

DRAFT

Minutes

COMMISSION ON DIVERSITY AWARENESS
WEDNESDAY
APRIL 17, 2026

STAFF CONFERENCE ROOM
211 WEST ASPEN AVENUE
1:30 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Manny Hernandez called the meeting to order at 1:33pm

2. Roll Call

NOTE: One or more Commission Members may be in attendance telephonically or by other technological means.

MANNY HERNANDEZ, CHAIR Present
SANDRA DARLING, VICE CHAIR Present
CARMENLITA CHIEF Absent

SILINA MARTINEZ Present
JUSTIN MALLETT Present
ANGELICA SANCHEZ Present

3. Mission Statement and Land Acknowledgment

Chair Hernandez read the Mission Statement and Commissioner Sanchez read the Land Acknowledgement.

MISSION STATEMENT

A commission to foster support, respect, awareness and appreciation of diversity among all citizens of Flagstaff.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Commission on Diversity Awareness humbly acknowledges the ancestral homelands of this area's Indigenous nations and original stewards. These lands, still inhabited by Native descendants, border mountains sacred to Indigenous peoples. We honor them, their legacies, their traditions, and their continued contributions. We celebrate their past, present, and future generations who will forever know this place as home.

4. Upcoming Opportunities and Announcements

Chair Hernandez shared information on the Starlight in the Square event and Commissioner Sanchez shared information on the bilingual beginnings events.

5. Open Call to the Public

The Commission cannot act upon items presented during the Public Participation portion of the Agenda. Individual Commission members may ask questions of the public but are prohibited by the Open Meeting Law from discussion or considering the item among themselves until the item is officially placed on the Agenda. Each public comment or presentation will be limited to four (4) minutes.

None.

6. Approval of Minutes

- A. Minutes from the February 20, 2026.

Vice Chair Darling made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve the minutes from the February 20, 2026 meeting.

7. Action Items

- A. Rescheduling or Canceling the June meeting for the City observed Holiday of Juneteenth

The commission discussed canceling the June meeting unless there is anything urgent comes up in the meantime that requires the Commission to meet. There was also discussion of upcoming Pride events that will fill up the month with as well.

Staff will put the action to formalize canceling the meeting on the next agenda.

B. Proclamations

- i. Jewish Heritage Month

The Commission discussed both Proclamations together. The Commission confirmed May for both the Jewish Heritage Month and Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month and discussed creating a document to save community contacts who might be able to represent for the Proclamations brought forward by the Commission.

- ii. Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month

8. Discussion Items

- A. Employee Notice and City Manager Directive regarding federal agencies

Item 8B was heard prior to item 8A.

Commission members discussed concerns about relying on federal law enforcement agencies to cooperate with identification and accountability measures, noting uncertainty about whether officers would properly identify themselves. They also questioned what authority the advisory commission actually has to influence city policy, concluding that the issue may need further discussion with Council Liaison Councilmember House and clearer guidance on what actions the commission can formally take.

- B. Regional Plan informational update from Staff

Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Manager Sarah Dechter explained that Ballot Question 492 asks voters to approve the new Flagstaff Regional Plan 2045, replacing the current long-range planning document for Flagstaff and surrounding areas. She said the plan is a flexible policy guide focused on six key priorities, not a zoning code or binding project list.

Chair Hernandez asked questions regarding short term rentals. Ms. Dechter stated that Arizona law limits Flagstaff's ability to regulate short-term rentals, but the city wants to be ready if state rules change. She also said the 2045 plan supports adding more small neighborhood businesses like cafés and corner stores to improve walkability and accessibility.

C. Potential planning meeting to establish goals for the year

Commission members discussed holding a less formal strategic planning meeting, possibly in June to replace the June meeting, to set goals and priorities for the next year. Staff encouraged Commissioners to bring ideas, action items, and questions about commission procedures and open meeting rules to help guide the group's future work.

Staff will bring this item back for further discussion and date planning at the next meeting.

D. Pride Parade update and involvement opportunities from Chair Hernandez

Commission members discussed opportunities to participate in community events during Pride and Juneteenth weekend, including walking in the Pride Parade on June 20 and possibly decorating a truck together. They also talked about coordinating attendance at other local events throughout the weekend and encouraging broader community involvement. Staff reminded Commissioners to let their Staff Liaison know about any potential quorums when gathering outside meetings.

9. Reports

A. Updates from Working Groups

i. Rainbow Crosswalk Update

Vice Chair Darling shared that there is not much to report on this meeting for the Rainbow Crosswalk group but they hope to restart outreach and community engagement this summer.

ii. Library Working Group

Commissioner Sanchez shared the Library Working group's successful ongoing programs like bilingual story time and ASL sessions, planned a Drag Story Hour, and is awaiting a grant for an oral history project. They also introduced a new idea to expand book access through a "book ecosystem" initiative, with details and funding still in development.

B. Updates from Council Liaison

None.

10. Informational To/From Commissionmembers/Staff and Future Agenda Item Requests

None.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.