



LEBANON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMISSION

APRIL 16, 2024 - 5:30 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE

1. Call to Order

- A. The April 16, 2024, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commission (DEI) Meeting is hereby called to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

- A. March 19, 2024 (Regular Meeting)

3. Old Business

- A. Letter to Lebanon Superintendent based on feedback received from Lebanon middle School mother

4. New Business

- A. Update from Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF), Discuss Definition of Environmental Justice
- B. Equity Plan Subgroup – Document Summarizing Two Stakeholder Brainstorming Sessions to DEI Commission for Review
- C. Access Navigators
- D. Coordinate Pride Week Activities
- E. Discuss Updates/Additions to Strategic Plan

5. Open to the Public

- A. Any member of the public who desires to speak on any item may do so when the item is taken up by the Commission and will be allowed to speak on the subject for not more than three minutes. (Note: Speakers are asked to state their name, ward of residence, and to use the microphone provided.)

6. Future Agenda Items

- A. Juneteenth Celebration
- B. Welcoming Ordinance
 - 1. Review and Revise
 - 2. Recommendation to include in hiring packet for all new hires in the school district

7. Other Business

- A. Implicit Bias Training

8. Adjournment

Lebanon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission Agenda
April 16, 2024

Meetings are open for in-person and remote attendance. Members of the public that wish to attend remotely may do so by going to LebanonNH.gov/Live where you will find instructions on how to enter the meeting. Members of the public will be able to participate and ask questions through the City's virtual platform or by phone. Please note: Should technical difficulties occur during the meeting that disrupts virtual or phone connection(s), the meeting will continue without remote access capabilities.

DRAFT

CITY OF LEBANON
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION COMMISSION
March 19, 2024— 6:00pm
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL or
Remote Via Microsoft Teams: LebanonNH.gov/LIVE

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karen Liot Hill (City Council Representative); Keiselim Montas (Public Representative); Alisha Robinson (Chair) (via telepresence); Emily Walton (Public Representative); Bise Wood Saint Eugene (Vice-Chair); Simone Whitecloud (Public Representative Alternate) (via telepresence); Devin Wilkie (City Council Representative); Tia Winter (Public Representative)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Richard Ford Burley (Secretary); Kathy McCarty (Public Representative); Karen Zook (City Council Alternate)

STAFF PRESENT: Shaun Mulholland (City Manager)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The March 19, 2024 meeting of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commission (DEI) Meeting was called to order by Chair Alisha Robinson at 6:00pm.

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the meetings on February 20, 2024 and March 5, 2024 were approved.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. Ceasefire Resolution

Chair Alisha Robinson asked whether members of the public in attendance had had an opportunity to read the amended resolution as included in the published packet for the present meeting, and a paper draft was shared.

Councilor Devin Wilkie gave a brief overview of the differences between the original resolution and the draft under consideration. Tia Winter offered thoughts on whether it was the purview of the City Council to make a recommendation on this issue. Councilor Karen Liot Hill said that any reference to matters outside of the City of Lebanon was beyond the purview of the City Council and the DEI Commission, and indicated that she would be arguing such should it come before the City Council. Emily Walton argued that it would serve as a symbolic gesture and a

compliment to the resolution already passed by the Council in a way that incorporated the feedback and concerns that the DEI Commission received. A conversation was held about the relationship between the present draft and public feedback, with members alternately voicing concerns over whether enough public comment had been taken or if further public comment was necessary. Keiselim Montas suggested it was appropriate to forward the draft resolution to Council in order for them to decide what to do with it. Bise Wood Saint Eugene suggested it was appropriate to make international calls for peace, even if other international calls might be inappropriate. Councilor Karen Liot Hill spoke in favor of public comment once more before the DEI Commission votes, after which public comment was opened.

Richard Abel, resident of Lebanon Ward 1, offered recommendations for changes to the resolution, especially a call to protect anti-Zionism, and to delete any reference to military aid. Other comments were submitted on paper, which have been appended to these minutes.

Ben Spero, resident of Lebanon Ward 1, offered critiques of the draft, but focused more on his belief that there should not be a resolution at all.

Laila Volle, resident of Lebanon Ward 2, requested a vote on the resolution as soon as possible and voiced concerns about the potential for taking language about military aid out, as that is a large part of the reason for the resolution.

Maria Solis Kennedy, resident of Lebanon Ward 2, urged approval of the present draft as a compromise.

Sabiya Ahamed, resident of Lebanon Ward 2, argued against adding anti-Zionism, as a political position, not a race, religion, or ethnicity.

Ellen Rockmore, resident of Hanover, argued against the resolution, especially the language around prisoners and military aid.

Jeremy Katz, resident of Lebanon Ward 3, praised the changes from the initial resolution to the present draft, and agreed with other commenters about adding anti-Zionism to the language.

Aleks Austin, resident of Lebanon Ward 2, argued against sending military aid to conflict zones in general, and referenced the Council's vote on climate change in an explanation of the interconnectedness of local communities with international matters.

Daisy Goodman, resident of Lyme, employee of Dartmouth Health, thanked the Commission for creating a compromise document, and spoke against adding Zionism as a protected class.

Dr. Ahalem Abuawad, resident of Lebanon Ward 2, thanked the Commission for listening, asked that the resolution mention not using Lebanon tax dollars for military aid.

Dr. Graham Edwards, resident of Lebanon Ward 2, spoke against the use of tax dollars for military aid, and against the inclusion of anti-Zionism in the resolution.

Christina Wolf, resident of Lyme, works in Lebanon, speaking as a member of Veterans for Peace, called for an end to war, and that a call for a cease fire is a just thing to do.

Councilor Karen Liot Hill argued that taxes collected by the federal government are not Lebanon taxpayer dollars but federal taxpayer dollars, and reiterated her belief that the City of Lebanon weighing in on foreign policy is radical and inappropriate.

With the closing of public comment, Emily Walton thanked everyone for their comments, and suggested the words “and hostages” be added to the term “prisoners.”

City Manager Shaun Mulholland advised removing any reference to the Mayor, for reasons having to do with the structure of the city government, and advised rewording the initial paragraph to align with the Welcoming Lebanon Ordinance, which changes were agreed to by general assent.

A MOTION by Chair Alisha Robinson that the DEI Commission pass the City of Lebanon Resolution in Support of Peace in Gaza and Israel that was drafted by the DEI Commission to the City Council with a recommendation to forward it to our state officials, as amended.

Seconded by Emily Walton.

Discussion of the Motion began.

A MOTION by Councilor Karen Liot Hill to amend paragraphs 4 and 8 to add “anti-Zionism.”

****The amendment died for lack of a second.***

Discussion of the Motion ended.

****The Motion is approved 7-1 by roll-call vote.***

4. NEW BUSINESS

All new business was postponed due to lack of time.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Alisha Robinson adjourned the meeting at 7:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Ford Burley, DEI Commission Secretary

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all Lebanon community members—regardless of race, skin color, national or ethnic origin, cultural group, language, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, age, religious or political opinion or activity, economic status, immigration status, or housing status—in decisions that affect their access to and quality of interaction with the natural environment. For environmental justice to be achieved, protection from environmental risks and access to environmental benefits should be fair and equitable, and the policy, investment, and advocacy decisions surrounding environmental issues should meaningfully involve those who stand to be affected.

DEI Commission

First Equity Plan Report

Based on the DEI Commission's 7/26/2023 brainstorming session with invited community stakeholders and its 12/5/2023 meeting with the City REAL team, the following report summarizes the key priority areas and recommendations for the focus of a Citywide Equity Plan:

Priorities:

Access to Public Services and Amenities

- Improve **bus routes**, schedules, hours of operation, and overall accessibility of public transportation and bicycle/pedestrian paths
- Address challenges with **waste disposal access** and options like composting and recycling
- Expand **internet/telecom access**, especially for unhoused and disadvantaged residents
- Increase access to medical, dental, and mental **healthcare**, especially for low-income individuals
- Improve communication and publicizing of **cultural events** and local resources
- Enhance **linguistic access** through translated materials and interpretation services
- Streamline processes for **accessing city services** and public spaces for all community members
- Facilitate communication and **coordination between school districts and municipalities** in both states
- Access to **information** – no access to technology – digital equity – digital divide
- Continue to offer **affordable programming**

Economic Equity

- Address disparities in **cost-of-living increases** compared to pay raises across the region
- Review impacts of **benefits cut-offs** tied to pay raises
- Diversify **suppliers** and connect with minority-owned businesses
- Offer **grants, loans, and accelerator programs** to support **BIPOC-owned businesses**
- **Recruit for diversity** within major employers and leadership boards, including disabled and disadvantaged populations
- Increase opportunities for **networking** and accessing services outside standard work hours
- **Increased education** in community (businesses) and within City Departments

Housing & Childcare Access and Affordability

- Increase **affordable housing** and address barriers to home ownership
- Offer **accessible childcare** options and resources

- Address **energy costs** and energy insecurity

Community Connectedness and Inclusion

- Host and support **cross-cultural community events** and immersive cultural experiences
- Increase activities and **representation for people** across age demographics, including young people, single adults, and older people
- Celebrate **language diversity** through translated materials, signs, etc.
- Increase DEI education and **cultural competence training** for all communities
- Ensure **community spaces** and social opportunities are inclusive and accessible
- **Foster connections** across cultures and backgrounds to ensure all community members, including newcomers, nonresidents, and those engaged in homeschooling, feel **welcomed, represented, and able to access social networks**

City Employees

- Steer away from thinking of **employment candidates** as “good fits”
- Consider **customer population**, and customer DEI policies, in procurement and contracting purposes
- Address **state-level policies** that drive some of these barriers to diversity, including testing requirements and certifying standards
- Ensure **pay equity** across departments and roles
- Evaluate **interviewing practices**, ensuring a diverse group of people on hiring panels

Goals & Metrics:

- Community-wide **culturally competent language & bias education**
- All people **feel safe, welcome, included**; **no intrinsic assumption** someone is not local
- Decreased **systemic barriers**, including in municipal and organizational leadership
- Increased **community connectivity & engagement**
- Decreased **poverty rates**, decreased crime
- Ongoing opportunities for **whole communities**, including immersive trips
- Culture in schools: Positive **student behavior** and community cohesiveness
- Formation of **ongoing norms** in communities with minimal resistance
- Increase **diversity within City Departments & community**: youth staying in the community, different languages represented, female leadership & employee retention
- Percentage of **affordable housing units** embedded in all new development – not separated
- **Workplace equity**:
 - Work schedules (flexibility)
 - Increased efforts in childcare assistance
 - Educational opportunities for all (succession planning) – increase availability and mentorship
- What is being **celebrated** within the community

- More **applications** than openings on boards and committees
- Decrease in complaints in **access issues**
- More City **employees live in the City**

Process Improvement

- Seek to **include all members of the community** who should be involved in equity conversations
 - Representation on Boards and Committees – how are we reaching out to people who are not represented? Socioeconomic status – voice needs to be broadly represented (not only homeowners, but renters, better representation of different ages, etc.)
 - Increased education on what it means to serve on Boards and Committees – impact it can have on community
 - Investing in people – active outreach
 - More youth representation on committees
 - Stipends for those serving on boards and committees – difficulty serving due to childcare issues
 - “Working Groups” for boards and committees
 - Rethinking how work on boards and committees is done
- Expand **reach of the conversation** to the broader community, including underrepresented groups, using available resources to encourage wider involvement
- Remove **barriers to participation** to ensure community members can easily participate
- Engage in **active outreach** and ask intentional questions of participating members: who is equity for, and what is our position in pursuing equity?
- Motivate the dominant cultures to participate in **planning and pursuing equity goals**
- Examine opportunities to **use policy to aid and support** all community members
- Think beyond “welcoming” to include actions alongside statements.
- Routine, long-term planning and assessment

Accountability

- Track **data on poverty rates, pay equity, business ownership** demographics
- Conduct **inclusive community surveys** to measure change
- Maintain focus through **ongoing planning, assessment, and progress tracking**
- **Report progress** to community stakeholders and keep plan visible