

DULUTH INDIGENOUS COMMISSION
Monday, May 18, 2020
Virtual Webex Meeting

Present: Babette Sandman, Larry Heady, Kassie Helgerson, Phoebe Davis, Amber Lightfeather

Absent: Carol DeVerney, Mary Owen, Rochelle Goodrich

Staff: Kathy Wilson, Mollie Hinderaker

Note: Per the request of the Indigenous Commission members two Ojibwe language words are used in the meeting minutes: bezhig (“one”) indicates who made the motion and niizho (“two”) indicates who seconded the motion.

1. Call to order and introductions

Chair Sandman called the meeting to order at 5:53 pm. Introductions were made.

2. Approval of meeting minutes

Heady bezhig/Davis niizho to approve the February 24, 2020 meeting minutes. **Motion passed 5:0**

3. Public comment

- Summary of comments received prior:
 - City Staff, Kathy Wilson, gave a summary of all comments received prior to the virtual meeting. One comment was received from Kathleen Spencer. Spencer commented that she wanted to express her continued support for the IC.
- Virtual public comment via webex:
 - City Councilor Renee Van Nett gave an update on City Council related items as Liason to the Indigenous Commission.

4. New business

- Check in about community concerns arising from the pandemic-
 - Commissioner Davis brought up concerns about safety for homeless families and individuals living on the streets during the pandemic. Councilor Van Nett explained that she is the City Council representative for Public Safety and requested that Commissioner Davis provide her more details so she could follow up with her concerns. Davis also mentioned her efforts in providing masks and hand sanitizer to tent communities in Duluth. Commissioner Helgerson stated that she has already made more than 600 masks and could assist Davis in making more masks.
 - Davis told the other Commissioners that she continues to find and pick up needles around Washington Center and the old Nettleton School site in the Central Hillside.
 - Chair Sandman expressed other concerns including community members experiencing increased loneliness during the stay at home order, access to mental health resources, and differences in opinion about wearing masks in public.

- CARES Act COVID-19 response funds (City Staff)-
 - City staff gave an overview of the CARES Act HUD funds the City will be receiving to address the Coronavirus pandemic. Staff wanted the Commission to be aware of these funds so Commissioners could share this opportunity within their networks once the request for proposal (RFP) process is open for submissions. Updates on the RFP process will be sent out to Commissioners once available.

- Census Video – community engagement (Daniel Oyinloye)
 - Daniel Oyinloye of DanSan Creatives gave a summary of a project he is working on promoting the 2020 Census. In partnership with the City and US Census Bureau, Oyinloye will connect with historically undercounted communities in Duluth to create digital media content about the importance of taking the Census. Oyinloye has started to connect with families and individuals in the Black, Latinx, and Indigenous communities in Duluth to create this content and wanted to update the Commission to receive any feedback on the project as well as access to potential connections in Commissioner networks. Commissioners expressed their support for this project and Davis volunteered to work with Oyinloye to help him carry out the project.

- Announcements and updates from Commission-
 - Commissioner Heady made comment that in light of the pandemic and other emergencies that may arise in the future he wanted to make changes to the Indigenous Commission bylaws to allow for greater flexibility in meeting virtually. Helgerson agreed that this would allow the Commission to be more effective. Commissioners supported this idea and Heady committed to drafting updates to the bylaws.
 - Commissioner Helgerson gave an update that the Chief Buffalo project continues to move forward. They have received a \$6,000 grant from the Anishinaabe Fund and the artist and sub committee continue to work with City Departments to move the project forward. Councilor Van Nett offered to assist the Commission in making any necessary inquiries to City Departments involved in the project.

8. Announcements/Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm

9. Next Meeting:

Next meeting is June 15, 2020 at 5:30 PM via Webex.