

**Leesburg Diversity Commission**  
**March 9, 2022**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Location:** Leesburg Town Hall, Lower Level Conference Room 1

**Commissioners Present:** Devon Carter  
Dana Kunzelman (electronically)  
Vanessa Maddox  
Jasmin Martinez-Harris  
Linda McCray  
Jean-Joseph Poisson  
Mary Randolph

**Commissioners Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Betsy Arnett, Public Information Officer

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

**Motion to Allow Remote Participation:**

- On a motion by Vice Chair Carter, seconded by Commissioner Poisson, the commission voted to allow Commissioner Kunzelman to participate remotely. Commissioner Kunzelman was out of town for work.

**Approval of Agenda:**

- Agenda was approved as presented, on a motion by Vice Chair Carter, seconded by Commissioner Randolph.

**Approval of Minutes:**

- The minutes of the February 9, 2022, regular meeting were approved as presented, on a motion by Vice Chair Carter, seconded by Commissioner Poisson.

**Guest Speaker: Carol Smith, Crossroads Jobs, Inc.**

- Ms. Smith talked about Crossroads Jobs, a non-profit organization with offices in Leesburg and Sterling. She founded Crossroads Jobs 10 years ago, modeled after Jubilee Jobs in D.C. They help individuals who have barriers to employment, like gaps in employment history or difficulty completing an application. They prescreen applicants for companies and offer post-placement support services. Crossroads Jobs is a member of the Loudoun Human Services Network, and they often direct clients to other services within the network.

So far this year, they've received 30 applications for assistance.

Ms. Smith said that there is a disconnect between the perception that no one wants to work and reality, but that employers need more proactive "match making" with prospective employees.

#### **Commissioner Comments:**

- **Commissioner Poisson** noted that he met Carol Smith about six years ago and was very complimentary of the work that she does to positively impact people's lives.
- **Vice Chair Carter** said that the subcommittee meeting for the Employment Fair was very productive and he looks forward to the event.
- **Commission Randolph** mentioned that the BURG Family Reunion is planned for Saturday, June 18, at Ida Lee Park, and hopes that the commission members will attend.
- **Commissioner Kunzelman** made motion that the Town of Leesburg should do something to raise awareness of world issues, like the conflict in Ukraine. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Poisson and passed unanimously.
- **Commission Martinez-Harris** requested that staff post information about available business startup resources to the town's social media accounts.

#### **Chair Comments**

- **Chair McCray** noted that the next business walk with Mayor Burk will be on April 12, in the Exeter Neighborhood Center and Shenandoah Square.

She asked Ms. Arnett to follow up with the EDC on the commission's request to expand First Friday to the entire town.

#### **Staff Liaison Report**

- **Ms. Arnett** distributed copies of the Council's updated attendance policy for boards and commissions and the 2021 and 2022 (to date) attendance charts.

She advised that the Leesburg Police Department will be holding National Night Out at the Leesburg Mobile Park on Tuesday, August 2, and a Fiesta Latina with soccer tournament at Ida Lee Park, tentatively on August 27. The Police Department will provide additional information as the dates get closer.

#### **Old Business**

- **Employment Fair:** Ms. Arnett has reserved the lower level of Ida Lee Park Recreation Center for Sunday, June 26, from noon until 8 p.m. Commissioners discussed the following action items:
  - **Marketing:** Commissioner Martinez-Harris and Commissioner Kunzelman will work together to design a flyer, a postcard, and a save-the-date. Ms. Arnett will check on funding to print and mail postcards to residents within the HUBZone and other selected areas of town. Commissioner Maddox will send the save-the-date to her network. Chair McCray will work on a plan for distributing the flyers.
  - **Registration:** Ms. Arnett will create a registration form on the town website. Commissioner Maddox will send her the fields needed for the form.
  - **Refreshments:** Commissioners will discuss at the April meeting.
  - **Security:** Commissioners will discuss at the April meeting.
  
- **What is Racism? Video:** Commissioners discussed the merits of showing their faces in the video versus having a voiceover with images or video showing instances of racism. They will revisit at the April meeting.
  
- **Community Resources Database:** Vice Chair Carter will get with Ms. Smith to see what resources she may recommend be added.

#### **New Business**

- **Observances/Social Media Posts for April:** After some discussion, the commission selected graphics to be posted to social media for Autism Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month.
  
- **Invitation to Participate in Latino Festival:** Loudoun County is hosting a Latino Festival on May 22 at the Shenandoah Building (normally, the festival is held at the Douglass Community Center, but that building is under renovation) and extended an invitation to the Diversity Commission to have a booth. The commission decided not to take the booth, but they will attend the festival.
  
- **Changing the Date for the April Meeting:** Due to Loudoun County Public Schools' Spring Break, the commissioners agreed to move the April meeting from April 13 to April 6.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, April 6, 2022 at 7 p.m.