

City of Bend
Human Rights and Equity Commission
October 26, 2022
Meeting Minutes

The work session of the Human Rights and Equity Commission (HREC) was called to order at 4:45 p.m. on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at the Central Oregon Community College Health Careers Center, Room 190, 2600 NW College Way, Bend, OR 97703, and virtually.

- 1. Roll Call:** Commissioners Manoj Alipuria, Brittany Brown, Olivia Dudo (attended virtually), Cameron Fischer, Cassandra Kehoe, Vice-chair Joanne Mina (attended virtually), Carolyn Peacock-Biggs, Chair Jasmine Wilder

Absent: Brittany Brown

- 2. Land Acknowledgement**

Vice-chair Mina read the land acknowledgment.

- 3. Approval of the September 28, 2022, Meeting Minutes**

Not Addressed. Added to the November 9, 2022 HREC Meeting Agenda.

- 4. HREC Work Plan – Listening Session**

Commissioners Alipuria, Mina, and Wilder led the Commission and community members in an overview of the initiatives in the draft work plan. Commissioner Alipuria explained that the HREC worked with the community, City Council, and City staff to come up with seven ideas for the HREC's initiatives. Commissioner Alipuria displayed the following slides:

- **Initiative #1: Discrimination:** Establish a process for community members to be able to share acts of discrimination while offering resources, navigation, and appropriate triaging
- **Initiative #2: Restorative Justice:** Establish a process of restorative justice for Bend Police and community members
- **Initiative #3: Equity Framework:** Develop an equity framework to be utilized by all City departments in all stages of policy development and decision-making processes
- **Initiative #4: City Process, Policies, & Procedures:** Review and establish recommendations on City's contracting, permitting, and sponsorship process, policies, and procedures
- **Initiative #5: Community Engagement:** Create community engagement in City Council's goal setting process
- **Initiative #6: Language Access Policy:** Establish a Language Access Policy (LAP) to ensure Spanish speakers and non-English speakers and community members have equitable access to City services

- **Initiative #7: Policy Feedback:** Provide advice and direction to City Council on policy decisions that align with the mission of HREC. This includes advice on legislative agendas and funding priorities

Commissioners and community members provided input and clarified the initiatives.

Christy Walker, Central Oregon Community College (COCC) Director of Diversity and Inclusion, stated she supports Initiative 1, but the language is unclear. Walker said the initiative seems to say that while someone is sharing an act of discrimination, that person is also offering resources. Commissioner Alipuria clarified the slide is meant only to convey ideas.

Community member Dana Gulley stated he was excited to see Initiative 2 as part of the draft work plan. Gulley questioned the extent to which a program like this could live apart from the existing criminal justice system as a way to truly reflect restorative practice.

Community member Jenny stated Initiative 3 could be a priority woven throughout the Commission's document.

Commissioner Peacock-Biggs asked whether a local outside entity trains City staff on diversity and marginalization and what accountability exists for that training.

Mo Mitchell, City Councilor, briefed the group on a risk assessment and outreach to the unhoused in which she participated before a camp sweep. She stated there is a need for an equity guide that could be referenced by all City departments.

Anna Allen, temporary Equity and Inclusion Director, explained the core of Initiative 4 is being intentional about how the City is pushing funds out into the community through policy and funding decisions.

Mary Winters, City Attorney, pointed out that contracting, permitting, and sponsorship are three big topics all grouped under one heading in Initiative 4. Winters stated the Commission might want to establish subcommittees in these areas.

Commissioner Mina explained Initiative 5 is designed to center Council goal setting and legislative priorities on community wants and needs.

Commissioners agreed "collaborative governance" better conveys the aim of Initiative 5.

Allen explained Initiative 6 originated in the Equity Department. Upon reviewing census data, the department recognized a clear LAP was necessary. The policy ensures community members are able to access City services in their own language.

Zavier Borja, Community Relations Manager, explained the LAP serves as an internal tool to help City departments and staff to identify when translation or interpretation is needed and to budget for those needs.

A community member who is a language access professional advised the Commission that if language access professionals had been included in the planning of this meeting, they likely would have advised a simultaneous interpreting session would have been appropriate to allow monolingual Spanish speakers to participate.

Allen explained Initiative 7 will be an ongoing part of the Commission's work.

Commissioner Mina stated it is crucial that City Council consider input from those directly impacted when creating policies to support them.

Commissioner Peacock-Biggs would like to see how the rental cap was determined because it does not seem to consider low-income households. The Commissioner said there is a need to see housing from the perspective of workers.

Commissioner Mina acknowledged that the inventory of affordable housing is extremely small, and many community members who are struggling do not qualify for it. The Commissioner explained Initiative 7 would allow HREC to look at policies that directly impact community members and enable community members to help design solutions.

Chair Wilder discussed Equity Department and HREC capacity and stated action is needed in that area. Chair Wilder cited the amount and complexity of work involved in change and said it will take conscientious investment and additional staff. Commissioner Wilder called for HREC to make a detailed, specific, and intentional recommendation to Council about the necessary capacity investment.

Mickie Derting, Equity Department Interim Director, asked Commissioners to send her feedback and said only nine survey responses had been received; Derting asked Commissioners to help spread the word about the survey.

5. Public Comment – None

6. Agenda Setting – Not Addressed. Added to the November 9, 2022, HREC Meeting Agenda.

7. Adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Mitsch
Senior Administrative Support Specialist



Accessible Meeting Information

This meeting/event location is accessible. Sign language interpreter service, assistive listening devices, materials in alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, or any other accommodations are available upon advance request. Please contact Robyn Christie at rchristie@bendoregon.gov or 541-388-5507, Relay Users Dial 7-1-1. Providing, at least, 3 days' notice prior to the event will help ensure availability.