



This does not represent a verbatim transcript of the Herndon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee meeting. Any questions regarding the agenda and discussions outlined below should be directed to the Department of Community Development at 703.787.7380 or at community.development@herndon-va.gov.

HERNDON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
Monday
September 15, 2022

The Herndon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (HDEIC) met in public session on Thursday, September 15, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room at the Herndon Police Department, 397 Herndon Parkway, Herndon, Virginia. In attendance were Councilmember Pradip Dhakal, Chair, Sabrina Hossain, Andrew Lacher, Keven LeBlanc, Soma Ramesh, Alex Rodriguez, Donielle Scherff, Arati Sigdel Parajuli, Eileen Villegas.

Absent Committee members: Rachel Eisenfeld and Syed Ifitkhar

Staff members present: Lisa Gilleran, Director of Community Development and Collin Okoniewski, Planning Operations Manager.

WELCOME

Councilmember Dhakal, opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

For the record, Mr. Okoniewski stated that eight out of eleven members were present for the meeting. Ms. Hossain arrived at 7:12 p.m.

2. Comments by the Chair

Councilmember Dhakal extended a welcome to all members to the first meeting of the Herndon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (HDEIC). He provided a background on the establishment of the HDEIC at the Town Council level and encouraged the participation and open sharing of ideas amongst all members.

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3. Introduction of Committee Members

Councilmember Dhakal invited all members of the committee to introduce themselves to the group. Committee members introduced themselves and provided some career and personal background information that was relevant to their role on the committee.

4. Reading of the Mission, Purpose, and Objective of the HDEIC dated February 22, 2022

Councilmember Dhakal read the Mission, Purpose and Objective of the Town of Herndon Diversity Equity, and Inclusion Committee that was approved by the Town Council on February 22, 2022. The Mission, Purpose and Objectives read as follows:

Mission:

To promote, engage and enhance the Town of Herndon's diverse community and to connect the community in a partnership that celebrates equity and inclusion.

Purpose:

Listen to and discuss community concerns, and use the information gathered from these discussions to make recommendations to the Town Council that enhance the delivery of services to the minority resident and business communities. Recommend policies and activities that help foster diversity and inclusion within the community at-large.

Objective:

To engage the community by listening and discussing to understand the breadth and depth of issues related to inclusion and equity, and to suggest actionable steps to the Town Council so that under-represented members of our community are seen, heard, and included. The Committee's recommendations may include improvements to town services, practices that enhance diversity, and inclusive cultural programming and events.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Councilmember Dhakal inquired of the committee if they had any additional items they would like added to the agenda.

Committee Member Ramesh asked if a budget item could be added to the end of the agenda to discuss the available funding for events, projects, and outreach. Committee Member Rodriguez agreed and seconded this request.

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Committee Member LeBlanc asked if the committee could discuss the method of gathering and presenting ideas to the Town Council.

Committee Member Hossain requested that an agenda item concerning the current state of equity in the town be discussed; as well as a discussion on what the Town may be looking to do on the front in the future.

As a result, the following items were added to the agenda following item number '9. ***Proposals and discussion of potential HDEIC initiatives***':

- 10. Mechanisms of Presenting Items to the Town Council**
- 11. Budget and Funding Discussion**
- 12. Discussion on the Current and Future state of Equity in the Town**

NEW BUSINESS

5. Adoption of Robert's Rules of Order

Councilmember Dhakal advised the committee that they will be adhering to Robert's Rules of Order, 3rd Edition in alignment with all Town of Herndon committees, boards commissions, and the Town Council.

Councilmember Dhakal circulated a couple of summary physical copies of Robert's Rules of Order that could be used and reviewed by committee members not familiar with the parliamentary document.

6. Determination of Future Schedule

Councilmember Dhakal asked in the committee had any recommendations for a meeting schedule. Several committee members agreed that it should be incorporated around the Town Council's meeting schedule and coincide with various milestones including the budget. Ms. Gilleran provided comment that Thursday nights work best for staff in order that these meetings avoid conflicts with legislative bodies in the Town. Upon the recommendation of committee members, Councilmember Dhakal advised that the determination of a future meeting schedule topic was moved to the end of the agenda after the current agenda items were discussed.

COMMENTS

7. Comments from the Staff Members

Ms. Gilleran asked the committee members if they had received the Conflict-of-Interest document distributed by the Town Attorney's office. Most members acknowledged

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receipt, and those that did not advised they would ensure they located the document and let staff know if they needed another copy to review.

Ms. Gilleran advised on the typical roles and strategies of committees in town and provided examples from other Town Council established committees.

8. Comments from Committee Members

There were no additional comments from committee members.

ROUND TABLE

9. Proposals and Discussion of Potential HDEIC Initiatives

Councilmember Dhakal invited the committee members to go one by one and bring forward any ideas, observations, or comments to the roundtable to prompt discussions. The committee brought forward the following concepts for discussion amongst the group:

- The hosting of various diverse events
- Attendance at existing events to listen to diverse community concerns amongst not only adults, but the youth in the community as well
- Analyzing reports put out by existing programs at the county level
- Inviting of community members, leaders and youth to meetings, or hosting them for an “open mic” session
- Reaching out to diverse communities and educating them about town services and the business of government
- Diversifying of town deliverables to provide more translation of electronic and physical town resources
- Providing resources for diverse town businesses and educate existing businesses on the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion

10. Mechanisms of Presenting Items to the Town Council

Committee Member LeBlanc outlined an idea for a form to propose projects, initiatives, or ideas to the Town Council. Committee member Scherff also offered a formatted proposal on the subject. Both committee members would develop formal documentation that would be presented at the next meeting for the layout of future initiatives.

Councilmember Dhakal also proposed that at the next meeting the committee have a brainstorming meeting where they prioritize initiatives.

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11. Budget and Funding Discussion

The committee members inquired as to what funding was available for events and projects they may develop. Town staff as well as Councilmember Dhakal provided some answers. Town staff offered that they would have a better response at a future meeting.

12. Discussion on the Current and Future state of Equity in the Town

Councilmember Dhakal invited Ms. Gilleran to provide information on current Town initiatives based on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Ms. Gilleran cited a number of programs including front counter translation specifically for Spanish speakers as well as others, efforts at the Neighborhood Resource Center to reach out to diverse community membership and the incorporation of diversity at town festivals. Ms. Gilleran also cited several challenges that were in place in terms of outreach to various diverse communities.

Committee members voiced opinions on ways that town services could be enhanced to be more accessible to diverse communities.

FUTURE HDEIC SCHEDULE

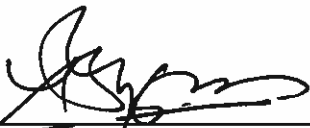
13. Confirmation of Next Meeting Date

Committee members stated that they would like to schedule meetings six times per year.

Committee members agreed that the next meeting should be held on Thursday, October 20th, 2022, at 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.



**Councilmember Pradip Dhakal, Chair
Herndon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**



Collin J. Okoniewski

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**Planning Operations Manager
Acting Clerk Boards & Commissions**