

HERNDON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 15, 2023

The Herndon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (HDEIC) met in public session on Thursday, June 15, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room at the Herndon Police Department, 397 Herndon Parkway, Herndon, Virginia. In attendance were Chair Pradip Dhakal, Vice Chair Soma Ramesh, Committee Members Lorena Brady, Triston Chase O'Savio and Eileen Villegas.

Staff Members present: Elizabeth Gilleran, Director of Community Development; Dennis Holste, Economic Development Manager; and Collin Okoniewski, Planning Operations Manager.

1. Call to Order

Chair Dhakal called the meeting of the Herndon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to order at 7:07 p.m.

For the record, Chair Dhakal stated that five members were present for the meeting, which did not constitute a quorum.

2. Comments from the Audience

Chair Dhakal called on any members of the public that wanted to address the committee.

No comments were provided.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. April 13, 2023, Herndon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Draft Minutes

Due to a lack of quorum, there was no motion for the approval of minutes.

4. New Business

a. Presentation from Councilmember Donielle Scherff

Chair Dhakal welcomed former HDEIC member, and current councilmember, Donielle Scherff to provide a presentation on the upcoming Juneteenth event.

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Councilmember Scherff provided information regarding the Juneteenth Celebration which was scheduled to be held at Arts Herndon on Saturday, June 17, 2023.

Chair Dhakal provided positive remarks and asked if the committee had any other comments. No further comments were provided.

b. Presentation from Jay Garant, Director, Business and Community Partnerships, Fairfax County Public Schools

Chair Dhakal called on Jay Garant, Director, Business and Community Partnerships, Fairfax County Public Schools for a discussion on their current initiatives.

Mr. Garant spoke about his role with Fairfax County Public Schools and highlighted a number of programs available to students that correlated with diverse students, as well as students that attend Herndon High School and live inside the town.

Committee members provided questions and comments to Mr. Garant about involving local and tailoring any effort to helping Town of Herndon students, specifically those that may not be able to attend college.

Mr. Garant encouraged that the committee and his office maintain an open line of communication to work together in the future.

c. Presentation from Karen Smaw, Director, Diversity Business Investment and Entrepreneurship, Fairfax County Economic Development Authority and Dennis Holste, Town of Herndon Economic Development Manager

Chair Dhakal called on Karen Smaw, Director, Diversity Business Investment and Entrepreneurship, Fairfax County Economic Development Authority for a presentation.

Following the presentation there was a brief question and comment period.

Chair Dhakal called on Dennis Holste, Town of Herndon Economic Development Manager for a presentation.

Following the presentation there was a brief question and comment period.

d. Action/Initiatives Roundtable (Updates and New Initiatives)

Due to a lack of quorum, there was no discussion or action on this item.

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5. Comments

a. Comments from Staff

No additional comments were provided.

b. Comments from Committee Members

Chair Dhakal further extended a welcome to the new members and asked if they had any questions or comments following their first meeting.

Chair Dhakal also provided information for present members on the status of the recommended initiatives from the April 13, 2023, meeting.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.



Collin J. Okoniewski

Planning Operations Manager