

City of Bend
Human Rights and Equity Commission
February 22, 2023
Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Human Rights and Equity Commission (HREC) was called to order at 4:33 p.m. on Wednesday, February 22, 2023, in the Board Room at City Hall, 710 NW Wall Street, Bend, OR 97703, and virtually.

1. **Roll Call:** Commissioners Jasmine Wilder, Manoj Alipuria, Brittany Brown, Cameron Fischer, Joanne Mina, Carolyn Peacock-Biggs, Renee Ruiz (present virtually), Erin Maher, Jeff Kitchens, Linda Long (present virtually), Sergio Retamal, Mo Mitchell (present virtually), Stephen Sehgal

Absent: Brittany Brown (unexcused), Carolyn Peacock-Biggs (excused), Stephen Sehgal (excused)

2. **Acknowledgements**

- A. Commissioners and Cassandra Kehoe, Equity and Accessibility Manager, thanked Mickie Derting, Interim Director – Equity, for her leadership and the transition from former Equity Director Anna Allen. Each shared a memory about Derting.
- B. Commissioner Maher read the land acknowledgement.

3. **Approval of January 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the January 25, 2023 meeting minutes. Commissioner Mina seconded. **Voice vote** – Commissioners Wilder, Alipuria, Fischer, Mina, Ruiz, Maher, Kitchens, Long, Retamal, Mitchell, Yes 10 No 0

4. **Black History Month Acknowledgement**

Chair Wilder read the Black History Month Proclamation passed by City Council at its February 15, 2023 meeting. At that meeting, Chair Wilder read the proclamation; she, along with Kenny Adams, director of The Father’s Group, and Dr. Dalton Miller-Jones, retired professor and co-chair of the Restorative Justice & Equity Group, delivered closing comments.

Chair Wilder said the general theme of the closing comments was the importance of action, not words; the need for changes to processes and structures; being willing to be visible and allowing tragedies to be seen, honored, and remembered; and the recognition that Bend is diverse, with African Americans, indigenous peoples, and the LatinX communities bringing value to the area. Chair Wilder called on the community to treat diversity as a restorative thought process that always should have been happening. Chair Wilder cautioned the community should not condemn growth, newcomers, and increasing diversity.

Chair Wilder shared that as she has dug into Black history, she has found language that is intense but historically accurate. This Black History Month, she became aware of racism in Bend’s history that she wasn’t aware of. Chair Wilder stated this history must be overcome, and Bend must

actively embrace a restorative storyline. Chair Wilder added she had always felt out of place here until joining this Commission, which she joined so Black children growing up here wouldn't have the same experience she had in the schools and the community. Finally, Chair Wilder stated Black history is just American history.

5. Elections

Kehoe explained Commissioner Peacock-Biggs, Commissioner Alipuria, and Commissioner Mina were the three candidates for HREC Chair. Kehoe presented the following slides:

- Chair Election
- Manoj Alipuria
- Joanne Mina
- Carolyn Peacock-Biggs

Commissioner Alipuria shared his core value of empathy, his vision as a leader of HREC, and his own story.

Commissioner Mina introduced herself and shared her core values of collectivism, love for community/family/nature/creation, and justice; her history of helping to found and grow the HREC; her leadership style; and her own story.

Derting noted Commissioner Peacock-Biggs could not attend the meeting due to a previously scheduled event. Wilder read Commissioner Peacock-Biggs's statement.

Chair Wilder clarified that each of the candidates for Chair have a role already; Kehoe explained the process for filling those roles in March.

Following a roll call vote, the candidates' vote tallies were as follows:

- Commissioner Alipuria: 5 votes (Commissioners Fischer, Maher, Wilder, Alipuria, and Mitchell)
- Commissioner Mina: 4 votes (Commissioners Kitchens, Mina, Long, and Ruiz)
- Commissioner Peacock-Biggs: 1 vote (Commissioner Retamal)

Kehoe stated Alipuria will be the Chair for a one-year term expiring in March 2024. Vice-Chair Mina will complete her current term.

6. HREC Workplan – Review & Subcommittee Creation

Kehoe provided an overview of the HREC Workplan and presented the following slide:

- HREC Workplan – Review & Subcommittee Creation

Kehoe opened the floor to Commissioners to provide input and volunteer for subcommittees.

Commissioner Retamal indicated interest in the **Resources in Response to Discrimination Subcommittee** and explained his background in organizational development and his interest in providing structure to the subcommittee and its process.

Commissioner Long indicated interest in the **Developing an Equity Framework Subcommittee** and explained what draws her to that work. Long also indicated interest in serving on the **Collaborative Governance Subcommittee**.

Commissioner Maher asked for clarification on the goals of the Operationalizing Equity Subcommittee and whether it would be creating policy. Commissioner Wilder provided insight.

Commissioner Wilder indicated interest in the **Operationalizing Equity** and **Developing an Equity Framework (Subcommittees)**.

Commissioner Maher indicated interest in the **Developing an Equity Framework** and **Operationalizing Equity Subcommittees**.

Commissioner Mitchell indicated interest in the **Operationalizing Equity Subcommittee** and possibly the **Collaborative Governance** and **Developing an Equity Framework Subcommittees**.

Commissioner Kitchens asked to hear more about expectations and goals of the Collaborative Governance Subcommittee, noting everything Council does is public and transparent, with a lot of opportunity for public input. Vice Chair Mina explained the difference between collaborative governance and traditional governance. Commissioners Long and Ruiz provided their perspectives on collaborative governance.

Commissioner Ruiz indicated interest in the **Resources in Response to Discrimination Subcommittee**.

Commissioner Fischer explained her perspective on collaborative governance and asked for more information about the Resources in Response to Discrimination Subcommittee. Chair Alipuria explained the people who land on each subcommittee should feel empowered to build from those big ideas. Vice Chair Mina provided further explanation of collaborative governance.

Kehoe explained the existing tools to report hate and bias crimes in the State of Oregon and noted the Resources in Response to Discrimination Subcommittee would focus on how to get people the information and resources they need in conjunction with the proper reporting channels and steer away from collecting reports and investigating. Vice Chair Mina offered her perspective on Resources in Response to Discrimination.

Commissioner Fischer indicated interest in **Operationalizing Equity** and **Developing an Equity Framework**.

Commissioner Kitchens indicated interest in whichever subcommittee most needs a person and provided information about where he might be most helpful.

Chair Alipuria indicated interest in the **Resources in Response to Discrimination Subcommittee**.

Vice Chair Mina asked to think it over and email Kehoe. Chair Alipuria clarified there would be outreach to Commissioners who were absent.

Commissioner Wilder and Commissioner Mitchell left at 5:45.

Kehoe explained what would happen moving forward regarding plugging people into the subcommittees.

Commissioner Kitchens asked whether the Developing an Equity Framework Subcommittee might be more effective by integrating staff from various levels of City government.

Ian Leitheiser, Assistant City Attorney, noted it might not be workable to have City staff as members of an advisory subcommittee. Leitheiser pointed out it would help the group to have a better understanding of what the City does, and staff could come present what they do to the Subcommittee and be invited as consultants at different points in the work. Commissioner Kitchens clarified he was thinking of City staff attending the Subcommittee on an ad hoc basis.

Commissioner Fischer stated the same thing might be helpful for the Resources in Response to Discrimination Subcommittee; Chair Alipuria noted it would be helpful for all four subcommittees to invite City staff perspectives.

Councilor Perkins asked what HREC would like to see in terms of involvement from Council. Chair Alipuria said he would love to have Council perspective at key strategic milestones in the workplan. Commissioner Maher agreed.

7. Agenda Setting & Bike Rack

Kehoe presented the following slide and noted she would email HREC members to review Core Area Building Improvement Programs for the Latin@ Business Outreach.

- Agenda & Parking Lot (10mins)

Agenda items proposed by City staff included the following:

- Attendance/Participation Policy
- 2023 Diversity Calendar
- City Council Liaison Reporting – Council Rotating

Agenda items proposed by HREC Members included the following:

- Bend Housing Overview Presentation by Housing Director Lynne McConnell
- AHAC Presentation
- Intro/Feature to Historically Marginalized Communities/Groups
- Buddy Assignment

- Locations for Future HREC Meetings

Commissioners and staff discussed prioritizing agenda items and discussed the proposed items.

8. Public Comment

There was no public comment submitted.

9. Adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Mitsch
Senior Administrative Support Specialist