



Office of the Mayor

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MINUTES

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON COMMUNITIES OF COLOR MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2021 5:30 P.M. – Virtual Attendance

Members: Chair Deanna Reder, Natasha Lancour, Jenny Van Sickle, and Kat Werchouski

Others Present: Mayor Jim Paine, Nick Raverty, Police Chief Nicholas Alexander, Sue Heskin, and Shelley Nelson

The December 14th meeting of the Mayor's Commission on Communities of Color was called to order at 5:31pm.

AGENDA:

- 1. Roll Call**
- 2. Approval of November 10 minutes**
Motion by Commissioner Werchouski, second by Commissioner Van Sickle, and approved unanimously.
- 3. Presentation from Superior Public Library Director, Sue Heskin**
Library Director Sue Heskin gave a short presentation discussing the library and its programs. Heskin also informed the commission about the Comprehensive Assessment the library will be conducting to gauge its diversity and inclusion – which Commissioner Lancour will be serving as a representative for. Director Heskin finished the presentation by welcoming any questions, feedback, ideas, opportunities, and guidance from the commission.
Commissioner Reder inquired about any efforts to increase online accessibility. Heskin told the commission their goal is to increase accessibility and user interface through the website, and are looking at policies that may help break down barriers.
Commissioner Lancour asked for the library to put more focus on outreach, and focus on the inclusivity of their existing collections. She expressed an interest in seeing staff who are youth-focused and more involved with the youth community.
Commissioner Van Sickle asked if librarians can administer NARCAN, and if the tax program will be taking place in 2021. Heskin said the librarians cannot administer NARCAN but do know

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the response time for medical services is very good for the library, and the tax program will begin soon.

Heskin acknowledged her belief that the library staff is in need of, and eager for, more training opportunities, and are excited about the development of the social worker position within the Superior Police Department.

4. Discuss a Communities of Color/LGBTQ+ liaison officer

Chief Alexander opened the conversation by informing the commission that a liaison officer had existed in this capacity in the past, but was not currently in use. He added this type of liaison will create consistency for communities of color and the LGBTQ+ community, which would help reduce barriers. This position would help provide resources for non-emergent calls to SPD, and this officer would be trained above and beyond to help these communities.

Commissioner Lancour expressed her appreciation and is excited about this opportunity.

Commissioner Van Sickle shared her thoughts stating this is an excellent opportunity and very important for the community. She also shared concerns that other officers may come to rely on this position to help communities of color/LGBTQ+.

Chief Alexander stated this position would be utilized to train other officers in the department, but he would also keep an eye on how this position works within the entire department to ensure the scenario described does not occur.

Commissioner Reder inquired if there could be a group/task force to work with this officer on initiatives within Superior. Chief Alexander shared this would be a possibility. There is already a domestic violence crisis communication response (CCR) team as well as a sexual violence CCR team.

Commissioner Werchouski shared their excitement for this role and the advanced training.

Chief Alexander said this position will help create a strong response team within our community. He will continue to research and move the project forward. He will bring further developments back to the commission.

Commissioner Van Sickle made a motion to make the following statement of support: The Mayor's Commission on Communities of Color supports assigning a renewed collateral duty to have a Communities of Color and LGBTQIA+ Liaison Officer in the Superior Police Department.

The motion was made by Commissioner Van Sickle, seconded by Commissioner Reder, and approved unanimously.

5. Discuss switching to quarterly or bi-monthly meetings

Commissioner Reder opened the conversation by sharing a concern to reach quorum in meetings, and a potential remedy being switching to quarterly or bi-monthly meetings to allow for a more robust agenda and increased participation. They would personally like to see the commission continue to meet monthly.

Commissioner Werchouski is comfortable switching to bi-monthly to accommodate busy schedules, so long as there are agenda items to act on.

Commissioner Lancour is in favor of continuing monthly meetings at the designated date and time.

Commissioner Werchouski asked for clarification for the time allotted for the meetings.

Commissioner Reder stated commissioners should plan on an hour-long meeting typically.

Motion to continue meeting the second Monday of the month at 5:30pm by Commissioner Werchouski, seconded by Commissioner Lancour, and approved unanimously.

6. Goals for 2021

Commissioner Reder's goals for the year include regularly reaching quorum at meetings, having guest speakers regularly, and having the commission become more involved in the community.

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Commissioner Van Sickle's goals include city department heads each visiting the commission to have collaborative conversations, explore staff training, and to act as a commission of policy. Other commissioners shared in the already stated goals.

7. City staff training

Mayor Paine shared he will work with the city's contract analyst to author a Request for Proposals (RFP) that the commission can then refine to fit their goals with staff training. Commissioner Werchouski requested a lighter agenda if possible so the commission can focus on this topic at the next meeting.

8. Citizen suggestion update

Nick Raverty shared updates were made to the Commission's webpage to include a contact form which will be sent as an email to all commissioners. It was requested that short bios be added to the webpage as well.

9. MLK Day

Commissioner Reder asked if the city had anything planned for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Mayor Paine shared a joint proclamation is typically created with Duluth. The city will also look into sharing information of other events in the Twin Ports through the website.

10. Any other business

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:51pm.

The City of Superior complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you are in need of an accommodation to participate in the public meeting process, please contact Nick Raverty at (715) 395-7212 by 4:30 pm on Friday **prior** to the scheduled meeting. The City will attempt to accommodate any request depending on the amount of notice we receive.

Notice is hereby given that a majority of the members of the Common Council may be present at the meeting, and although this may constitute a quorum of the Common Council, the Council will not take any action at this meeting.