

City of Bend
Human Rights & Equity Commission
July 26, 2023
Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Human Rights and Equity (HREC) Commission hybrid meeting called to order at 4:30 PM, on Wednesday, July 26, 2023, in Council Chambers at City Hall, 710 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon 97703, and through Zoom. YouTube **livestream recording for the July 26, 2023, HREC meeting.**

Please note, the recording for this public meeting began late and starts at the update and discussion of Hunnell Road with Assistant City Attorney, Ian Leitheiser (agenda item 5).

1. Roll Call:

Commissioners Present In-Person (4)

- Manoj Alipuria – Chair
- Joanne Mina - Vice Chair
- Cameron Fischer
- Jeff Kitchens

Commissioners Present Virtually/Phone (4)

- Linda Long
- Sergio Retamal
- Stephan Sehgal
- Jasmine Wilder (Zoom Phone)

Commissioners Absences Excused (2)

- Carolyn Peacock-Biggs
- Erin Maher

City Staff in Attendance:

- Cassandra Kehoe (She/Her), Accessibility and Equity Manager // HREC Staff Liaison (In-Person)
- Andrés Portela (He/Him), Equity and Inclusion Director (Virtual)
- Megan Perkins, Mayor Pro Tem // HREC Council Liaison (Virtual)
- Melissa Mitsch, (She/Her), Senior Administrative Support Specialist (In-Person)

Public Comment

- **John Heylin** – Attended with no comment.
- **Daphne Heylin**

2. Land Acknowledgment:

The Land Acknowledgment was read.

3. Minutes Approval: Approve July 26, 2023, Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Unknown commissioner moved to approve the July 26, 2023, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded. The ayes unanimously approved the nomination by all Commissioners that attended the HREC July 26, 2023, meeting; four in-person and four virtual commissioners.

4. Welcome: Andrés Portela III, Equity and Inclusion Director

5. Hunnell Road Update, Ian Leitheiser, Assistant City Attorney

Assistant City Attorney Leitheiser gave the following update on the encampment living on Hunnell Road.

The federal court dismissed the case and the claims in a written order.

The current timeline still stands for people to leave Hunnell and Clausen Roads by the end of today (7/26/2023). With the city to resume cleanup operations tomorrow morning.

6. Election – HREC Contributing Roles:

a. Commissioner Connector (Encompasses role of Safety Lead)

- Periodically checks in with commissioners to ensure engagement.
- Coordinates care/respite for commissioners as personal issues arise.
- Lead reporting of safety concerns to larger HREC group as needed.
- Coordinate buddy pairings.
- Set up monthly/quarterly social get togethers.
- Serves as a confidant to receive feedback.

The terms of office shall be one year, from the time of election until the first meeting occurring in the following calendar year.

b. Councilor Connector (Encompasses roles of Communications and City Council Liaison)

- Drafts a monthly, bulleted email of top HREC activities/accomplishments for the month - send to Commissioners and HREC City Council Liaison Megan Perkins.
- Meets with HREC City Council Liaison (Councilor Megan Perkins) to identify crossover work and collaboration opportunities.
- Work with the Chair, Vice-Chair, and City staff to draft official recommendations from HREC to City Council.
- Work with the Chair, Vice-Chair, and City staff on content development as needed for briefings to City Council and other tasks within the HREC's scope and attend City Council meetings when Equity issues arise.

The terms of office shall be one year, from the time of election until the first meeting occurring in the following calendar year.

OR:

- c. Break the two roles into three. 1 - Commissioner Connector Safety/Peer Relations Lead, 2 - Councilor Connector Communications, & 3 - Councilor Connector City Council Liaison.

HREC Commissioners discussed concerns about the modifications to the roles above. Capacity, participation in long City Council meetings, short communications with other HREC commissioners and sharing information in a timely matter, an allowance for the demand/time spent for these positions, and who notifies role holders of upcoming equity issues/events.

Mayor Pro Tem // HREC Council Liaison Perkins volunteered to meet with the Commissioner that will represent HREC at the City Council meeting before, after, and notify the person, in this role, when there are events that may be important for an HREC Commissioner representee to attend.

Commissioner Mina mentioned a stipend for all Commissions but did not know if there is a code for provisions for extra hours spent as a HREC Commission representative.

Commissioner Alipuria brought up and agreed with a question posed by Commissioner Kitchens earlier: Is there interest in splitting the Council Connector role in two, having a Communication and a City Council Liaison position(s). This would make three Connector positions total.

HREC Commissioners shared opinions and began accepting nominations and volunteers for two Connector positions. Mention of the splitting of the Council Connector position being split into two positions, Communications and City Council Liaison, later, if this position becomes too much for one person to oversee.

MOTION: Commissioner Chair Alipuria motioned to adopt two new positions: Commissioner Connector and Councilor Connector positions. Commissioners Retamal approved the motion and Commissioner Vice Chair Mina seconded. The ayes unanimously approved the nomination by all Commissioners that attended the HREC July 26, 2023, meeting; four in-person and four virtual Commissioners.

Commissioner Kitchens offered to help Commissioner Wilder when needed, with the Councilor Connector Position which encompasses roles of Communications and City Council Liaison. Commissioner Wild accepted the offer.

Two Nominations:

- I. Commissioner Connector Position:
Commissioner Vice-Chair Mina nominated Commissioner Long, she accepted.
- II. Councilor Connector Position:
Commissioner Sehgal nominated Commissioner Wilder, she accepted.

MOTION: Commissioner Chair Alipuria motioned to approve Commissioner Long as the Commissioner Connector for HREC. The ayes unanimously approved the nomination by all Commissioners that attended the HREC July 26, 2023, meeting; four in-person and four virtual Commissioners.

MOTION: Commissioner Chair Alipuria motioned to approve Commissioner Wild as the Councilor Connector for HREC. The ayes unanimously approved the nomination by all HREC Commissioners that attended the HREC July 26, 2023, meeting; four in person, four virtual Commissioners.

7. HREC August Break:

August 30, 2023, HREC meeting canceled, will reconvene on Wednesday, September 27, 2023.

Subcommittee meetings to be held in August:

- a. Resources/Response to Discrimination Follow-Up:
CANCELED: Due to the capacity of city staff, Welcome Week prep and HREC Commissioners taking a break in August.

b. Andrés Portela and Equity Framework/Lens work:

Equity Framework Lens Work: Equity and Inclusion Director Portela mentioned he is working on how the framing how that conversation will take place and the resources needed. Director Portela looks forward to the lived experience of the subcommittee members.

c. Welcoming Week Subgroup Opportunity (future slide)

The information for Welcoming Week subgroup opportunities found under agenda item 9. Welcoming Week: Co-hosted HREC and COBAAC Event with Accessibility and Equity Manager / HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe.

Commissioner Wild asked for an update on the subcommittee members for each group.

Staff Liaison Kehoe: We combined the Equity Framework and the Operationalizing Equity subcommittees into one group based on the capacity of members. This work came to a halt after one or two sessions anticipating Director Portela joining the city and having the opportunity to look at everything before moving forward.

The Resources in the Response to Discrimination subcommittee met twice. Commissioner Chair Alipuria, Commissioners Retamal and Sehgal are members of this subcommittee.

Staff Liaison Kehoe said Commissioner Wild was a member of the Equity Framework and Operationalizing Equity subcommittee. And we had the Collaborative Governance we were trying to plug in to support other initiatives.

Commissioner Vice Chair Mina said the Service Development Charge workgroup has one more meeting and she would like to volunteer for the Collaborative Governance workgroup.

8. Brainstorm of Q3-Q4 HREC Additional Initiatives / Workflows (Future HREC Work):

The Human Rights and Equity Commission (HREC) will ensure historically marginalized and underrepresented people and communities in Bend have equal access to City programs and services, representation in City decision-making, and a venue to raise concerns and complaints about discrimination. HREC will

- 1) Provide input to the City Council on City goals and policies using diversity, equity, and inclusion lens and perspective, including recommending effective strategies to increase engagement with historically marginalized and underrepresented communities.
- 2) Create an action plan to achieve an equitable society, where our diversity is celebrated and all are included, and advise the City Council on implementation, progress, and updates to the plan. The plan should be responsive to the evolving needs and priorities of the marginalized and underrepresented communities, engage with Bend community members, interested groups, other agencies, City staff, and businesses and non-profits to develop strategies to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.

- 3) Work with the Bend community, interested groups, staff, and elected officials to make recommendations that embrace the City's commitment to building more inclusive community, where all can be treated with compassion, and respect, regardless of race, ethnicity, place of origin, immigration status, or any other perceived or self-identified class or status.
- 4) Provide opportunities for people seeking resolution and assistance regarding complaints of discrimination in Bend, including potential violations of the City's Equal Rights Ordinance. HREC may connect people with resources and assistance seeking resolution of complaints through conciliatory or educational processes, but does not have authority to compel participation, require specific actions, or impose sanctions or other penalties.

HREC Discussion: HREC Commissioner Chair Alipuria said, progress made on each of the three and four workflows. They paused work on this due to the new addition of the Equity and Inclusion Director Portela to wait for his involvement and collaboration on these workflows.

Commissioner Chair Alipuria asked the group to think ahead, talk about future work based on what we have seen happening in our city this past year, city needs, which is not part of our purview currently.

Commissioners' suggestions for the next set of workflow initiatives for City Council to review:

Commissioner Retamal: More involvement from the community. Send out a survey monkey, cell phone surveys of the initiatives HREC and the city is working on, to receive feedback. Hoping for more community involvement.

Commissioner Vice Chair Mina: Current workplan has five recommendations not there.

- Language access for Spanish speakers in our community. That should be a priority for the city.
- At the last meeting, the Planning Department talked about Climate Friendly Areas study, and the anti-displacement, showing a map where the vulnerable live. Chair Mina followed up and sent them one of the recommendations, from the work plan that align, and we can follow-up and collaborate with the anti-displacement work.

HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe: The Planning Department is creating a subgroup and have requested one or two HREC Commissioners to join, if interested. Commissioners interested in the last meeting were, Commissioners Wilder, Retamal, and Long.

Commissioner Long: Want direct conversations with the Planning Department and creating accessible urban spaces for wheelchair users. Planning and replanning of accessible physical spaces is important and a huge part of equity. Talk to the architects/building owners about physical access to apartments/housing and upgrades needed after they have lived there for years.

Commissioner Chair Alipuria: Suggested there might be initiatives that COBAAC (City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee) and HREC can create and work on together.

HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe will email Commissioner Long different housing avenues. Housing Coordinator Kamanya is interested in public comments related to accessibility and housing, specifically in rentals and affordable housing in the City of Bend. Commissioner Vice-Chair requested the same email of information for low-income housing.

Commissioner Vice-Chair Mina: Regarding two initiatives/recommendations remaining.

- A restorative process for our police department. The City of Portland is starting this process, and it is interesting to see what they are doing.
- We have gun sales recommendations. There could be mixed emotions but needs addressed. It is in our work plan, and we can revisit this initiative.

Commissioner Kitchens: Reading the information on HREC Q3-4 Additional Initiatives / Workflow and referring the groups ideas and Commissioner Retamal's suggestion of surveys and community involvement. It seems a theme with a lot of what this group is doing but do we have defined a task/goal/initiative, specific to community engagement. Where we are trying to get more community engagement, more responsive on changes they wish to see happen or their feedback on inclusiveness and increase equity.

Commissioner Chair Alipuria: Last year we did when we formulated the workplan Chair Mina referenced. We held a listening and learning session with citizens of the community, but attendance was low. We need to be listening and engaging people of what they want.

Commissioner Vice Chair Mina: When seeking collaborative governance and the process that happens here out to the community is one way to engage in all stages of the decision-making process. Engaging in the conceptualization, the deployment, and then the evaluation. We need to have this conversation to set tangible goals to know what we are working towards. Part of this will come with the Equity and Inclusion Director Portela to provide guidance and keep up our relationship with City Council and their feedback and direction. For the last two weeks, we had a commission that was underutilized, and it is important we strengthen our working relationships.

Commissioner Kitchens: Are there tangible, tactical tools that we could create within the community that may not require the community to physically be in attendance. Easy buttons to work with to communicate issues we are interested in and addressing that might help. Starting a communication line for the community to share concerns, ideas of awareness, their thoughts, to their city governments about topics related to Human Right and Equity. With Equity and Inclusion Director Portela, it would be nice for him to come back with ideas about this and whatever he decided could help and support the work, to create as a priority with the city.

Commissioner Vice Chair Mina: The city has explored Facebook lives and YouTube. Vice Chair Mina has received feedback from her Latinx immigrant community. They do not want elected officials to only come to neighborhoods during election season. Folks want elected officials and city staff to come out on a regular basis. And talk to the City Manager quarterly. If the City Manager does report to the City Council, the City Council should be encouraged to report to the community, out in the community. This brings thoughts on making our neighborhood associations more diverse. Those connections can help the City Council with underserved communities.

Commissioner Wilder stated he agrees that focusing on the need for community member input, conversations and reminding people, by sending out literature about having City of Bend/HREC representation. We could have the collaborative governance workgroup be a serious focus, if started, with a lot of potential.

Commissioner Wilder would like to invite Affordable Housing for an update from the March meeting. Wilder would like to invite someone from Transportation to talk about accessible Transportation and what makes the City of Bend more accessible, and the equity involved. HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe said this is something she could look in to.

Commissioner Vice Chair Mina: Chief Operations Officer Russ Grayson and Senior Management Analyst Sarah Hutson are leading the System Development Charge (SDC) stakeholder group. There was conversation the workgroup that is currently tackling SDC's will provide little feedback on different Transportation charges and create a rough draft and posted for the community's feedback. There will be opportunity to engage in the Transportation work internally and externally.

HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe mentioned Chief Operations Officer Russ Grayson and Senior Management Analyst Sarah Hutson sought out volunteers for a Transportation Fee roundtable.

Commissioner Fischer: Wanted a reminder about the Chief Operations Officer Russ Grayson and Senior Management Analyst Sarah Hutson are leading the System Development Charge (SDC) stakeholder group. Then remembered there was no decision for volunteers made for the Transportation Fee Roundtable. And mentioned how Commissioner Kitchens, earlier in the meeting, asked if there was a need for a more formal process for volunteering for subgroups.

HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe: reminded the group that the Transportation Fee Roundtable sessions start in August (August 9th, September 13th, and October 11th).

The Equity and Inclusion Director Portela is creating a template, asking internal staff, to discern what the equity connection is, what they would like to talk to, and timeliness factors to establish the criterion for choosing only one City staff group if two could not present on the same day.

Commissioner Sehgal wants to invite and get Cascades East Transits (CET), perspectives and beneficial for long-term Transportation in our city.

Commissioner Chair Alipuria: Addressing Commissioner Kitchens point about volunteering. We have used an informal process when asking commissioners to volunteer for subgroups. If no one is interested, then you might be asked formally to volunteer. If no one is interested, someone would step in. if the current interest-based volunteering is not working, I would like your feedback.

HREC Staff Liaison: In a past meeting Commissioner Vice Chair Mina asked about everyone's capacity, we wanted to fill these leadership roles and see what happens after that.

If people want to volunteer because they are passionate about a particular subgroup, they can. We will never force any member to attend, it is going to be optional. If spread to capacity and not able to fill it, that is a message can share and a reality we have. Recruiting new HREC members might increase our capacity. Volunteering will never be a mandatory requirement.

Commissioner Wilder: A formal appointment may be difficult when up and running will be time consuming. She wants it to remain personally volunteering. If that does not work, is it that people are unsure or intimidated to volunteer. Having a discussing making commissioners feel secure in volunteering. The benefit of formalization helps greater participation but has capacity issues. She just wants people to feel included, comfortable and chose the things they are passionate about.

9. Welcoming Week: Co-hosted HREC and COBAAC Event

Accessibility and Equity Manager and HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe announced the approval that HREC and COBAAC can co-host at Welcoming Week.

HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe is seeking volunteers interested in joining the party planning committee. The idea of the event is a celebratory open mic event with local musicians and looking for vendors would be BIPOC from our community, as well as non-profits from the Bend community specific to equity kinds of work. Attendees have an opportunity to contribute to a community art piece.

And the idea this group shared to have more collaboration with the City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee (COBAAC) which is a wonderful opportunity to join in the work, together, for equity in the accessible field. More details to follow.

Commissioners Sehgal and Long volunteered. Commissioner Chair Alipuria has already volunteered.

HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe answered Vice Chair Mina's question if the city will provide any education, values, or the purpose of Welcoming Week. Mayor Keebler will host a Kick-Off event that will include the purpose and the why. Staff Liaison Kehoe believes there are ten non-profit or groups approved by the city that specifically have different niches in the community around immigration, BIPOC perspectives, and community members supporting the mission behind Welcoming Week and what it does. It is to affirm the importance of welcoming in inclusive places.

10. Public Comment:

Earlier at this meeting community member John Heylin and Daphne Heylin were present to share a public comment but had to leave before the public comment section. HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe asked and given permission to share Daphne Heylin public message. Daphne Heylin's message: "Help the homeless."

11. HREC Opportunities / City Staff Invitations

First invitation: Transportation Fee Roundtable Discussion from the May 31st meeting presented by Chief Operations Officer Russ Grayson and Senior Management Analyst Sarah Hutson:

- Seeking One or two HREC members.
- Two to three sessions from August to October 2023.
- Time, location, and dates TBD.

Commissioner Vice Chair Mina is interested.

Second invitation: Climate Friendly Area Workgroup June 28th meeting presented by the Growth Management Team: Planning Manager Brian Rankin, Associate Planner Elyse Vukelich, Senior Planner Jennifer Knapp, Senior Planner Damian Syrnyk:

- Seeking one to two HREC members
- Sessions and times TBD

Preliminary interests from the last conversation: Commissioners Wilder, Retamal, and Long.

HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe will send an email with the above opportunities for who is currently interested in these two volunteer opportunities.

Commissioner Retamal: What would be helpful is to write out what are the priorities of HREC in terms of engagement. Meetings, supporting our subcommittees, and joint events (like Welcoming Week). And then if folks have capacity to after that to support these other workgroups, we are not dictating to people and your time. Clarity of what the priorities are and where we are most useful might go back to the comment where we might want to volunteer but we do not want to sign up for everything at once because it all sound interest.

HREC Staff Liaison Kehoe: Furthermore, documenting, being clear about who is volunteering at what time, and who it is impacting, that will help come December when we give the information to City Council.

Commissioner Wilder: Agreeing with formalizing this scenario, making it more transparent for the group. Another area this would work is documenting the volunteer's outcome, reporting back about the groups they attended and tracking commissioners' opinion on if it was a good use of their time, thoughts and concerns.

12. Agenda Setting & Bike Rack:

Commissioner Chair Alipuria asked members to email in any future agenda requests for the September meeting because there is not August meeting.

13. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 6:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen
Administrative Support Specialist
Human Rights and Equity Regular Meeting
July 26, 2023



Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc., Please contact the Accessibility and Equity Manager Cassandra Kehoe at ckehoe@bendoregon.gov or call 541-693-2141. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.