



# Meeting Minutes

## Human Rights and Equity Commission

June 25, 2025, from 4:30 to 6:30 PM

Location: Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall, Bend Street, and online.

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HREC Chair Ventura called the **Human Rights and Equity Commission**'s (HREC) June 25, 2025, regular meeting to order at 4:31 PM.

Please [watch the HREC June 25, 2025, livestream recording](#).

### 1. Commissioner Roll Call:

#### Chambers (5 Voting Members)

- Agatha Ventura, Chair
- Scott Jones, Commissioner Connector
- Fenix Van Tassel (left 6:00)
- Mario Anguiano
- Mary (Bet) Hannon
- Kinsey Martin (ex officio)

#### Zoom (4)

- Cristina Morales Moyano
- Eli Loewenstein
- Jennifer (Jenn) Kovitz
- Ruth Vernotico (Left (6:05)

#### Absent (4)

- Linda Hiemer, Vice Chair
- Jackie Currie, Council Connector
- Cameron Fischer
- Carly Colgan

### Public Comment (0):

#### City Staff:

- Andrés Portela, He, Him | El, Equity & Inclusion Director (C)
- Megan Perkins, She, Her, Councilor / Mayor Pro Tem / HREC Council Liaison (C)
- Ian Leitheiser, He, Him, City of Bend Assistant City Attorney (C)
- Cassandra Kehoe, She, Her | Ella, Accessibility & Equity Manager / COBAAC Staff Liaison (Z)
- Kathi Barguil, She, They | Ella, Community Relations Manager (C)
- Lisa Larsen, She, Her, Administrative Support Specialist (C)

### 2. City of Bend Land Acknowledgement.

- Kinsey Martin (ex officio) read the City of Bend Land Acknowledgement in Spanish.
- Commissioner Vernotico read the City of Bend Land Acknowledgement in English.

**3. HREC Business:** Agatha Ventura, Chair.

**a. Approval of the April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Draft Minutes.**

**Motion:** Commissioner Vernotico motioned to approve the April 30 and May 28, 2025, Draft Minutes, with no corrections. Commissioner Jones seconded. The motion was unanimously passed by all voting members who attended today's meeting in Chambers (5) and Zoom (4).

**b. Review the HREC June 25, 2025, Agenda.**

The HREC June 25, 2025, agenda was reviewed by those in attendance at today's meeting.

**4. Standing Item:** HREC Council Liaison Perkins, She/Her, Update.

Council Liaison Perkins Updates:

- Council's end-of-fiscal-year meeting that lasted 6 hours on June 18<sup>th</sup>:
- Franklin should be both aesthetically pleasing and functional for everyone, regardless of their travel method. They discussed what the redesign could look like.
  - Talked about the big picture of Franklin, Greenwood, and eventually the Hawthorne Bridge with a limited number of investments.
- Subcommittee meeting and conversation about the schools and safety for the Galveston design; hearing from parents and crossing guards from schools, cyclists, and local businesses on Galveston.
- Discussing modernizing the design code. If you have a mural painted on the building, but opt to hang a non-permanent piece of art.
- Resolution to officially start the Home Committee to investigate different options to provide funding for housing needed in our community.
  - Councilor Perkins gave knowledge to Mayor Keebler about the support letter HREC wrote about shelter funding, since the legislature is moving fast. Mayor Keebler used the support letter as the basis of a letter she wrote to the legislature. Giving HREC credit at the beginning of the meeting. The City's shelters will be covered for the next couple of years.
- 2nd Street: The 6M invested used for (ADA) accessible sidewalks, storm work, connectivity, lighting, beautification, and safety is now officially open. Yesterday, they had a 2<sup>nd</sup> Street ceremony at the Dogwood.

HREC Chair Ventura: HREC would like to connect with all members of the City Council and invite council members to the HREC meetings to help keep intentional connections.

**5. Roundtable of HREC Commissioners (Roundtable Discussion Timestamp 23:44):**

**a. VOTE/Approval:** Letter in Support of the unhoused community of Bend. Author Commissioner Loewenstern.

**Motion:** Commissioner Vernoitico motioned to approve the Letter in Support of the unhoused community of Bend, with no corrections. Commissioner Hannon seconded. The motion was unanimously passed by all voting members who attended today's meeting in Chambers (5) and through Zoom (5)

**HREC Council Liaison Perkins:** Thanked HREC for the support of the unhoused community of Bend. Liaison Perkins met with some of the people living on China Hat who were involved in the lawsuit and raised concerns. The Forest Service will not allow people to retrieve their belongings due to a change in the rules.

Councilor Perkins is raising these concerns with the Federal Delegation about making it impossible for people to retrieve their belongings that they had to leave behind at China Hat. They must show proof of insurance, registration, and sale for RVs, vehicles, and their belongings. This is due to the Forest Service's new rule for the retrieval of belongings.

Councilor Perkins suggests she share the letter with the Council, but she also shares this letter with the Coordinated Houseless Response Office, which she co-chairs. This is the group that focuses on a regional response.

Councilor Perkins invited the author of the letter, HREC Commissioner Loewenstern, to comment at the next Coordinated Houseless Response Office meeting.

**Commissioner Loewenstern:** He accepted the invitation to the next meeting.

Commissioners, Council Liaison, and City Attorney continued to have conversations on different topics. Below are some of the topics discussed:

New businesses that do not offer gender neutral bathrooms, even in queer friendly places. | Use of the Wayback Machine to examine changes on websites. They would like pronouns added back to the commissioner's names on the HREC website. | Noticed ICE enforcement in the community/ City, which causes tension. Let's stay a welcoming community. | Old Mill: Private and Private streets? Give some ability to close streets. | Concerns with plain-clothed officers and undercover vehicles when dealing with ICE. Commissioners have concerns and are afraid of being or speaking Spanish in public and being without enough documentation carried on their person. | The Bend Police Department does not participate in any immigration investigation or enforcement; Bend has a policy.

## **6. Public Comment:**

No public members in the gallery or online left a comment.

## **7. Business:** Working Meeting, Andrés Portela, He, Him | El.

### **Overview, Follow-up, Review, Discussion(s), and Proclamation Timeline:**

- Follow-up: Subcommittee switches to a working meeting.
- Review of past subcommittee items:
  - Welcoming Week (Community Engagement Subcommittee) (Now to September)
  - Equity framework/ lens for Presentations (September start) (Policy Subcommittee)

- HREC Newsletter/ Social Media to inform the community and council of our discussions (Education and Awareness Subcommittee)
- HREC Newsletter/ Social Media to inform the community and council of our discussions (Education and Awareness Subcommittee), Resources for staff and community.
- HREC Newsletter/ Social Media to inform the community and council of our discussions (Education and Awareness Subcommittee)
- Welcoming Week:
  - Policy: Connecting with the Welcoming Week Team to revise the proclamation.
  - Engagement/ Education: Co-lead a welcoming week event centered on public learning and community storytelling.
- Proclamation Timeline:
  - June: Staff and City Council liaison. Review the 2024 proclamation and draft the 2025 version.
  - July: HREC members review before the meeting.
    - HREC Staff, Community Partners meeting: Facilitated input session on framing, language, and community voice.
  - August: Staff finalize with community-centered edits. Share with council and city leadership.
  - September 3<sup>rd</sup>: Council Meeting: Proclamation read aloud, HREC members and community reps share context and stories.

**8. Adjourn:** With no further HREC Business, Chair Ventura adjourned the June 25, 2025, hybrid meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen, Administrative Support Specialist, Accessibility

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