

CITY OF La PORTE  
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE  
May 27, 2021 5:00 p.m.  
Minutes  
Council Chambers, City Hall

Call to Order

A meeting of the City of La Porte Diversity and Inclusion Committee was called to order by Marvin McCoy at 5:02 p.m.

Attendees

Present: Marvin McCoy, Frank Zolvinski, Jessica Aguilar, City Attorney Nick Otis, Code Enforcement Director Jeff Batchelor, City Councilman Tim Franke, and Administrative Assistant Corinne Fitzgerald.

Absent: Elissa Affeld, Selah Brooks, HR Director Jen Noll.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the March 25, 2021 were approved by a motion from Frank Zolvinski and seconded by Jessica Aguilar.

Claims

No claims to report.

Public Comment

None

Old Business

None.

New Business

Marvin McCoy introduced Fonda Owens, Executive Director of the La Porte County Library, about the potential partnership with the La Porte County Public Library.

Fonda Owens stated the library has access to grant funds and opportunities and it is important to have a community partner when doing that. Fonda stated there are many projects and directions that can be taken. She said they work with all ages and have done projects in the past (some not successful) and is working to improve on that. Fonda mentioned there are grants to libraries from Indiana Humanities, like they would sponsor diverse author series in the community. You have a choice who those authors would be, or you would select from a preselected list they have. They could come to the community and do speaking engagements. Communities can choose a book together.

Marvin McCoy asked about a scholarship. Fonda said there was not any opportunity they would not explore. She mentioned Friends of the Library group do fund raising and do that type of work and may be interested to do this.

Fonda mentioned they tried a LGBTQ book discussion for teens and there was low participation. A lot of teens were interested but the actual participation was not as they hoped it would be. Fonda said there was a project called "make a difference" and they seemed to enjoy that, which was grant funded and have sought another grant, but then with COVID everyone was staying at home. Fonda said if they see an opportunity she will come back to the meeting and make a proposal.

Fonda said there are 300,000+ visits to all the library locations. She said they are about to open an eighth location at 807 Indiana Avenue, the exchange building. The exchange building will offer opportunities. There will be three floors. The lower level is storage, the main floor will have a recording studio and video studio with meeting rooms, study pods, meeting places, internet access. Upper level will have three printers, cricut machines, heat press, soldering stations, six small woodworking lathes, CNC machine, drill press and two dremel laser cutters, a larger epilog laser cutter, five sewing machines and a serger. It is like a community center for learning skills. Anyone can come to use the equipment.

Fonda said they hope to have a soft opening on June 28 and speakers later in the year. There is a classroom in the upper level with video audio equipment to do virtual events to teach the skills required to use the machines.

Fonda said they have data bases, classes to teach how to use the internet and software programs. Can help with applications with resume builders, teach people how to use equipment like 3D printers. Copy, printing and faxing is also available. She mentioned they also still have the bookmobile.

Marvin McCoy said the May campaign was great and for June the campaign would be pride month and Marvin stated he would send out an email regarding that.

#### Unfinished business

Marvin McCoy stated the fair housing training has stalled out but he will continue to keep things going on this.

#### Other business

Marvin McCoy mentioned Juneteenth and he will include this in his email. Marvin said he thought it would be more impactful if closer to the actual date (June 19).

Marvin McCoy mentioned there were new City police officers sworn in, including 2 female and 1 Hispanic, and thought it might be beneficial to invite the new officers in to talk to the committee and would follow-up with this.

Marvin McCoy mentioned he would be out of town for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade and if the committee wanted they could do something as a parade entry and will send an email.

Tim Franke mentioned that on the statement the committee is making for diversity month on the calendar, that the statement be read at the first Council Meeting of the month. Marvin said they would strive for that.

#### Announcements

The next meeting of July 22, 2021 was scheduled to be held at the new library at 807 Indiana Avenue.

#### Adjournment

There being no other questions or comments, Frank Zolvinski motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jessica Aguilar and unanimously carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:51 p.m.