



Planning & Development Division
Planning & Economic Development Department

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African Heritage Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 10, 2021, 5:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting –Web-Ex

Commissioners present: Jebeh Edmunds, Verna Thornton, John Staine, Bernice Pepper, Breanna Ellison

Commissioners absent: Antonio Carter, Susie Green

Staff present: Mollie Hinderaker, Kathy Wilson

1. Welcome & Introductions

The meeting started at 5:38 PM.

2. Appoint Temporary Chair to Convene the Meeting

John Staine volunteered to be the Chairperson for this meeting.

3. Public Comment

- Written comments received prior to meeting:
 - Emailed to Commission in meeting packet prior to meeting, no discussion.
- City Councilor Kennedy wanted to make the Commission aware of the Waabizheshikana ("The Marten Trail") project so they can provide input if they would like to. She mentioned that the trail interpretation plan includes white European history and Indigenous history, but that there is a lot of Black history in Western Duluth that could be included as well. Councilor Kennedy asked the consultants working with the City Parks Division on this project to reach out to the African Heritage Commission. Councilor Kennedy also discussed her role with the Commission – that she wants to make sure the Commission is informed so will bring them information as appropriate.

4. Approve Meeting Minutes for January 13, 2021

Staine/Ellison to approve the January 13, 2021 minutes – **motion passed 5:0**

5. Presentation from Workforce Development - Elena Foshay, Director

Foshay explained some of the work and mission of the Workforce Development Department and asked for their input on issues specific to the African Heritage community in Duluth.

6. Bylaws Review and Approval

Commissioners and Attorney Baldwin made final revisions to the bylaws.

Staine/Pepper to approve the bylaws – **motion passed 4:0**
(Commissioner Ellison left the meeting prior to this vote)

7. Statement on the 1/6/21 events at the Capitol

The Commission discussed the draft statement, it's timing, and purpose. Staine/Edmunds to approve the content of the statement with Commissioner Thornton to make non-substantive changes to grammar and formatting before making it public– **motion passed 4:0**

8. Follow up reports from City Staff

- Demographic Information update
 - The Commission tabled this and requested that City staff present information, at the beginning of the agenda, at the next meeting. Staine/Edmunds **motion passed 4:0**
- Commission awareness
 - The Commission discussed communications options to raise awareness about their meetings. Commissioners expressed frustration towards the City for the slow pace of public communications and the lack of City communications widely advertising the Commission beyond some press coverage before their first meeting in November. As a new Commission, the African Heritage Commission wants the community to know about their meetings and be able to participate. City staff will follow up and coordinate with the City Communications Office.
- BIPOC-owned business list
 - No discussion
- City grants and other funding opportunities
 - No discussion

9. Next Meeting Topics (March 10th)

- No discussion

10. Announcements

- City of Duluth Charter Commission Study Group Virtual Meeting: February 23rd at 4PM

11. Adjourn

Staine/Pepper to adjourn the meeting at 8:05pm – **motion passed 4:0**

Next meeting to be held virtually on March 10, 2021 at 5:30 PM

AFRICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION BYLAWS
CITY OF DULUTH

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ARTICLE I – IDENTITY

- 1.1 Name. The Duluth African Heritage Commission (hereinafter referred to as “Commission”).
- 1.2 Address. The administrative offices and mailing address of the Commission shall be Room 160, City Hall, Duluth, Minnesota, 55802.

ARTICLE II – ORIGIN AND POWER

- 2.1 Establishment. The Commission was created by Ordinance 10701 (05/26/2020), pursuant to authority provided by the 1912 Home Rule Charter of the City of Duluth, as amended. The Commission serves in an advisory capacity.

ARTICLE III – DUTIES AND PURPOSE

- 3.1 Duties. The Commission shall have the following duties:
- (a) To advise the mayor and city council about issues concerning services, policies, procedures, and facilities that are of concern to the African Heritage community;
 - (b) To serve as a forum for citizen involvement and expressions on issues affecting the community;
 - (c) To identify and apply for funds and grants on behalf of the African Heritage community;
 - (d) To make recommendations to the city council regarding community development planning;
 - (e) To recommend to the city council legislation that empowers and promotes African Heritage community development;
 - (f) To increase public understanding and acceptance of the African Heritage community and culture;
 - (g) To develop a process to institutionalize a dialog with the city council, the mayor’s office, and city departments;
 - (h) To foster programs that will increase African Heritage community involvement in all aspects of community affairs;
 - (i) To develop research and information about African-American heritage and the African Heritage community;
 - (j) To establish community development objectives and policies;
 - (k) To develop a strategic plan for the African Heritage community.
- 3.2 Purpose. The purpose of this Commission is to ensure that the views of the African Heritage community are incorporated in the decision making, future planning, and stewardship of the City of Duluth. The Commission will endeavor to act as a guide in the development of public policy,

planning, and services so that the African Heritage community is adequately represented in these processes. The Commission will aim to plan, develop, and implement community projects that recognize and increase the awareness of the contributions of African-Heritage history; to encourage and assist the teaching of African-Heritage history; and to recognize sites in the community that are significant to African-Heritage History.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 Number. The Commission shall consist of seven members and shall reflect African Heritage diversity in the area.
- 4.2 Eligibility. A majority of the members shall be residents of Duluth.
- 4.3 Appointment. Members shall be appointed by the Mayor with approval of the City Council.
- 4.4 Term. Of the first seven appointments, three shall be for three years, two shall be for two years and two shall be for one year. Thereafter, all appointments shall be for a term of three years.
- 4.5 Absenteeism. If any member fails to attend three regular meetings of the Commission, notice may be forwarded to the Mayor and Council with the request for removal of such member from the Commission at the discretion of the Commission Chair.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS AND DUTIES

- 5.1 Titles. The officers of this Commission shall be Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.
- 5.2 Chair. The Chair shall preside at all meetings, appoint committees, rule on procedural questions subject to reversal by two-thirds of members in attendance, exercise the same voting rights as the other commissioners, and carry out such other duties as are assigned by the Commission.
- 5.2 Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall act in the absence or inability of the Chair to act in such instances shall have the powers and functions of the Chair.
- 5.3 Secretary. The Secretary shall be responsible for notifying all members of meetings; drafting and circulating agendas; performing research work and preparing reports as are necessary to fully advise the Commission of all facts on matters before the Commission; keeping on file all official records and reports of the Commission; keeping a written record of Commission meetings,

transactions, and actions; serving required notice of all public hearings and public meetings; maintaining and circulating minutes; reporting on and attending to correspondence of the Commission; and carrying out such other duties as are assigned by the Commission. City of Duluth Staff shall serve as Secretary.

ARTICLE VI – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- 6.1 Terms. Officers shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Commission. Terms of office shall be for one year and no member shall hold the office of Chair or Vice Chair for more than two years consecutively. Officers shall serve until replaced by a duly elected offer in accord with these procedures.
- 6.2 Nominating Committee. Nomination of officers shall be made from the floor.
- 6.3 Majority Required. Candidates for office receiving a majority vote of the entire membership (seven) shall be declared duly elected.
- 6.4 Vacancies. Vacancies occurring in officers of the Commission shall be filled forthwith by regular election procedure.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

- 7.1 Annual Meetings. An annual organizational meeting shall be held in November, at the time and place set forth for that month's Regular Meeting, of each year. Election of officers shall be conducted and proposed amendments to bylaws may be acted upon.
- 7.2 Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm. In the event that the regular meeting date falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held on the following day. Regular Meetings will be held at City Hall unless circumstances so require an alternate meeting place.
- 7.3 Special meetings. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair, or at the written request of at least five members who shall convey such request to the Secretary.
- 7.4 Notice of Meetings. Notice in writing of annual meetings setting forth the time and place thereof shall be delivered to all Commission members at least ten days in advance of such meetings; notice in writing of each regular meeting shall be sent to all Commission members at least three days in advance of such meeting; and notice in writing of any special meeting shall be sent to all

Commission members at least one day prior to such meeting and shall state the time, place, and purpose of such meeting.

- 7.5 Open Meeting Law. All meetings of the Commission shall be posted and conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law.

ARTICLE VIII – PRE-MEETING PROCEDURES

- 8.1 Agenda. The agenda for each meeting of the Commission shall be developed in writing by the Secretary of the Commission. The Chair shall determine the meeting at which an agenda item will be considered.

ARTICLE IX – MEETING PROCEDURES

- 9.1 Rules of Order. Unless otherwise specifically designated, *Roberts Rules of Order*, as most recently revised, shall govern meeting procedure.
- 9.2 Quorum. A majority of the currently serving membership of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for meeting purposes. A majority vote of the members present shall be required to transact business or make binding decisions on behalf of the Commission.
- 9.4 Suspension of Rules. The Commission may temporarily suspend its rules by a three-fourths vote of members in attendance.
- 9.5 Public Participation. The public shall be given an opportunity to speak on all agenda items pursuant to provisions written below.
- 9.8 Tabling. A tabling motion if passed has the effect of laying the matter over until the next regular meeting unless otherwise specified.
- 9.9 Notice of Appearance. Any person desiring to speak to the Commission shall express that desire in writing prior to hearing of the matter in question, setting forth their name and address and the matter in which they are interested.
- 9.10 Time Limits. Any person desiring to speak to the Commission shall be limited to a total presentation period of five minutes each.

ARTICLE X – COMMITTEES

- 10.2 Special Committees. The Chair may appoint such special committees and chairperson thereof from time to time as may be deemed necessary.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

- 11.1 Amendment Procedure. These bylaws may be amended by the affirmative vote of the majority of the entire Commission then sitting, provided that the proposed amendment has been read at the preceding meeting of the Commission.

ARTICLE XII – EFFECTIVE DATE

- 12.1 Effective Date. These bylaws shall take effect on February 10, 2021.