

FINAL

**CITY OF LEBANON
DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMISSION
MINUTES
January 11, 2022 – 5:30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL or
Remote Via Microsoft Teams: [LebanonNH.gov/Live](https://lebanonnh.gov/Live)**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Renee DePalo; Vice-Chair Emily Walton; Secretary Richard Ford Burley; Bise Wood Saint Eugene; Devin Wilkie (City Council Rep.); Nancy Graham; Karen Liot-Hill (City Council Rep.); Keiselim Montas; Tia Winter (participating remotely)

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Shaun Mulholland

(Note: This was the first meeting of the DEI Commission)

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

City Manager Shaun Mulholland called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

3. OLD BUSINESS: None

4. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Review of Basic Safety Procedures at City Hall

City Manager Shaun Mulholland briefly advised the Commission of the necessary safety procedures in case of an emergency. These procedures included steps to take if there was a fire and steps to take if there was a lockdown. He also discussed the current mask policy.

B. Introductions

The Commission went around the table and gave a brief introduction of themselves.

Bise Wood Saint Eugene is originally from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, but has lived in Lebanon since his emigration in 2014. He possesses a background in sociology and a general interest in humanity. He is presently the family resources coordinator at the Listen Center but is still active with an organization he founded in Haiti.

Devin Wilkie is a City Council member who has lived in the Upper Valley for the majority of his life, aside from a brief stint in Italy. He cares deeply about diversity as he grew up with a diagnosis of Autism and Selective Mutism, which informed much of his psychological and intellectual development. With this, he has done diversity work since he was approximately 14 years old. Presently, he volunteers with various organizations that help with migrant and refugee issues as well as housing justice and poverty. His day job is book publishing.

Nancy Graham moved to Lebanon three years ago to be closer to her son who is a physician in Boston. She is a retired teacher and special education administrator. She feels this Commission fits her background and likes to contribute to her community.

Emily Walton has lived in Lebanon since 2012. She moved to take a job in the sociology department at Dartmouth. She joined the Commission for personal reasons such as her family being bi-racial as well as the fact that she studies race and ethnicity as a sociologist.

Shaun Mulholland is the City Manager and Chief Diversity Officer for the staff of the city. He is this Commission's staff liaison.

Karen Liot-Hill is also a City Council member. She said that becoming a mother, and a mother of a bi-racial child, is what really made her start viewing the world differently. She is also the mother of a non-binary child and says she feels as though she has a lot of personal as well as public service reasons for being a part of this Commission.

Renee DePalo is currently the director of Court Diverted Programs in Grafton County. She spends a lot of her time educating the community on diversity, equity, and inclusion. She has lived all over the country and hopes her background, education, and experience can contribute.

Keiselim Montas is originally from the Dominican Republic but has lived in Lebanon for 14 years. He has a 10 year old daughter who was born and raised in Lebanon. He is interested in helping and learning about how to make Lebanon equitable.

Richard Ford Burley just completed his 10-year journey to American citizenship and shares many of the same sentiments of other members.

Tia Winter has lived in Lebanon since 2012 and has two daughters who were born and live there. She is a licensed Clinical Social Worker with a focus on mental health. She says part of being a social worker is being an advocate for the vulnerable.

C. Election of Officers

Karen Liot-Hill nominated Emily Walton for Chair, Renee DePalo for Vice-Chair, and Devin Wilkie for Secretary.

Emily Walton nominated Renee and Bise Wood but would accept if all voted for her. Renee DePalo would accept as she chairs many Commissions for the state.

Karen Liot-Hill switched her nominations to Renee DePalo for Chair and Emily Walton for Vice-Chair. ***There was no second.***

Roll Call Vote: Emily Walton, Richard Ford Burley, Bise Wood Saint Eugene, Devin Wilkie, Nancy Graham, Karen Liot-Hill, Keiselim Montas, and Tia Winter voted in favor; Renee DePalo abstained. **The nomination for Renee DePalo for Chair passed (8-0-1).**

Roll Call Vote:

Emily Walton, Richard Ford Burley, Bise Wood Saint Eugene, Devin Wilkie, Nancy Graham, Karen Liot-Hill, Keiselim Montas, and Tia Winter Renee Depalo vote in favor.

The nomination for Emily Walton for Vice-Chair passed (9-0).

Karen Liot-Hill nominated Devin Wilkie and Renee DePalo nominates Richard Ford Burley for secretary. After discussion, Devin Wilkie declined so Karen Liot-Hill withdrew her nomination for Richard Ford Burley.

Roll Call Vote:

Emily Walton, Richard Ford Burley, Bise Wood Saint Eugene, Devin Wilkie, Nancy Graham, Karen Liot-Hill, Keiselim Montas, and Tia Winter Renee Depalo voted in favor.

The nomination for Richard Ford Burley for Secretary passed (9-0).

D. Review of the Charge of the Commission

Shaun Mulholland explained he gathered information from across the country to determine the charge for the Commission. There was discussion on the purpose/charge/mission and the duties and responsibilities as listed in ORD 2021-07 CH31 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commission. There was also discussion regarding the goals and objectives of the Commission, such as what they hope to accomplish and goals to meet.

E. Rules of Procedure

Shaun Mulholland explained that a lot of City Commissions don't have rules of procedure as they don't typically need them for this type of Commission. He suggests establishing basic concepts of rules but nothing too serious. Councilor Wilkie agreed but also notes that members of the public who join should be allowed to participate. Councilor Liot-Hill expressed that time limits are a good idea, such as a one and one-half hours for the meeting. There was also discussion regarding time limits on the public speaking, such as three minutes. Mulholland also addressed the Conflict of Interest Policy.

F. Review of the Right to Know Law

There was brief discussion on the Right to Know Law and transparency. The City and the law take the public's right to know very seriously, though violations are typically with minutes or as an accidental "reply to all" email.

G. Meetings Schedule and Time

The Commission discussed ideal meeting days and times. The final agreement was that the Commission will meet on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, from 6:00-7:30 PM beginning on February 1st.

5. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

A. No discussion.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: None discussed

7. OTHER BUSINESS: None

8. ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned by Chair DePalo at 7:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Mraz