



CITY OF BEND

# Minutes

## Human Rights and Equity Commission

January 29, 2025, from 4:30 to 6:30 PM.

**Council Chambers**, Bend City Hall  
710 NW Wall, Bend, Oregon

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Chair Ventura called to order the Human Rights and Equity Commission's (HREC) hybrid regular alternate meeting on January 29, 2025, at 4:31 p.m. This meeting was held virtually through Zoom and in person in Council Chambers at City Hall, 710 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon, from 4:30 to 6:30.

Please [watch the HREC meeting Zoom recording](#).

### 1. Roll Call and Welcome: Commissioners, City Staff & Visitors: Chair Agatha Ventura She. Her. Hers.

#### Chamber Attendees (7):

- Agatha Ventura She/Her/Hers, Chair.
- Jackie Currie, She/They, Council Connector.
- Scott Jones, He/Him, Commissioner Connector.
- Carly Colgan She/Her.
- Eli Loewenstern He/Him.
- Linda Hiemer She/Her.
- Ruth Vernotico They/Her/He.

#### Zoom Attendees (2):

- Adrienne McDougal She/Her/Hers.
- Cameron Fischer She/Her.

#### Commissioner Absent (1):

- Vanessa (Nessa) Covington She/Her.

#### City Staff:

- Andrés Portela, He/Him/El, Equity & Inclusion Director (CC).
- Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella, Accessibility & Equity Manager / COBAAC Staff Liaison (Zoom).
- Megan Perkins, She/Her, Councilor / Mayor Pro Tem / HREC Council Liaison (CC).
- Brian Rankin, He/Him, Senior Strategist: Future Growth & Development
- Elyse Vukelich, She, Her City of Bend Associate Planner, Growth Management Division. (CC)
- Ian Leitheiser, He/Him, City of Bend City Attorney (CC).
- Lisa Larsen, She/Her, Administrative Support Staff (CC).

#### Public Comment:

- Matt Muchna, He/Him, Representing Envision Bend (Zoom)

### 2. City of Bend Land Acknowledgement:

Commissioner Currie read the City of Bend Land Acknowledgement in English.

**3. HREC Business:** Chair Agatha Ventura, She/Her/Hers.

**a. Approval of the November 13th and December 11th, 2024, Draft Meeting Minutes.**

- **Motion:** Commissioner Vernotico motioned to approve the HREC November 13<sup>th</sup> & December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Draft Minutes, with no correction. Commissioner Currie seconded. The motion to approve the HREC November 13<sup>th</sup> & December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, draft minutes was unanimously passed by all voting members who attended today's meeting in Chambers (7) and through Zoom (2).

**b. Review the HREC January 29, 2025, Agenda.**

- Reviewed by all Commissioners that attended today's meeting.

**4. Standing Item: HREC Council Liaison Update.** Megan Perkins She/Her, Mayor Pro Tem.

- **Councilor Perkins** (with the recently announced Executive Orders): She spoke to the commissioners about how she knows that every one of the commissioners, whether it's your workplace, your children, or your own identity, has been affected over the last couple of weeks and a division. Councilor Perkins wants you to know that she supports you.

She is comfortable expressing the support of the entire council for the work of the Human Rights & Equity Commissioners, and Equity Department, and will continue this work.

- **Councilor Perkins and City of Bend Attorney Leitheiser** discussed the governing body and its policies at Juniper Ridge Fitness Center and not removing folks for their speech. They are separate entities and different governing bodies.
- **Director Portela** wants to talk about the Hate Speech and Discrimination Coalition's work that has been taking place, pre-dating this moment.
- **Councilor Perkins** mentioned the LCA (Latino Community Association) will have two presentations this weekend, one for employers and employees and the other for the general public.
- **Director Portela** is working on inviting ODOJ (Oregon Department of Justice) to provide information on the resources they have been collecting and refining up till the point.
- The Commissioners and city staff continued to discuss the Executive Order, the approach, written language, the future equity framework, and (refined) Council Goals.

Some of the Equity Department asks of the City Council as they redefine the City Council Goals around ADA and accessibility; how can we create spaces around universal design and think about our Transition and Self-Evaluation Plan? Moreover, the upcoming studies, our Supplier Diversity Program as part of Council Goals.

**5. Public Comment:**

Matt Muchna supports the Human Rights & Equity Commission, the commissioners (HREC) and the work. And thank you to the commissioners for the work they are doing.

**6. Old Business:**

a. **Refresher, Role, Responsibilities, and the City of Bend:** Ian M. Leitheiser, He, Him, City Attorney.

- **Slide - Title: City of Organization & Structure**
- **Slide: Objectives.**
- **Slide: What does the City Do?**
- **Slide: Charter, Ordinances, Resolutions.**
- **Slide: Current City Charter – Adopted in 1995.**
- **Slide: City of Bend Charter, continued.**
- **Slide: Charter Provisions Related to Council.**
- **Slide: Council has a Significant Oversight Role, with Limits.**
- **Slide: City Manager (Charter V, Section 24)**
- **Slide: Council-Manager form of Government.**
- **Slide: Council and Advisory Bodies Bend Municipal Code 1.20.**
- **Slide: Council and Advisory Bodies, continued.**
- **Slide: HREC Bend Municipal Code 1.20.120 (1of 4)**
- **Slide: HREC Provide Input to the City Council on City Goals & Action Plan for Equitable Society. (2 of 4)**
- **Slide: HREC Derives its Authority from BC 1.20.005 & this Section (3 of 4)**
- **Slide: HREC Ethics – ORS Chapter 244. (4 of 4)**
- **Slide: Use of Power or Office ORS 244.040.**

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact City Attorney Leitheiser.

b. **Standing Item: Workplan**, Andres Portela (He, Him) Equity and Inclusion Director.

- **Slide: Focus Areas. Education and Awareness, Community Engagement, Policy Advocacy, Advisory Role.**
- **Slide: Subcommittee Model.**
  - Subcommittees: Education, Awareness, Community Engagement, Policy Advocacy.
  - Expectation:
    - during work plans. Standing item.
    - Quarterly updates on work coming up.
    - The Equity Department needs to be involved with the meetings scheduled by subcommittee members.
  - Adhering to Public Meeting Rules – No more than four per meeting.
  - Potential Commission time commitments: Three hours for all. Four for Leadership Monthly.
- **Slide: Community Engagement & Potential Opportunity.**

- **Slide: Education and Awareness & Potential Activities.**
- **Advisory Role:** HR EC provides guidance and recommendations to the City Council on human rights and equity issues through formalized recommendations.
  - We have already started this, which will continue through the work of the policy advocacy Equity Lens.

Commissioners discussed ways to connect with the community and other avenues to invite folks into this space and what education and awareness would be needed through different opportunities and activities.

## 7. New Business:

- c. **Growth Plan Engagement**, Elyse Vukelich (She, Her) City of Bend Associate Planner, Growth Management Division.
  - **Slide: Presentation Objectives**
  - **Slide: Bend's Existing Growth Strategy.**
  - **Slide: The growth plan. Community Engagement Approach.**
  - **Slide: Community Engagement Process.**
  - **Slide: Project guidance.**

The above sides were discussed at the December 11, 2024, meeting. Growth Management was invited back to have HREC answer the following questions.

- **Questions for HREC.**
  - What questions do you have for us on the growth plan? How can we improve our communication on this topic as we begin to share this project with the public?
  - What barriers might exist to conducting equitable engagement for this project?
  - What approaches to engagement do you think would be most successful?
  - Would HREC like to be engaged? On this topic moving forward? If so. How can we best communicate with you?

## 8. Roundtable Discussion of HREC Commissioners: Chair Ventura, She/Her/Hers.

### a. Bin Items/Tasks/Follow-ups.

- Commissioners have talked with people and how they feel about the Executive Orders. Feelings of sadness, frustration, and fear. They can still do great work together and build relationships amongst themselves to help support each other.
- There was talk about a presentation about the different natural disasters and the displacement of people that could happen in Central Oregon. It was horrific how many could not leave their homes due to mobility/age issues. A lot of the loss of life was based on the marginalized and oppressed. A suggestion for planning in the City or County considers the equity of the loss of life. A lot of people do not have access to an app that helps others escape these emergency issues.

**b. Equity Department Updates.** Andrés Portela, He/Him/El, Equity, and Inclusion Director.

- Belonging, Justice, and Our Shared Humanity: Rev. Nontombi, Naomi Tutu January 27, 6:30 PM.
- Belonging without Othering: How we Save Ourselves and the World, January 29, 3:30 to 5 PM.
- Black History Month Dinner Celebration, February 25, 5 to 7 PM.
- Season of Nonviolence - Central Oregon Community College.

**9. Adjourn: 6:39**

With no further Business, Chair Ventura adjourned the January 29, 2025, Human Rights and Equity hybrid regular meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen, Admin

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