



# Regular Meeting Agenda

## Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

**Date:** Monday, February 26, 2024

**Time:** 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

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**Location:** Hybrid Tacoma Municipal Building

747 Market Street

Conference Room CSC #200-A

Tacoma, WA 98402

The Tacoma Municipal Building is served by Pierce Transit bus routes 1, 2, 11, 16, 45, and 57.

Visit [www.tripplanner.piercetransit.org](http://www.tripplanner.piercetransit.org) to find your route.

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

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[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82775537321?pwd=pbDCnh93nh-fUMCY4cYI2Zfc2qu3Tg.e76XT7BvH\\_P2KSFJ](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82775537321?pwd=pbDCnh93nh-fUMCY4cYI2Zfc2qu3Tg.e76XT7BvH_P2KSFJ)

Passcode: 053473

Webinar ID: 827 7553 7321

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**I. Call Meeting to Order (5:30 pm)** –Chair Ghayoumi  
Meeting called to order by Chair Ghayoumi at 5:40 pm.

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

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 Le

*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

Emani Donaldson

Thierry Ruboneka

Natalie Ghayoumi - present

Maricres Valdez Castro. Vice Chair

### Commissioners

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

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

- Samantha Le - present
- Lydia Zepeda - present
- Maurice Lekea - present
- Andy Mejia – Youth - present

- Alicia Sands - present
- Alternate (Vacant)
- Hieu Nguyen - present
- Hugo Nicolas. Second Vice Chair

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

- a. Approval of February 26, 2024 Meeting Agenda (Aye/Nay Votes)
  - Motion to approve the February 26, 2024 agenda as written by Commissioner Zepeda
  - Seconded by Commissioner Sands
  - Ayes have it, approved.
- b. Approval of January 22, 2024 Meeting Minutes (Aye/Nay Votes)
  - Motion to approve the January 22, 2024 Meeting Minutes by Commissioner Zepeda
  - Seconded by Commissioner Le
  - Ayes have it, approved.

**VI. Public Comment (5:40 – 5:50 pm)**

- No one present for public comment.

**VII. Commission Affairs**

- a. City Council Member Olgy Diaz
  - City Council Member Olgy Diaz requested an endorsement from the Commission on a resolution for the City of Tacoma to provide \$10,000 in phone call funds for those currently living in the Northwest detention center located in Tacoma, Washington.
- b. Trauma Informed Policing
  - Discussion / Motion(s) / Vote
  - Motion to approve the proposal to go forward to City Council by Commissioner Zepeda.
  - Seconded by Comisioner Nguyen.
  - Ayes have it, approved.
- c. Commissioner Nicolas (Second Vice Chair) second Interactive Presentation and Training
- d. Certified Welcoming
  - No update from city staff.
  - Commissioner Lekea will be present at the Welcoming Interactive on behalf of the Tacoma Refugee Choir.
- e. Schedule of upcoming activities
  - Proclamation
  - Recruitment
  - Budget
  - Policy
- f. Commissioner Andy Mejia
  - Commissioner Mejia provided an inspiring presentation on his personal journey to and beyond the commission.
- g. Committee Updates
  - Governance (of CIRA) Committee Wednesday, *February meeting canceled.*
    - Update: Need to connect with the legal department on bylaws updates. Will request an update from the Office of Equity and Human Rights on CIRA's budget.
  - Community Safety Committee
    - Committee is in review of all-state training for police officers in alignment with their proposal to council.
  - Welcoming Week / Recruitment Committee
    - No updates.

**VIII. Presentation:**

- a. Jane Nesbitt, immigrant story
- b. Jane Nesbitt, discussing the role of State of Washington Office of Independent Investigation

**IX. Immigration Local News and Updates**

**X. City Staff Updates**

**XI. Items to Consider of Next Meeting and Announcements**

Updates from Commissioner Samantha Le on Riverton Methodist Church refugee efforts.

**XII. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned by Chair Ghayoumi at 7:37 pm.

**Commissioners**

Emani Donaldson  
Natalie Ghayoumi  
Stacy Kowalski  
Samatha Le  
Maurice Lekea  
Hieu Nguyen

Hugo Nicolas  
Thierry Ruboneka  
Maricress Valdez-Castro  
Alma Villegas  
Leena Vo  
Lydia Zepeda

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### 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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#### Commissioners

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