



Minutes

Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

Date: January 24th, 2022

Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

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

<https://zoom.us/j/91791840410?pwd=d3lyYW44Tm8wT1NrNIU4ekRsWERnQT09>

Meeting ID: 967 9184 0410

Passcode: 264285

Real-time Spanish translation will be available during the meeting.

I. Call Meeting to Order – Chair Sych 5:30 pm Meeting called to Order

II. Statement of Purpose – Chair Sych

Statement read

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 –Vice Chair Donaldson

Statement read

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. Consent Agenda – Chair Sych

- a. Approval of Meeting Agenda (Aye/Nay Votes) Lydia moved, Emani Second – Motion Passed
- b. Approval of October and December 2021 Meeting Minutes (Aye/Nay Votes) Lydia moved to approve December minutes, Emani Second – Motion passed. October 2021 draft minutes were sent out.

V. Record of Attendance and Excusal of Absences – Chair Sych

<input type="checkbox"/> Emily Calhoun	Absent	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	
<input type="checkbox"/> Perla Gamboa	Late 6:17pm	<input type="checkbox"/> Emani Donaldson (Vice-Chair)	Present
<input type="checkbox"/> Hieu Nguyen	Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rafael Saucedo	Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Sandra Sych (Chair)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lydia Zepeda	Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Alma Villegas	Present

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Alma Villegas

Perla Gamboa
Hieu Nguyen
Rafael Saucedo

Vacant

Alternate Position (Vacant)

VI. City Staff Updates – Liaison Raeshawna

- a. We are in recruitment season and notice should be going out soon. We are recruiting for 7 commissioners as of right now, but that could change based on any vacancies that occur after this meeting. Encourage commissioners to share this information with the network. Even if people are not sure about the commission's participation, they can also look to participate on committees.
- b. Gratitude for all of the work the commission has completed: Lydia - translation app, Alma - police chief recruitment, Rafael - UW Tacoma Latinx awards funding. Thank you for all the work you are getting done as volunteers this can often be a lot to take on.
- c. Governance committee requested to have updated picture names and updated workplans on the CIRA webpage. The webpage is going to be updated
- d. Rafael and Saiyare (previous chair) work with Kristina Walker – please share that work with

VII. Group Get-To-Know-You Activity: Vice-Chair Donaldson

Share the story of your name - Emani born to teenage parents. I went about 3 days without a name. Emani Donaldson – It is Arabic and Swahili. Faith/ 7 days of kwanza. Donaldson – father's mother. Who got it from her step-mother. It was passed down from a woman. I am proud. I am married and I have not changed my name but will hyphenate my name.

Rafael Francisco Saucedo. – The first name honors my grandfather. My middle name is from my dad's name. Very few Saucedo, but many Saucedo. Dad used to say maybe a long time ago someone mistook the a for an o.

Lydia Zepeda – My first name honors my aunt whose name was “Lilia”, but my mom wanted to name me after the richest woman in the bible “Lydia” because she wanted me to be wealthy. “Z” at the beginning of my last name is typically Mexican, whereas it is mainly spelled with a “C” in Spanish. Heather field in English. Jews who were forced to become Catholics. They took names of nature things 1491 changed to Catholicism from Judaism.

Hieu Chung Nguyen – Hieu in traditional care and love the parents. The last name is popular for Vietnamese people. The story is my great-great-grandparents originally did not take that last name. But when one of my great-great-grandparents serving a general serving someone named King Nguyen moved to South Vietnam, so whoever is going to make a victory gets the last name Nguyen. So it changed.

Sandra – Maria Sandra Sych – My parents want me to be named Sandra but being born in a small town in Poland and in a family that was very religious, a family relative convinced parents to name her Maria because the priest would not baptize me if my name was not a saints name. Maria is one of the holiest people. Saint Mary protecting me. She always used Sandra though. Although I want to get rid of Maria, since I do not use it, it is part of my history, so I have kept it so far. Sych – could have come from a Jewish background. Typically, Polish people have much longer last names.

Alma Villegas – Not a story of my name that I know of. My mother is Delia and she always likes the name, so my full name is Alma-Delia Villegas-Perez. My father wanted to name me Dracma, but my mom said no.

Raeshawna – Raeshawna Janelle (Sager) Ware. My dad wanted to name me Roshaun but found a way to name me Raeshawna. I was supposed to be named Janelle, but my dad said there were too many J's in

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the family, so it was put as my middle. I struggle with it because Raeshawna is so different in comparison to my other sisters' names.

Lisa – Lisa Woods. I do not have an inspiring story. I know my name in Hebrew form is Elizabeth is God is my oath. My maiden name is Ware, so I am curious to know if I am related to Raeshawna' s husband.

Officer Ali, Mohammed. It is the name of our prophet. Not too much besides that. Also Muhammed Ali.

VIII. Commission Affairs (60 min)

- a. Final review and vote on CSC letter in opposition to Ordinance 28880. Update on the ordinance – Chair Sych
 - i. Ordinance may not go to full City Council consideration; we should still send it out. Did everyone have a chance to read the letter? Any questions? The ordinance was being brought to a vote without going to the council committee. Lydia: It is now being sent back to CVS, we should send it so they know our sentiment. Lydia - moved to approval letter. Emani, second. Motion passed
- b. Final review and vote on CSC letter in response to hate crimes in Tacoma – Chair Sych
 - i. Did everyone have a chance to read the letter? Any questions? Lydia – There is a typo, a friendly amendment to add a “not prosecuted” in the paragraph. Lydia moved to approve the letter as amended. Emani, second. Motion passed.
- c. Discussion on CIRA committees and quorum – Chair Sych
 - i. We do not have enough commissioners to staff the committees. Like the NWDC, we are looking to combine committees. Only four people can be on the committee after this meeting. How can we make sure that we keep those committees? Do we need to create new committees, how do we make it work better? Alma: I don't think we should add more committees until we have more commissioners. There is a problem with general onboarding and consistency and availability to participate. Sandra: a lot of people expressed that it is difficult to find links and schedules for committees. And some do not have zoom acct access. Raeshawna: The community safety committee had their link in the zoom. Lydia: We do not have it now. Rae: We can set it up for all committees, it is more logistical. I can set up the zoom links and coordinate. Google drive – one way that one of the commissions does it is to have a committee having access to a google drive as a committee. Sandra: Can we share the link we also need a place for people to be able to see all documents. **Can we put the links on our webpage?** Rae: I am not sure about the webpage piece. Lisa: Acknowledge the shift in the way we have worked and how we are working. Overall commission structure, google drives, links, etc. Rae: We can explore options of sharing documents without making them all editable due to quorum. Sandra: About adding a committee, there may be other committees of interest if we have a shift in priority. Alma: Is there a purpose statement in these committees so we know the focus? Where would that be captured? We should have purpose statements, workplans, goals, etc. Hieu: Every subcommittee is supposed to come up with a purpose statement and work plans from about two years ago. **We need a central place so the documents are shareable and accessible for all.** Sandra: DO you have all these documents. Rae: I have some, but I am not sure I have all of them from the

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past. Sandra: Having that information accessible would be helpful. Rae: Let me take this concept back to webmaster, Sam and see what she would need and how we could help.

d. Discussion on recruitment process. Recommendations on how we would like to collaborate with CVS during the CIRA recruitment process – Chair Sych

- i. Sandra: CVS asked for three recommendations on how we can work with them for recruitment. 1) CIRA member is able to review applications and is present to look for diversity of skills and interests. Rafael: 1) CIRA rep on panel. Have not had an engagement with any panel members since 2) Inform folks that CIRA folks will be present 3) Mostly around the interview process and avoid any problems and targeted outreach. Diversity of background and faces across the city. Alma: Not clear of CVS, not even knowing CIRA was separate. Did not make sense why I was interviewing with CVS for CIRA. Felt like it was too easy to be on the commission and not real vetting. Giving background and description of who everyone is would be helpful. Perla: Provide information ahead of time. It is a public meeting, especially in person it can be awkward. Our recruitment should be a little bit different than other cbcs. It may not have good results for CIRA because people will not always go to the City website for information. Rafael: How can we leverage the City's communication team about the openings in CIRA? Sandra: Will press releases be available in other languages? Rafael: Ensuring there is a CIRA member on the interview panel. Rae/Lisa: Social media funds for recruitment are possible through OEHR or MCO. Hieu: Can we use existing relationships the City departments like NCS have with organizations that serve immigrants and refugees to encourage them to participate in CIRA? Rafael: Can we extend recruitment? Or have it ongoing? Ending term early at the end of March. Perla: We need a message that is shorter, accessible, more inviting, and less formal to share with our networks than a new release. It will also save some money in the city and

e. Discussion on CIRA's vision for this year – Chair Sych

- i. What are our collective and individual goals related to CIRA?
- ii. What do we need to focus on to achieve our goals?
- iii. What are the roadblocks/frustrations? The past year in review

Lydia: It was a win to get a translation app. And a draft policy around not using minors for translation. Concerned for crimes that appear to be victims of hate crimes that may not be getting attention about the violence they feel is being targeted towards them. Blue cards is something we want to improve. We need QR codes with links to things that share resources about what people need. Trauma-informed policing. Frustration is the survey of the community safety delay.

Rafael: My goal is to support the recruitment best I can before I leave the commission. Frustration – not knowing. It is really hard to have an expert. Lack of infrastructure with the commission. Not knowing the resources we have available. Not knowing what questions to ask.

Sandra: My goal is toward the onboarding process. I would like to make it easier for people who are going to be joining. Future: How do we insert ourselves, how do we know when CIRA can advise on something before it is established. Roadblocks: The response to the NW detention center. Their position is that we have done everything we can do.

Alma: I liked Lydia's recap and the accomplishments. Frustrating – not feeling like I am contributing. My goal this year is I would like to be more active and contribute more. Feels like this is a token commission. Why do we not have shared decision making with CVS and other reporting committees. Would like to Council members. Would like to have a listening session with the new chief of police. How do we elevate it.

Perla: Win – language access guidance document and presented it to CVS.

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Emani: Want to tie youth and others that are first and second-generation immigrant and refugee representation. Share resources with each other. Wish we could have worked more with the Police Department. Hieu: I will share my input over email.

f. Finalize work plan – Chair Sych

Sandra: Please submit the work plans. Community Safety Committee has sent a workplan.

g. Committee Updates (30 min)

- Community Safety Committee

Lydia: Asst Capt/ Asst Deputy assured them that they are a high priority. A lot of community members are interested in participating

- Governance (of CIRA) Committee

Sandra: Did not meet this month. Rescheduled meeting and will be talking about bylaws, recruitment, and onboarding

- Language Access Committee

Perla: We currently have two members on the language access committee. We met and set our recommendations for recruiting and talked about our report for the year. We invited a few community members to attend the committee.

- NW Detention Center Committee

Sandra: Will be merging with the community safety committee. Covid report is given in the detention center

(Perla, Alma, Sandra will meet with Raeshawna to coordinate recruitment needs).

Liberation education history, Alma shared sentiments

IX. Public Comment

X. Items to Consider for Next Meeting:

XI. Adjourn - Chair Sandra Sych 7:37 pm

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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