

**Meeting Agenda**  
**January 21, 2026**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission**  
**School Board Conference Room**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Hall**  
**116 West Beverley St.**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Call to Order**

**Proposed Agenda:**

- 1. Approval of Minutes**
  - a. DEI Commission Meeting – December 17, 2025
  
- 2. Subcommittee Report Outs**
  - a. Community Connections
  - b. Data and Research
  
- 3. City Council Presentation**
  
- 4. Going ‘Round the Circle!**
  
- 5. Other Business**

**Adjournment**

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMISSION**

Meeting

December 17, 2025

6:00 p.m.

School Board Conference Room

City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

PRESENT: Sabrina Burress  
Ian Callahan  
Cecilia Carpenter  
Mark Jeter, Vice Chair  
Charles Lawson  
AnhThu Nguyen, Chair  
Belinda Osario Polgar  
Natalie Slater  
Susan Venable  
Jordan Zipser

ABSENT: Alice Woods, Council Liaison  
Josh Knight, Engagement & Communications

ALSO PRESENT: Leslie Beauregard, City Manager  
Morgan Smith, City Manager's Office

AnhThu Nguyen called the meeting open at 6 p.m.

**1. Approval of Minutes**

Cecilia Carpenter moved to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2025 DEI Commission meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Sabrina Burress and carried unanimously.

Jordan Zipser moved to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2025 Community Connections subcommittee as amended. The motion was seconded by Ian Callahan and carried unanimously.

**2. Subcommittee Report Outs**

a. Community Connections – messaging for the Commission and communications guidelines on how to help communicate that message have been drafted. Once the sub-committee agrees on them, they will be distributed to the entire Commission.

b. Data and Research – They've begun to look through the HR data and want to take a deeper dive. Does the current makeup of city employees align with the makeup with the City of Staunton. The answer is not really, there is not perfect alignment. The female ratio is low, but the largest departments are more traditionally male (Public Works, Fire, Police Department). AnhThu met with Human Resources as an introductory conversation and talked hiring, recruiting, onboarding and retention. HR is open and receptive to outside training, local experts. HR seems to need a marketing department, more of a recruiter type of personality.

- 50 i. Suggestions were made that perhaps there be an internal mentorship program, offering  
51 a slimmed down version of Citizen University to new hires, etc.  
52 ii. Next steps will be do finalize the suggestions and then share with Jon Venn ahead of  
53 the January 22 report to Council.  
54

55 **3. Annual Written Report to City Council – January 22, 2026 Work Session**

- 56 • Drafts due to AnhThu by Jan. 12 as the agenda packet is published on Jan. 16.  
57 Community Connections was to create an updated timeline of activities, focusing on  
58 January to June.  
59

60 **4. Going ‘Round the Circle!**

- 61 • **Dec. 18**, Documentary at Court Square Theater highlighting a local bakery in  
62 downtown Harrisonburg  
63 • **Dec. 21**, Solstice Potluck at the LGBTQ Center  
64 • **Teacher Fair**, January 31  
65

66 **5. Other Business**

- 67 • **You Belong** art project with City Schools to engage students and teachers in  
68 discussions about DEI and promote inclusive practices. The proposal that Belinda put  
69 together includes a timeline for the competition, with a final event in May. It was  
70 suggested that corporate sponsorships for prizes be considered. Discussion ensued  
71 regarding starting with the School Board to get their support and understand their  
72 limitations, as well as the importance of aligning the competition with the school  
73 system’s existing programs and initiatives.  
74  
75

76 **Adjournment**

77  
78 The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.