



## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMISSION (DEI)**

**May 25, 2021 Regular Meeting  
(3:03 to 4:26 p.m.) Remote Meeting via Zoom**

**Members Present:** Daniel Amos, Tylene Carnell, Delores (Kandee) Cleary, Sara Omrani, and Nancy Goodloe (chair)

**Members Absent:** Veronica Acevedo (excused), Landis Hanson (excused)

**Also present:** Kirsten Sackett, Community Development Director; Stacey Henderson, Senior Planner; Nicole Klaus, Public Information Officer (Recording Secretary); Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager; and six members of the public.

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### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Nancy Goodloe called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

**Motion:** Commissioner Omrani moved to approve an excused absence for Commissioner Hanson for the May 25 meeting, and Commissioner Amos seconded. All in favor; motion passed.

**Motion:** Commissioner Cleary moved to approve an excused absence for Commissioner Carnell for the June 8 meeting, and Commissioner Amos seconded. All in favor; motion passed.

Commissioners and City staff provided introductions.

### **2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion:** Commissioner Omrani moved to approve the agenda as presented, and Commissioner Cleary seconded. All in favor; motion passed.

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 11, 2021 MEETING**

**Motion:** Commissioner Omrani moved to approve the minutes from the May 11, 2021 DEI Commission Meeting, and Commissioner Carnell seconded. All in favor; motion passed.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **4. Discuss Developing Land Acknowledgment Statement**

Chair Goodloe discussed Commissioner Hanson's idea to read a land acknowledgment statement before all DEI Commission meetings and asked if anyone on the commission wasn't familiar with a land acknowledgment statement.

Chair Goodloe said there was no statement to read at this meeting, but asked commissioners to share their thoughts about developing one.



Commissioner Cleary had previously provided CWU's statement as an example to City staff via email. Commissioner Cleary said a land acknowledgment statement is good to do, but not just in terms of checking a box; it is about intentionality. Cleary said Kittitas County is a place of gathering for the Yakama Nation and many other nations, and as the Kittitas Valley is ceded land in the 1855 Treaty with the Yakama Nation it is important to recognize that.

Commissioner Omrani agreed it's important to not just check a box, but also acknowledge the history of the land and that some of the people who lived here before are still here. Omrani said the intentionality and making sure it's not just a performative measure is important.

Commissioner Carnell seconded what Commissioner Omrani said, and added that there's an importance in this heightened cultural conversation being had locally and nationally.

Commissioner Amos agreed with previous comments, and said a land acknowledgment statement sounds like an appropriate thing.

Chair Goodloe asked staff for their thoughts. City Manager Heidi Behrends Cerniwey said the commissioners nailed it with their comments about why to do a land acknowledgement and mentioned it's important to include people who have been here and are here in the statement creation. City senior planner Stacey Henderson appreciated the intentionality behind the commissioners' comments.

Commissioner Omrani mentioned the Land Back movement, a push for Indigenous people to be advisors or stewards for national parks. She asked if it's in the DEI Commission's realm of recommending that the Parks and Recreation Commission offer stewardship to Indigenous people who live here. Commissioner Omrani said it would be a concrete measure to back up the land acknowledgment. Chair Goodloe said the commission could come up with ideas on it and could make a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Chair Goodloe said the DEI Commission doesn't need its own land acknowledgment statement that is different from the City. Chair Goodloe tasked Commissioner Carnell to lead a subcommittee to do the research, answer specific questions, and bring back a City land acknowledgement recommendation to the commission to approve or edit, and then forward to the City Council. If Council adopts the statement it can be used across commissions and will be a consistent message for the City.

In development of the recommendation Chair Goodloe tasked the subcommittee to answer what a land acknowledgment is, how widespread is it through state and country, examples of what cities are using it, and then answer the question of whether Ellensburg should do this as a City or not. Part of the process should include conversations with Ellensburg's Native American



community. Chair Goodloe asked for one to two land acknowledgment statements that could go to Council for consideration and emphasized not rushing the process. She is interested in quality products and quality recommendations that can be put to City Council and stand the rigor of their examination and answer the questions they have.

The subcommittee working on the land acknowledgement statement includes: Commissioner Carnell, Commissioner Omrani and Commissioner Amos.

## **5. Discuss Comprehensive Plan overview and what this group needs to accomplish with DEI Chapter**

Community Development Director Kirsten Sackett referenced links that were sent out as homework regarding other jurisdictions working to incorporate DEI into comprehensive plans. Those are resources to look at as time allows:

- Des Moines, IA has included a new chapter in their comp plan, labeled “Social Diversity”: [FINAL PlanDSM\\_web \(1\).pdf](#). The new chapter begins on page 77
- Seattle, WA has integrated the topics throughout the entirety of their Comp Plan: [CouncilAdopted2020.pdf \(seattle.gov\)](#)
- Beaverton, OR has adopted a “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan”. This is not a Comp Plan, but incorporates many of the same principles: [DEI-Plan-web \(beavertonoregon.gov\)](#)

Sackett presented this timeline for comprehensive plan amendments on the screen and discussed each step:

July 19 — City Council docketing of items for Comprehensive Plan

SEPA Review— up to 3 months

60-day notice to Commerce

September 9 — Planning Commission Meeting (requires 2-week notice)

October 4 — City Council Public Hearing (requires 2-week notice)

November to December — City Council adoption meetings

Sackett said if the commission wants to get the DEI Chapter done in this year’s timeframe, there are only a couple of months to pull it together. It’s not a lot of time to go out to the community but the commission can work with the existing IDE Report, and do community outreach to add to what the City already heard. Then the commission will take all that information to craft goals and policies to share back to community for additional feedback. Community engagement will be focused to online with some opportunities for limited in-person engagement.

Sackett said the commission can work on the chapter as a team, but she is hoping to create a subcommittee with members of the commission to help pull demographics, share stories of our Native American past, and work on writing the chapter. It can start by pulling some ideas out of the existing IDE Subcommittee report, and developing questions to ask the community.



## **6. Strategy Discussion for Comp Plan Development**

Commissioner homework to prepare for the 5/25/21 meeting included thinking about strengths and skills commissioners could bring to the table as part of a team working together to develop the Comprehensive Plan chapter in a transparent, effective and efficient manner.

Sackett led the exercise where commissioners discussed their strengths and skills. Sackett will follow up on strengths with the two commissioners that were not present and see where they would like to help.

Sackett discussed three task categories for the DEI Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and asked where commissioners could help:

1. Overview Section of Comprehensive Plan:  
Commissioner Omrani offered to assist with the background and narrative.  
Commissioner Cleary offered to help pull existing demographics for the community (city and county).
2. Review of existing IDE Subcommittee Report:  
Commissioner Cleary offered to pull goals out of the report.
3. Community Engagement:  
Commissioner Amos offered to talk to folks and discussed using mixed method for feedback (unstructured conversation, structured interviews and survey questions).

Sackett and Klauss discussed the City's new community engagement platform, Be Heard Eburg, hosted by Bang The Table. Sackett shared examples of other cities that have used the platform to get community feedback. Klauss mentioned this commission can help develop survey questions.

## **7. Staff Report**

Klauss will update the commissioner/staff phone list with Stacey Henderson's information. Klauss reminded commissioners to review the Boards & Committees handbook. Klauss reminded commissioners that they are not allowed to represent the commission in letters to the editor or in political activism unless directed by the commission.

## **8. CITIZEN COMMENT**

Theresa Plue, 140 Woodhouse Loop, spoke about her background and requested the City Council put out a statement condemning the current Jewish hate being seen worldwide, like the City did for the Asian American hate. Plue requested the commission looks at cities similar to Ellensburg in size and demographics — agriculture and other subcultures—when working on DEI issues, and expressed concern about stirring up violence, hatred and divisiveness.



Plue asked that email links be provided to the public in agenda materials, and to be included in the community engagement process along with other rural community members.

In the Zoom chat, Commissioner Omrani wrote: I would like to echo that making a statement in support of Palestinians (in Palestine and the diaspora) and in support of our Jewish community would be a great idea! :)

Chair Goodloe said the next meeting will be June 8 from 3-4:30 p.m. Sackett said she would reach out to individual commissioners to discuss the work they can start on.

The meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Nicole Klauss  
Recording Secretary  
**Drafted: 5/26/21**  
**Approved: 6/8/21**