



Date of Council Meeting: February 9, 2015

**TOWN OF LEESBURG
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

Subject: Creation of Town Diversity Commission

Staff Contact: Kaj Dentler, Town Manager
Barbara Notar, Town Attorney

Council Action Requested: Discussion and direction is needed on the potential creation of a Town Diversity commission.

Staff Recommendation: I recommend the Council clearly define the mission and duties of a Diversity Commission before proceeding with a public hearing.

Commission Recommendation: Not applicable.

Fiscal Impact: The annual cost will be commensurate with other Town advisory commissions. The chair would receive \$1,350 annually, and each of the six other commissioners would receive \$1,200. As a result, total cost for the commission is \$8,550.

Executive Summary: Members of the Town's Task force on Workforce Diversity have petitioned for the creation of an advisory group for Town Council called the Diversity Commission.

Background: Per Town Resolution 2014 – 004, Town Council created a task force on workforce diversity. The task force was formed with the purpose of increasing representation of different groups within the Town of Leesburg's workforce in an effort to better mirror the community. The taskforce submitted its final report in September 2014 with three key recommendations: (1) development of a diversity pipeline; (2) succession planning, and (3) communications.

The task force also made a recommendation that called for the creation and establishment of a standing diversity commission. Recently, members of the task force have petitioned the Council with a proposal that includes a mission statement and goals for consideration.

Chapter 2 – Administration, Article V of the Town Code provides Town Council the authority to create and establish regular boards and commissions. As such, a draft Town Code amendment has been created for Council review using the respective proposal as a basis for review and discussion.

One area of the respective proposal that cannot be incorporated into the creation and establishment of a diversity commission relates to personnel matters especially hiring and mediation. Since the Town of Leesburg is a Town Council-Manager form of government, the Town Council governing body sets policy, and the Town Manager oversees all administrative functions. In accordance with the Town Charter, the Town Manager serves as the Chief Executive Officer, and is responsible for hiring and all personnel related matters. In addition, the State Code only authorizes boards and commissions to serve in advisory capacities. The only exception to this is the Planning Commission and the Board of Architectural Review who have some limited additional powers and responsibilities.

Attachments:

- (1) Town Resolution 2014 -004
- (2) September 2014 Final Report–Workforce Diversity
- (3) Leesburg Diversity Commission Proposal

Leesburg Diversity Commission Proposal

Mission Statement:

To identify and advocate on behalf of the Leesburg minority community on issues related to inclusion and deliverance of town services, business opportunities, employment and workforce diversity and fairness. To serve as advisors to the Leesburg Town Council on issues affecting the minority community in order to help create a town atmosphere where all citizens feel empowered and where diversity is accepted and appreciated at all levels of town government.

Goals

To monitor the implementation of the Diversity Task Force's accepted recommendations and make periodic updates, improvements and modifications as might become necessary to meet diversity goals. And to make sure that there is an accountability system in place to track and measure progress.

To create a forum to accept complaints from members of the minority community and employees who themselves might find it uncomfortable or difficult to bring issues before the Town Council or town staff and to facilitate that the complaint or concern reaches the correct decision maker and be ready to mediate if parties request; however, not acting as a decision maker of the final outcome.

To establish a clear and functional communications link between minority organizations and the Leesburg Town Council (and/or Town staff) for the timely dissemination of information.

To provide an annual Minority Business Opportunity Seminar in which the Leesburg Economic Development office can present an overview of town services, and opportunities as they relate to doing business with the Town of Leesburg and other information to support increased business development, growth and promotion.

To develop collaboration partnerships with minority organizations to help foster understanding of different cultures, i.e. establish an annual multi-cultural festival or day in Leesburg.

To prepare an annual report for the Leesburg Town Council of the Commission's activities.

Committee composition

Each board member will bring forth a nominee and the council will vote as a whole to accept that nominee as done in other committees

Terms of Service

The term of service will coincide with the term of the council members who appointed that individual as is done in other committees

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Section 2-233. Leesburg Diversity Commission

- a. Established. The Leesburg Diversity Commission is hereby created and established.
- b. Duties.
 - (i) The Leesburg Diversity Commission's mission is to help foster diversity and inclusion within the Town of Leesburg government workforce, and the community at large;
 - (ii) The Commission may make recommendations to the Town Council that potentially enhance the Town of Leesburg government's ability to communicate and to deliver services more effectively to minority residents and business owners within the Town;
 - (iii) The Commission shall work with the Leesburg Economic Development Commission and Town staff on a regular outreach effort to the minority business community in order to increase awareness of Town services, and to understand potential opportunities to do business with the Town;
 - (iv) The Commission makes recommendations to Town Council that provides the Town of Leesburg with the opportunity to enhance and celebrate the Town's diverse community;
- c. Membership. Exclusive of the rules outlined in division 1 of this article, membership may consist of town residents, town property owners, or town business owners. At least four members shall be town residents.
- d. Meetings. The Leesburg Diversity Commission shall meet once a month.