



**HERNDON COMMUNITY INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, November 6, 2025**

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor LeBlanc called the November 6, 2025, Community Inclusion and Engagement Committee meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Herndon Council Chambers Building, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia. In attendance were: Mayor Keven LeBlanc; Councilmember Alex Reyes; and Committee members Yelena Barth, Rosemary Kendall, Andrew Lacher (elected Chair during the meeting), Fanny Salazar-Laske and K Scarry (elected Vice Chair during the meeting).

Committee Member Charles Hall was absent.

Staff present during the meeting: Brent Heavner, Chief Communications Officer; and Margie Tacci, Deputy Town Clerk.

**Determination of a Quorum**

Mayor LeBlanc determined there was a quorum of five Committee members present. He stated Mr. Abdul, who had originally been appointed to this Committee, had to resign due to employment conflicts.

**2. Welcome and Introductions**

Mayor LeBlanc welcomed everyone and asked the committee members to introduce themselves, their organization or community group they represent.

Community Inclusion and Engagement Committee (CIEC) members introduced themselves and provided some background on their organization/group they represent.

Mayor LeBlanc asked Committee Members Lacher and Barth, who were members of the previous Herndon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (HDEIC), to provide background on that group. There was discussion among the Committee about what had occurred with the HDEIC, along with expectations and the meeting schedule for the CIEC.

Mayor LeBlanc referenced the CIEC's charter, stating that all members should have received a copy of it. He expanded on the importance of engagement, along with inclusion. He referenced the updates and changes that were made to this Committee, and highlighted the work of the member organizations.

### **3. Organizational Meeting Item**

#### **a. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Mayor LeBlanc stated that the first order of business is the Election of the Chair and Vice Chair of the CIEC.

Mayor LeBlanc called for nominations for the Chair for the term November 6, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

#### **Election of Chair**

Committee member Kendall nominated Committee member Lacher for Chair. Nomination was seconded by Committee member Fanny.

The question was called on the motion, which carried by 4-0 roll call vote. The vote was: Committee Members Barth, Kendall, Salazar-Laske and Scarry voting "Aye". Committee Member Lacher abstaining. Committee Member Hall was absent.

#### **Election of Vice Chair**

Committee member Lacher nominated Committee Member Scarry for Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Committee Member Kendall.

The question was called on the motion, which carried by 4-0 roll call vote. The vote was: Committee members Barth, Kendall, Lacher, and Salazar-Laske voting "Aye". Committee Member Scarry abstaining. Committee Member Hall was absent.

Mayor LeBlanc congratulated Chair Lacher and Vice Chair Scarry.

### **4. Comments from the Audience**

Chair Lacher reviewed the process and asked those who wanted to provide Comments from the Audience to come forward. There were no comments from the audience.

Mayor LeBlanc took a moment to review the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) laws that also apply to this Council-appointed Committee.

## 5. **Comments**

### a. **Comments from the Staff Members**

Chair Lacher asked if there were any comments from staff.

Brent Heavner, Chief Communications Officer, stated that he is here to be the committee's resources, engagement, communications and use this group to better understand and communicate to the residents.

Responding to a question from Chair Lacher, Mr. Heavner and Mayor LeBlanc reviewed the communication process between the CIEC and Town Council.

Margie Tacci, Deputy Town Clerk, stated that the Clerk's office would be providing staff support to the Committee.

Councilmember Reyes congratulated the newly elected Chair and Vice Chair and stated that he was looking forward to working with the Committee.

### b. **Comments from the Committee Members**

Vice Chair Scarry: provided comments about being raised in Herndon and her love of the community. She wants to help communities to flourish by being inviting and supportive of everyone in Herndon. She stated that everyone is better in the community when all work together.

Committee Member Salazar-Laske: stated that she has lived in the Town for 16 years and has learned a lot about how to help those that are new to the United States. She provided comments on the importance of inclusion and providing a sense of belonging in Herndon.

Committee Member Barth: stated that Herndon is a special place and wanted to see the positive impact CIEC could have on the community.

Committee Member Kendall: provided comments about her professional background and stated that she has training in diversity. She has an understanding of how to give a voice to those that have not had a voice.

Chair Lacher: stated that he was looking forward to working with all members of the CIEC. He provided information about his background and stated that he has seen the value of diversity through his work in the community. He wants everyone in Herndon to feel the value of community.

## **6. Discussion**

### **a. Open Discussion - Future Topics and Interests**

Chair Lacher opened a discussion on future topics and priorities for the Community Engagement and Inclusion Committee (CIEC) and invited Councilmember Reyes and Mayor LeBlanc to share Council's expectations. Councilmember Reyes emphasized that Herndon is strongest when residents know and understand one another. He highlighted the value of faith-based, historical, and cultural connections and expressed interest in continued dialogue about Herndon's evolving community identity.

Mayor LeBlanc stated that the Committee's purpose is reflected in its name and that inclusion and engagement should focus on bringing people in and helping them connect. He discussed the purpose of bringing in all the groups that the members of the Committee represent, along with Town staff, in supporting the Committee's mission. He also provided comments on place-making and how community design, business types, and communications affect belonging, and suggested visible symbols of inclusion such as additional flags or cross-cultural events. He referenced low attendance at events such as Juneteenth and questioned how outreach and trust-building could be improved, citing events such as National Night Out and school-based activities as opportunities for engagement.

There was discussion among staff, Mayor LeBlanc, Councilmember Reyes, and the Committee Members on the following topics:

1. Community identity and how residents inside and outside the Town limits identify with Herndon.
2. Inclusion and engagement of underserved or less visible groups, including seniors, individuals with special needs, and renters.
3. Outreach methods and the effectiveness of current Town communications, including the Town newsletter and Mayor's Office communications.
4. Cultural, seasonal, and holiday events, including attendance challenges and opportunities for cross-cultural activities.
5. Work that faith-based groups are doing in the community. Vice Chair Scarry indicated that she would invite Mayor LeBlanc to the next meeting of a Reston-Herndon clergy group.
6. Food insecurity and family needs during the holiday season, including coordination of food and coat drives.
7. Informal community conversations and relationship-building through shared meals and neighborhood events.
8. Business inclusion, including support for small, home-based, and minority-owned businesses and improved visibility of registered businesses.

9. Welcome efforts for new residents, including review of the Town's welcome packet and challenges reaching renters and apartment communities.
10. Use of metrics and data tools to measure belonging, engagement, and Committee effectiveness.
11. Looking ahead to upcoming milestones; the Herndon Community Center's 50th anniversary, the Mayor's Volunteer Reception 40th anniversary, and the country's 250th anniversary, we should consider ways to incorporate these celebrations into our events and programming.
12. Committee role, goals, and meeting structure, including agenda organization, time management, and procedural guidelines. There was a request to review this topic during each Committee meeting.

With general agreement from the Committee, staff was requested to explore and prepare information on the following topics for possible inclusion on future meeting agendas:

1. Review of Town communications methods and outreach tools (to be included on the next meeting agenda).
2. Evaluation of the Town's welcome packet and options for reaching renters and apartment communities (to be included on the next meeting agenda).
3. Metrics or benchmarking tools related to belonging and engagement. Committee Members were asked to send any comments on this topic to the Town Clerk's office or to Brent.
4. Business inclusion and visibility of local businesses.
5. Community representation and engagement of underserved populations.
6. Holiday season support efforts and information-sharing related to food and coat drives.

## 7. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Lacher adjourned the November 6, 2025 Community Inclusion and Engagement Committee at 8:29 p.m.



**Margie C. Tacci**  
Deputy Town Clerk



Minutes approved by CIEC: **February 5, 2026**