray opened the floor to nominations for Vice Chair. Commission Poisson nominated himself. There were no further nominations. Commission Poisson was elected unanimously.

Approval of Agenda:

- The remainder of the meeting agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes

- The minutes of the December 1, 2020, meeting were unanimously approved as presented, on a motion by Commissioner Randolph, seconded by Vice Chair Poisson.

Petitioners

- None

New Business

- **Demographics Presentation:** Ms. Arnett gave an overview of Leesburg's demographics, from the recently released American Community Survey 2019 5-Estimates, produced by the U.S. Census Bureau. Vice Mayor Martinez requested more detailed information about the breakdown of household incomes. Ms. Arnett said she would provide via email.
- **Commission Review:** Chair McCray provided a review of the commission's accomplishments and activities since its founding, with an emphasis on 2020. This presentation will be forwarded to Council, as the commission's 2020 annual report.
- **Future Activities:** Chair McCray started the conversation by noting that the commission does not have a budget at the present time. Ms. Arnett elaborated on the process for requesting funding, either during the year or as part of the budget cycle.

Commissioners discussed ideas for community outreach efforts. Commissioner Maddox asked about the commission's past outreach activities. Chair McCray offered some examples, including event attendance (school international nights, the Café events, the MLK march, town parades, international festivals, the Police Department's soccer tournament) and the business visits made as a part of the joint EDC survey. Commissioners Maddox and Kunzelman expressed interest in spearheading social media outreach. Commissioner Kunzelman volunteered to be the commission's liaison to the EDC.

Commissioner Randolph said she thought the commission's overall goal should be for the community to come together so that everyone feels like they belong.

Commissioner Maddox offered some examples of ways to find commonalities, ways to "be the bridge", like challenging people to reach out to others who are different, or to share a dish.

Vice Chair Poisson brought the possibility of creating a commission or task force to investigate incidents of police misconduct. Vice Mayor Martinez cautioned that the Town does not have the authority to create a police oversight board, but could create an advisory board.

Chair McCray brought the idea of going to HOA meetings.

The commissioners also discussed possible changes to the Town Code regarding the mission and duties of the commission.

- **Meeting Date and Time:** After some discussion, the commissioners agreed to move the regular meeting to the second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m.

Old Business

- None

Staff Reports

- Ms. Arnett showed the commissioners the new Boards & Commissions Internet Portal. She advised the new commissioners to complete the HR forms in order to receive their stipends and encouraged all commissioners to review the FOIA/COIA and cybersecurity training resources.
- Officer Drogin advised that he will be meeting with the Latino pastors later this month. He added that the Police Department is open to assisting with any outreach efforts and pointed the commissioners to the LPD website where all of the department's general orders will be available to the public.

Council Member Comments

- Vice Mayor Martinez advised that the Council retreat scheduled for January 30th was canceled due to COVID, but will be rescheduled for later in the spring. He encouraged commissioners to reach out to other groups and to think of themselves as advocates for the community.

Commissioner Comments

- **Commissioner Randolph** suggested writing letters to the churches, and reaching out to the organizers of the upcoming Juneteenth events.
- **Commissioner Kunzelman** said she will work on a list of businesses that the commission could partner with to provide funding for outreach efforts.
- **Commissioner Maddox** mentioned the BURG Family Reunion Club as a possible partnership opportunity to make connections within the community. She also asked if there was a list of DEI-friendly businesses in town (there is not).
- **Commissioner Carter** offered to help with both the HOA meetings and writing letters to churches.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 7 p.m.