

Human Rights and Equity Commission

April 24, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Connector, Linda Long conducted and called the Bend Human Rights and Equity Commission, April 24, 2024, regular hybrid meeting to order at 4:30 PM, in Council Chambers at City Hall, 710 NW Wall Street. Watch the [HREC April 24, 2024, livestream recording](#).

1. Roll Call: Commissioners. Six in person, one virtually, one resigned-absent, and two absent.

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| 1.1. Chair Manoj Alipuria, He/Him. <i>(Absent)</i> | 1.6. Jackie Currie, She, They. <i>(In Person)</i> |
| 1.2. Cameron Fischer, She/Her. <i>(In Person)</i> | 1.7. Jasmine Wilder, She/Her. <i>(Virtual)</i> |
| 1.3. Carly Colgan, She/Her. <i>(In Person)</i> | 1.8. Jeff Kitchens, He/Him. <i>(In Person)</i> |
| 1.4. Carolyn Peacock-Biggs, She/Her. <i>(In Person)</i> | 1.9. Linda Long, She/Her. <i>(In Person)</i> |
| 1.5. Christopher Foltz, He/Him <i>(Resigned)</i> | 1.10. Nancy Stevens, She/Her <i>(Absent)</i> |

City Staff:

- Andrés Portela, He/Him, Equity & Inclusion Director, HREC Liaison. *(In Person)*
- Ian Leitheiser, He/Him, Assistant City Attorney. *(In Person)*
- Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella, Accessibility & Equity Manager, COBAAC Staff Liaison. *(In Person)*
- Megan Perkins, She/Her, Mayor Pro Tem, HREC Council Liaison. *(In Person)*
- Mellissa Kamanya, She/Her, Affordable Housing Coordinator. *(In Person)*

Fair Housing Council of Oregon:

- Emily Hammond, She/Her, Central Oregon Education & Outreach Coordinator *(Virtual)*

Public Comment Write in Only:

- Equity & Inclusion Director // HREC Staff Liaison, Andrés Portela read five out of thirty submittals.

2. Land Acknowledgment: Member Fischer read the land acknowledgement in English.

3. Minutes Approval: Approve the March 27, 2024, Meeting Minutes.

Correction/Amendment to the March 27, Meeting Minutes, Item 4. Public Comment: Deletion of what occurred during the 10-minute break, as it occurred outside of the meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Kitchens motioned to approve the amended HREC March 27, 2024, Draft Minutes, with correction. Commissioner Colgan seconded the motion with the amendment. The motion to approve the amended March 27, 2024, unanimously passed by all voting members who attended today's meeting, in person (6) and virtually (1).

4. Public Comment: The April 24th meeting was write-in only. Five of the thirty letters of support were read by Equity & Inclusion Director // HREC Staff Liaison, Andrés Portela.

Letters of community support for HREC from the backlash at the March 27, 2024, meeting:

- Councilor Riley
- Cassie Worthington
- Jess Beauchemin, Bend Resident
- Lorena
- Renee Goin, she/her

5. HREC Chair and Vice-Chair Elections.

Motion to approve Chair and Vice-Chair Positions from March 2024 to March 2025: Unanimously passed by all voting members who attended today's meeting, in person, six (6) and virtually, one (1):

- Commissioner Jeff Kitchens as Chair
- Commissioner Peacock-Biggs as Vice-Chair

6. Collaborate with City Staff: The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, Mellissa Kamanya (she, her) Affordable Housing Coordinator.

- The City of Bend receives funds from HUD: Called the Community Development Block Grant. Performing an Analysis of Impediment for Fair Housing.
- The purpose is to assess our community and look for discriminatory practices and identify impediment through outreach. To make appropriate recommendations.
- Of ten months of Community Input 8 months was active community engagements.
 - 350 community members through a survey and around three hundred in face-to-face interviews.
 - The three top issues heard:
 - Difficulty for property management company to address tenants housing needs.
 - Limited housing and infrastructure for persons with disabilities.
 - Substandard living conditions.
- Census data highlighted changes in Bend: Looking at the trends over five years:
 - Race and Ethnicity
 - Persons with disabilities
 - Income
 - Poverty
 - Employment
 - Housing
 - Identifying Disparities: Public Sector; Private Sector; School enrollment and Racial / Ethnic Composition.
 - Access to Social Mobility: Income segregation; Violent crime; Two income earners.
- Impediment 1 Recommendations:
 - Prioritize services and community investment in areas with concentrations identified.
 - Evaluate City projects for impacts on protected classes and potential displacement.
 - Balance tracts by increasing housing supply in areas outside of concentrations.
 - Create support systems for low-income families moving into high social mobility areas.

- Impediment 2 Recommendations:
 - Create workflows and systems to collect and analyze data.
 - Develop platforms to communicate data with the public.
 - Enhance community partnerships and establish protocol for data collection and sharing.
- Impediment 3 Recommendations:
 - Increase the number of fully accessible dwelling units in Bend.
 - Consider funding for developers to offset additional costs for building fully accessible dwelling units.
 - Identify areas with infrastructure that limit walkability / rollability for persons with disabilities.
- Impediment 4 Recommendations:
 - Increase developer accountability for how their property management's fair housing compliance.
 - Plan to share fair housing data, trends, and community input with developers.
 - Engage with community on fair housing trainings.
 - Collaborate to provide training on how to request reasonable accommodations.
 - Evaluate and improve City policy language.
 - Consider policies regarding the identification and handling of restrictive covenants.
- Impediment 5 Recommendations:
 - Create systems to analyze and publish Bend lending data.
 - Evaluate downpayment assistance fund options for protected data.
 - Partner with local organizations to increase financial literacy and lending readiness.

Questions:

- One of the impediments relating to participation. For the sake of most people of color, we are not quick to have a conversation, putting plans together because we are not trusting. How as a City can we create a more inviting environment for people that tend not to feel safe or address the fact that they have needs. *Housing Coordinator Kamanya*: Establishing trust is the cornerstone of this work. If we do not hear what is happening, we cannot address it. These are difficult things to talk about. It is the goal of the housing department to continue to work and engage with community groups to build trust.
- Wants to see more outreach to the homeless. And look for an alternative standardized housing options, community buildings, tiny house villages and alternative spaces in terms of sheltering. *Housing Coordinator Kamanya*: The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee works with service providers that provide services to our homeless neighbors. There is recognition for the need of more service providers. The Housing Department have two specialists who focus on houselessness alone and deeply embedded in the community. Coordinator Kamanya invited the commissioners to attend an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee where they have regular updates about the work the City is doing with our houseless population and our service partners.

- What is happening with the substandard housing, in your outreach were you able to use any collective data on that and what that looks like? *Housing Coordinator Kamanya*: During our outreach, a community member submitted a photograph of a burned outlet, having electrical fires on their property, and not able to get them fixed. During the winter, half of their house had no electricity. There were reports of accessibility needs and not having an accessible unit to live and causing damage to the property or themselves. Feelings of risk for safety. Property management companies having high turnover and shortage of staff. With the recovery after COVID, there is still a gap. And these issues have fallen under the data collected.
- What can HREC do to help to support your work? *Housing Coordinator Kamanya*: Attending the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee meetings is a first step. Dreaming of a partnership between Affordable Housing and HREC. And staying in communication with each other and combine forces to work on outreach together to establish community trust.

7. Fair Housing Council of Oregon: Emily Hammond (she/her), Education & Outreach Coordinator.

The Fair Housing Council of Oregon (FHCO) was formed in 1990. Fighting for housing justice for 34 years. It is a statewide civil rights nonprofit organization, that proactively promotes housing justice, equity, and inclusion.

It is their mission is to end illegal housing discrimination and promote equal access to housing choice through education and enforcement of fair housing law.

Fair Housing Act (FHA) applies to dwellings:

- Houses.
- Apartments.
- Condominiums and floating homes.
- Mobile homes.
- Retirement housing and assisted living.
- Nonprofit housing and shelters.
- Possibly motel rooms.

Federal Protected Classes:

- Race.
- Color.
- National Origin.
- Religion.
- Sex.
- Familial Status.
- Disability.

Oregon Protected Classes:

- Marital Status.
- Source of Income (TANF, SSI, Section 8).
- Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity.

What does FHCO do:

- Fair Housing Trainings.
- Distributes Educational Materials.
- Directly Advocate for People Experiencing Discrimination in Housing.

Community Advisory Group – Membership Invitation!

- Cross organization collaboration.
- Identity and address common barriers to fair housing.
- Inform our grants for locally relevant work.

Contacting FHCO – Get Fair Housing Advice:

- You can call with fair housing questions.
- Assistance with filing a fair housing claim.
- Provide education to a housing provider.
- Translation services are provided.

Central Oregon Education and Outreach Coordinator contact information:

503-223-8197 ext.: 103

ehammond@fhco.org

In Office: Monday through Thursday.

Questions:

- Does Fair Housing of Oregon directly collaborate with the City of Bend? *Education and Outreach Coordinator Hammond:* In the past, previous members of the Fair Housing Council of Oregon have been a part of the City of Bend Welcoming Week, collaborated with folks at Affordable Housing Department with continual conversations.
- Is the City of Bend Affordable Housing Department and the Fair Housing of Council of Oregon efforts connected? *Education and Outreach Coordinator Hammond:* Yes, we have had meetings and corresponding with each other about the work the City of Bend is doing and about how the FHCO can help with targeted trainings and education with their analysis of impediments.

8. Community Events, and Updates:

- Welcoming Week is the week of September 14th. There will be a press release announcing funding for community-based groups to apply for funding for welcoming week events.
- Dia Internacional del Libro y de la Lengua Española **April 25 5:30 – 7:30 pm | East Bend Library.**
- Juntos Family Day, **April 27 1:30 – 3:00 pm OSU Cascades.**
- Dia del Niño hosted by The Latino Community Association, **April 28, Starting at 1:00 pm | Alpenglow Park.**
- Asian and Pacific Islanders Talent Showcase: APIC Harmony, **May 18, 5 p.m.-7 p.m. | Tower Theater.**
- Salmon Bake, **May 18th, 11 Am- 3 PM COCC.**

- Juneteenth Jubilee, **Saturday, June 15 – Sunday, June 16 | Drake Park.**
- Pi-Ume-Sha Treaty Days Celebration at Warm Springs, **June 28-29 | Warm Springs Community Center.**
- Gender Hive is hiring a full-time Program Director help shape the future of gender-affirming healthcare and social support in Central Oregon in collaboration with community and public health partners.

9. Agenda Setting & Bike Rack / Equity Department Updates:

Next Meeting:

- Huong Tra: APIC and AAIP Month.
- Human Rights Campaign Municipal Database Overview & Next Steps.
- Equity Department Updates.

Equity and Community Engagement (English and Spanish)

10. HREC City Councilor Liaison Update: Megan Perkins She/Her, Mayor Pro Tem.

Highlights from the last council meeting:

- We focused on the environment and climate.
- Viewed early designs for the Hawthorne Bridge.
- Council compensation for future pay for councilors and the mayor.
- Discussed the Stipend Program and the suggestions from the Human Rights and Equity Commission and council agreed.
- The May 1st work sessions: Talking about Supplier Diversity and Community Benefit Program. And a public hearing at 5:00 pm on SDC's (System Development Charges).
- Highly recommends attending the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee meetings if commissioners have the time.
- The May 15th, council meeting highlighting they will talk about the memorandum of understanding for citizen assembly. They will also look at the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funding recommendations that came from the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee. And look at the tax incentive programs and what they want to incentivize.
- June 5th, they will talk about tree code.
- The Wednesday, June 19th council meeting will be held on Thursday, June 20th, due to Juneteenth (June 19th) being a holiday. All City offices will be closed.

11. Adjourn: With no further HREC business, Equity and Inclusion Director Portela adjourned the April 24, 2024, Human Rights and Equity Commission hybrid meeting at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen, She/Her
Administrative Support Specialist, Accessibility and Equity



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 Equity & Inclusion Director at aportela@bendoregon.gov or call 541-323-8563. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.

Para solicitar copias en español de los documentos en esta página web o en un formato alternativo como Braille, letra grande, formatos electrónicos, etc.: Por favor contacte al Director de Equidad e Inclusión, Andrés Portela aportela@bendoregon.gov o llame al 541-323-8563. Los usuarios de retransmisión marquen el 7-1-1.