



Leesburg Diversity Commission Regular Meeting

**Wednesday, January 10, 2024 • 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)
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - Minutes of December 13, 2023 Meeting
- Petitioners
- Commissioner Comments
- Council Member Comments
- Staff Reports
 - Public Information Office
 - Police Department
- Chair Comments
- New Business
 - Setting the 2024 meeting calendar
 - Election of Chair and Vice Chair
 - Planning events/guest speakers/proclamation requests for 2024
 - Review of bylaws
 - MLK March participation
- Adjournment

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

Location: Leesburg Town Hall, Lower Level Conference Room 1

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

Commissioners Absent: Lisa Marie Barrick
Carly Schmidt

Others Present: Public Information Officer Kara Rodriguez, Staff Liaison
(electronically)

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

Approval of Agenda:

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

Approval of Minutes:

- The minutes of the November 8, 2023, regular meeting were approved as presented, on a motion by Commissioner Borg, seconded by Commissioner Simonetta.

Commissioner Comments:

- Commissioner Gonzalez asked if the nationwide focus on diversity and inclusion in both academic settings and in the private sector is affecting the Town government. Ms. Rodriguez shared about a staff-led committee working on a DEIA visioning statement for the Town.
- Commissioner Segura asked about the progress of the Diversity Commission's FY25 budget requests. Chair Carter spoke about the budget process, while Ms. Rodriguez shared about the Town Council's deliberation process.
- Commissioner Borg mentioned the upcoming Meet the Mayor event at The Global Local on December 16 and said she had brought latkes for everyone to enjoy at the meeting.

Staff Report

- Ms. Rodriguez apologized for her physical absence from the meeting as she was attending training in Lynchburg and her staff liaison substitute was ill and could not attend the meeting. She noted that at the Commission's January meeting Commissioners would need to vote on their 2024 meeting calendar, and that staff was beginning implementation of all-electronic meetings (up to two per calendar year) for Boards and Commissions, but there were many details still to be worked out prior to implementation.

Chair Comments:

- Chair Carter wished a Happy Hanukkah to all who are celebrating. He said he hoped everyone who wanted to was able to attend the tree lighting and Christmas and Holiday Parade. He said he is ready to tackle 2024.

New Business

- **Planning for 2024:** Chair Carter asked for suggestions from Commissioners about new or recurring events the Commission wanted to sponsor or have a presence at; any proclamations the Commission wanted to sponsor; feedback on the Commission's website content; and organizations to partner with. He suggested removing the Marshall Movie Discussion from the webpage and adding the Community Resources Guide. Commissioner Borg suggested sponsoring a Food Expo to showcase the area's culinary diversity and using Ida Lee Recreation Center or Douglass Community Center as the event location. Chair Carter spoke about some events the Commission has done in the past, including the Halloween Parade, the Job Fair, the food donation drive, and Keep Leesburg Beautiful. Suggestions were made to consider exhibiting at the Flower & Garden Festival and Juneteenth. Chair Carter also brought up ideas shared at previous meetings to host a multi-cultural event and STEM workshops. He also spoke about working with the local R.O.C.K. program. Commissioner Simonetta spoke about her idea for working with the local humane society and hosting a dog park meet-up for those who have service animals. She and Commissioner Borg spoke about working with those with special needs, with Commissioner Borg suggesting that Arc of Loudoun could be a good partner. Commissioner Segura asked about the Town's internal and external wayfinding system, with Ms. Rodriguez promising to follow up with more information. There were several suggestions about possible speakers, including a representative from the Native American/indigenous community and Loudoun Interfaith BRIDGES. Chair Carter also spoke about the Commission participating in Loudoun-wide events, like the Recovery Festival and the Pride Festival, and handing out the Commission's Community Resources Guide. Commissioner Gonzalez also asked about partnering with the Police Department for Fiesta Latina, and Ms. Rodriguez said she would follow up with who the best contact would be. Commissioner Gonzalez also suggested hosting a viewing of "A Million Miles Away" and noted he knows Jose Hernandez, who the movie is based on, personally.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 10, at 7 p.m.

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