



**Planning & Development Division**  
*Planning & Economic Development Department*

Room 160  
411 West First Street  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

218-730-5580

planning@duluthmn.gov

African Heritage Commission Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, April 14, 2021, 5:30 p.m.**

Virtual Meeting –Web-Ex

Commissioners present: Jebbeh Edmunds, Verna Thornton, John Staine, Bernice Pepper, Antonio Carter, Susie Green

Commissioners absent: Breanna Ellison

Staff present: Mollie Hinderaker, Kathy Wilson

1. Welcome & Introductions

The meeting started at 5:34 PM.

2. Approve Meeting Minutes for March 10, 2021

Thornton/Green to approve the March 10, 2021 minutes – **motion passed 5:0\***

\*Commissioner Carter was not present for this vote

3. Special Item

Chair Staine and Vice Chair Green brought up the Human Rights Commission Community Listening Session scheduled for 6pm. The Commission agreed to try to finish their meeting by 6pm so Commissioners and meeting attendees could also attend the Community Listening Session.

4. Public Comment

- A few community members who are interested in forming a Hispanic/Latinx commission introduced themselves and stated they were in attendance to observe the meeting
- City Councilor Kennedy said she would attend AH Commission meetings occasionally and that the Commissioners should feel free to reach out to her

5. Action Items

a. Duluth Community Safety Initiative (DCSI) Law Enforcement Accountability Proposals Staine/Pepper that the African Heritage Commission supports the Proposals for Community-led Police Accountability in Duluth – **motion passed 6:0**

6. Subcommittees

Roles for subcommittees were briefly discussed and Commissioner assignments were clarified. A new subcommittee was established to continue working on support for the DCSI proposals.

- a. Community Center/Grants (Pepper)
- b. Employer Engagement/Demographics and Data Research (Carter, Green, Thornton)
- c. Historic Preservation (Edmunds, Staine)
- d. DCSI Law Enforcement Accountability Proposals (Green, Stain, Thornton)

7. Old Business

The Commissioners acknowledged the work that Commissioner Thornton put into writing the statement regarding the January 6, 2021 events at the US Capitol that was submitted to City Administration. This statement was also to be used to introduce the members of the African Heritage Commission to the Duluth community. The AHC Commissioners were perplexed as to why these issues (public introduction of Commissioners and the publication of the statement regarding the insurrection at the Capitol) were not upon or addressed. The Commission also expressed dissatisfaction that the members of the African Heritage Commission have not been formally introduced to the Duluth Community. The Commission requested city staff provide direction so that items that are approved by the Commission are published and that a formal introduction of the Commission to the Duluth Community occurs.

8. Next Meeting Topics (May 12<sup>th</sup>)

- Agenda Items:
  - Goals and Work Plan discussion
  - Subcommittee updates and lead roles
  - Resolution in Support of DCSI Proposals
- Questions for City staff:
  - What is the procedure/time line for press releases or statements from the Commission?
  - How can City Commissions communicate with the City and each other to ensure they don't have overlapping events/meetings?

9. Announcements

- No discussion

10. Adjourn

Staine/Pepper to adjourn the meeting at 6:07pm – **motion passed 6:0**

Next meeting to be held virtually on May 12, 2021 at 5:30 PM