



Leesburg Diversity Commission Regular Meeting

Wednesday, October 11, 2023 • 7:00 p.m.
Lower Level Conference Room 1
Leesburg Town Hall • 25 West Market Street

Meeting Agenda

- Call to Order
- Approval of Electronic Participation (if necessary)
- Introduction of commissioners
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - Minutes of September 13, 2023 Meeting
- Petitioners
- Commissioner Comments
- Council Member Comments
- Staff Reports
 - Public Information Office
 - Police Department
- Chair Comments
- Old Business
 - Job Fair (debrief)
 - Website language support update
- New Business
 - Grooming Policy Update – Chief Thea Pirnat
 - Keep Leesburg Beautiful Commission Challenge
 - Halloween Parade planning
 - Town Code board and commission changes
 - Meet the Mayor suggestions
 - Attendance, electronic participation policy reminder / new members
 - FY25 Commission budget
 - Upcoming events
 - Loudoun Latino Festival (Sunday, October 22, 12-5 p.m.)
 - Leesburg Halloween Parade (Tuesday, October 31, 6 p.m.)
- Adjournment

**Leesburg Diversity Commission
September 13, 2023
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Location: Leesburg Town Hall, Lower Level Conference Room 1

Commissioners Present: Devon Carter
Edgard Segura
Enrique Gonzalez
Melissa Simonetta
Vanessa Borg

Commissioners Absent: Lisa Marie Barrick

Others Present: Public Information Officer Kara Rodriguez, Staff Liaison
Sgt. Wael Abilmona, Leesburg Police Department Liaison
Chief of Police Thea Pirnat

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Introduction of Commissioners:

- Commissioners introduced themselves to new Commissioner Melissa Simonetta, who was attending her first meeting. She gave a brief introduction and said she was excited to serve on the Commission. Chief Pirnat also introduced herself to the Commission.

Approval of Agenda:

- Agenda was approved as presented, on a motion by Commissioner Gonzalez, seconded by Commissioner Segura.

Approval of Minutes:

- The minutes of the July 12, 2023, regular meeting were approved as presented, on a motion by Commissioner Segura, seconded by Commissioner Simonetta.

Commissioner Comments:

- Commissioner Gonzalez noted that it was Hispanic Heritage Month and inquired what the Town would be doing to recognize the occasion. He also inquired about putting forward a related proclamation and recognizing Oscar Torres, who helps to organize soccer teams for the Fiesta Latina.

Staff Report

- Ms. Rodriguez noted the Public Information Office's plan to recognize Hispanic Heritage Month in its social media posts. She also gave an update on Commission membership and noted that Commissioner Haleema Tayub had submitted her resignation due to family matters, while Lisa Marie Barrick had been appointed to the Commission at the previous night's Town Council meeting. Commissioner Barrick was unable to attend the Commission's meeting due to travel plans.
- Sgt. Abilmona said Fiesta Latina was a good event. He encouraged any Commissioners who are interested to contact him to schedule a ride-along with the Police Department as he is the Department's coordinator for that.

Old Business

- **Fiesta Latina (debrief):** Chair Carter said Fiesta Latina was a great event for the Commission. Attendees were picking up fliers about the Commission's upcoming job fair and enjoyed the free facepainting offered by Commissioner Borg. He said the turnout was good. Commissioner Gonzalez agreed with Chair Carter's comments, adding that it was hot. Chief Pirnat noted that some feedback the Department had received was that the name of the event was misleading, indicating more of a party atmosphere than a soccer tournament. She said the Department was considering whether to rebrand the event for next year and/or add additional features. Commissioner Borg suggested music and a moonbounce.

New Business

- **Q&A with Chief Pirnat:** Chief Pirnat took questions from Commissioners. Among the topics touched on were the Department's consideration of updates to its grooming policy, including tattoos, with a promise to return to the Commission at a future meeting to have Commissioners be a sounding board for any contemplated changes. Chief Pirnat and Commissioners also spoke at length about the Department's recruitment and retention efforts, with Commissioners offering ideas for possible incentives or different ways to find prospective officers. The Department's language skills were also discussed.
- **Job Fair Planning:** Commissioners discussed plans for that week's upcoming Job Fair. There was general discussion about setup and the confirmed exhibitors. Arrangements were made for snacks and drinks to be purchased and signs to be placed leading attendees to the Job Fair. Commissioner Borg gave an overview of the questions she received from the Public Information Office for a feature on Live in Leesburg that would spotlight the Job Fair. Several Commissioners indicated that they would attend all or part of the event.
- **Website Language Support:** Ms. Rodriguez provided a brief update on a recent staff discussion about providing language support on the Town website. She noted that Senior Management Analyst Betsy Arnett had reached out to Granicus, the Town's website provider, to inquire about Google Translate but Granicus had instead recommended use of Bablic due to compatibility issues with Google Translate. Ms.

Rodriguez encouraged Commissioners to investigate Bablic on their own and said she would return with her feedback and Bablic's pricing structure.

- **Loudoun Latino Festival:** Commissioners briefly discussed the upcoming Loudoun Latino Festival organized by the County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services. Chair Carter said the Commission could discuss the event at further length at October's meeting.
- **Halloween Parade:** Chair Carter noted the success of the Commission's previous participation in the Halloween Parade in 2021 when the Commission received an award for its float. He suggested the Commission again participate this year. Ms. Rodriguez noted the Commission's adopted budget included funding for decorations and candy. Commissioner Segura said he could be there for at least the initial setup of the float. Commissioner Borg volunteered her car for the parade. Further discussion was promised at October's meeting.
- **Other Business:** Commissioner Gonzalez asked about the process to submit a proclamation request to the Town Council, with Ms. Rodriguez promising to follow up via email the next day.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 11, at 7 p.m.