**Minutes**

**Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs**

Minutes Date: May 24, 2021 Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom Meeting

1. **Call Meeting to Order –** Chair Refaei

Meeting called to order at 5:36 p.m.

1. **Statement of Purpose –** Chair Refaei
2. **Land Acknowledgment –** Vice Chair Sych
3. **Record of Attendance and Excusal of Absences –** Chair Refaei

**Present:** Saiyare Refaei (Chair), Sandra Sych (Vice Chair), Lydia Zepeda, Emani Donaldson, Alma Villegas, Alma Vargas, Perla Gamboa, Patricia Flores, Hieu Nguyen

**Absent:** Rafael Saucedo (excused), Emily Calhoun

**City Staff Present:** Nick Bayard OEHR, Samantha Kaauamo OEHR, Reid Bennion Office of Management and Budget, Officer Muhamud Ali Tacoma Police Department

**Guests Present:**  Spanish Translator Margaret

1. **Consent on Agendas – Chair Refaei**
2. Approval of Meeting Agenda – Commissioner Lydia Zepeda motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Perla Gamboa seconded. Agenda approved.
3. Approval of the April 2021 Meeting Minutes – Commissioner Lydia Zepeda motioned to approve the meeting minutes. Vice Chair Sandra Sych seconded. Minutes approved.
4. **Commission Affairs – Chair & Vice Chair** 
   1. **Presentation on Budget Cycle and Process:** **Reid Bennion (Office of Management and Budget)**

Reid Bennion shared an overview of the City budget development process, City Council priorities developed during a Council Retreat, themes and feedback from a distributed community survey, context of the City of Tacoma budget as a whole and a breakdown of the General Fund, budget strategies and how community feedback fits in those strategies.

Chair Sych, Commissioners Zepeda, Gamboa and Villegas discussed questions and topics: how much of a difference does community feedback actually make to the proposed budget? What department would be responsible for providing services to immigrants and refugees (language access, services, etc.) How do you get feedback from immigrants and refugees who many not speak or read English? Is there a reserve?   
Bayard reminded commissioners that budget requests can be brought forward anytime since this information is what drives the City during budget season.

1. **Community Affairs** 
   * Information frequency and committee leads and emails will be shared to the group as well as the language access document.

* **Community Engagement Committee**
  + This committee will be dissolved and absorbed in the other 4 committees. A special task force will be created if needed.
* **Community Safety Committee**
  + Commissioner Nguyen made a motion to approve Commissioner Zepeda as the new Chair of the Community Safety Committee. Vice Chair Sych seconded. Motion approved.
  + Officer Ali shared that the LanguageLine app has been recently implemented and is currently in use with positive feedback.
* **Governance (of CIRA) Committee** 
  + No reports at this time.
* **Language Access Committee**
  + Commissioner Gamboa is finalizing the Language Access document with the understanding that revisions and suggestions are continually submitted. UW Tacoma will be partnering around vaccine information and will be co-authoring some reports.
* **NW Detention Center Committee** 
  + Last committee meeting was joined by Aid Northwest to discuss areas of collaboration and different services/information to share. Discussion of proof of negative Covid test result for released detainees. Stimulus check processing. Met with Adam Smith’s Office, Mayor Woodards, CM Ushka, City Staff to discuss House Bill next steps.

1. **City Staff Updates** 
   1. Bayard: New staff hires will be announced soon, including CIRA liaison. This person will be joining the next CIRA meeting in June.
2. **Public Comment:** No comments at this time.
3. **Items for next meeting.** Welcoming Week planning, Annual Report discussion

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.