



Regular Meeting Minutes
Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

Date: Monday, 3/25/2024

Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Location: Hybrid Tacoma Municipal Building

747 Market Street

Conference Room #138

Tacoma, WA 98402

The Tacoma Municipal Building is served by Pierce Transit bus routes 1, 2, 11, 16, 45, and 57. Visit www.triplanner.piercetransit.org to find your route.

Zoom (Click the following link to join the meeting):

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82775537321?pwd=pbDCnh93nh-fUMCY4cYl2Zfc2qu3Tg.e76XT7BvH_P2KSFJ

Passcode: 053473 Webinar ID: 827 7553 7321Re

I. Call Meeting to Order (5:30 pm) –Chair Ghayoumi

Meeting Called to Order at 5:31 PM.

II. Statement of Purpose (5:33 pm) –Commissioner Lekea

We convene this meeting to advance the City of Tacoma’s mission to “reducing barriers to access and participation in Tacoma’s economic, cultural, and civic life for immigrants and refugees.” This Commission aspires to help “make the City more vibrant, inclusive, and welcoming for all.”

III. Land Acknowledgment (5:35 pm) –Commissioner Ruboneka

The Commission acknowledges that the meeting is being conducted on Indigenous lands of the Puyallup People, who cared for their ancestral lands before the Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854 removed native peoples to clear way for colonial settlement. It is important to this Commission as settlers here, aspiring to care for immigrants and refugees in this place and to call it home, that we acknowledge and send gratitude to the Puyallup Tribe of Indians who continue to be leaders for justice in our community today.

IV. Record of Attendance and Excusal of Absences – Chair Ghayoumi

Commissioners

Emani Donaldson
Natalie Ghayoumi
Alicia Sands
Samatha Le
Maurice Lekea
Hieu Nguyen

Hugo Nicolas
Thierry Ruboneka
Maricress Valdez-Castro
Andy Mejia
Lydia Zepeda

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emani Donaldson resigned | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thierry Ruboneka |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natalie Ghayoumi | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maricres Valdez Castro. Vice Chair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Samantha Le absent | <input type="checkbox"/> Alicia Sands absent |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lydia Zepeda | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate (Vacant) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maurice Lekea | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hieu Nguyen |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Andy Mejia – Youth | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hugo Nicolas. Second Vice Chair |

V. Consent Agenda (5:40 pm) – Chair Ghayoumi

- a. Approval of March 25, 2024 Meeting Agenda (Aye/Nay Votes)
 - *Commissioner Zepeda made a motion to approve the agenda.*
 - *Vice Chair Valdez Castro seconded the motion.*
 - *The Ayes have it and the Meeting Agenda is approved*
- b. Approval of February 26, 2024 Meeting Minutes (Aye/Nay Votes)
 - *Commissioner Zepeda made a motion to approve the agenda.*
 - *Commissioner Ruboneka seconded the motion.*
 - *The Ayes have it and the February Meeting Minutes are approved*

VI. Public Comment (5:40 – 5:50 pm)

- *No Public Comments Made.*

VII. Commission Affairs

- a. May 2024 meeting
 - *Commissioner Zepeda made a motion to cancel the scheduled May 27th regularly scheduled meeting, and schedule a special meeting for Monday, May 20th at 5:30 PM.*
 - *Vice Chair Valdez Castro seconded the motion.*
 - *The Ayes have it and the May 27th meeting is cancelled and a Special Meeting will be noted and held on Monday, May 20th at 5:30 PM.*
- b. Commissioner Nicolas (Second Vice Chair) second Interactive Presentation and Training
 - *Training not offered. Additional Governance Committee work necessary to proceed.*
- c. Commissioner Le discussing status of refugee seekers in King County
 - Commissioner Lekea will provide his experience
 - *Commissioner Lekea shared updates and needs for volunteers. Vice Chair offered to forward an email with additional information.*
 - Questions / Discussion by Commissioners
- d. Recruitment Update
 - *Interviews scheduled for Thursday, April 11th at Community, Vitality and Safety Committee meeting.*
- e. Code of Conduct
 - *Document to be emailed to Liaison Shattuck in order to be shared and Commissoiners to offer comments, recommended edits for future discussion.*
- f. Committee Updates
 - Governance (of CIRA) Committee
 - By-Laws

Commissioners

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- *Continued question to Legal department re: Meeting absences*
 - Attendance
 - Questions / Discussion by Commissioners
- Community Safety Committee
 - Trauma Informed Policing
 - Questions / Discussion by Commissioners
 - *Next meeting scheduled for April 9th at 4:30 PM*
 - *CPAC supportive of TIP proposal – recommend broadening language to include more communities.*
 - *DOJ TIP grant due by 5/21*
 - *League of Women voters performing study related to welcoming of immigrants and refugees*
 - *Detention center updates – 1 confirmed suicide, 4 attempts. La Resistencia offers support to detainees in their hunger strikes. Ongoing harassment from trucks with flags, 911 called but unclear on follow-up. The Consulate list of phone numbers offered at the detention center is out of date and needs to be updated.*
 - *CPAC to recommend added language to interpreter policy for TPD that the confirmation that the interviewee understands the interpretation being offered.*
- Welcoming Week / Recruitment Committee
 - Questions / Discussion by Commissioners
 - *Citizenship day at Tacoma Community House in need of paralegal and interpreter volunteers at April 13th event.*

VIII. Presentation – N/A

IX. Immigration Local News and Updates – Vice Chair

- *Congolese Refugee Week – opportunity to serve as a judge for event*

X. City Staff Updates – OEHR Staff

- *New Zoom Invite to be sent to commissioners to aid in joining monthly business meeting virtually.*

XI. Items to Consider for Next Meeting & Announcements

- a. Commissioner Lekea on the Welcoming Interactive America

XII. Adjourn

Chair Ghayoumi called for adjournment at 7:11 PM.

Commissioners

Emani Donaldson
 Natalie Ghayoumi
 Samatha Le
 Maurice Lekea
 Hieu Nguyen

Hugo Nicolas
 Thierry Ruboneka
 Maricress Valdez-Castro
 Andy Mejia
 Lydia Zepeda

Why do we recognize the land?

To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory you reside on, and a way of honoring the Indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial. It is important to understand the long-standing history that has brought you to reside on the land, and to seek to understand your place within that history. Land acknowledgements do not exist in a past tense, or historical context: colonialism is a current ongoing process, and we need to build our mindfulness of our present participation. It is also worth noting that acknowledging the land is Indigenous protocol.

–<http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland>



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