

Tacoma Human Rights Commission
STUDY SESSION

DATE November 18, 2021

TIME 5:30 p.m.

PLACE Zoom Meeting

Minutes

Call to Order (1 min) 5:38pm

Commissioners Present: Westbrook, Lemons, Johnson, Lynch, Jimenez, Brickhouse, Culbertson, Washington, Oswal, Boullt, Lyons, Acoff, Nobles

City Staff Present: Samantha Kaauamo (OEHR), Andreta Armstrong (OEHR)

Project Presentation (30 mins)

Deputy Mayor Keith Blocker – moved to Business Agenda

Discussing HRC in Pierce County (25 mins)

- Commissioner Lyons. Would like to see educational equity. Some Pierce County school boards needs encouraging and would like support with letters and voices.
- Vice Chair Jimenez. Let's use this as an opportunity to advocate for a Human Rights Commission in neighboring cities.
- Commissioners Boullt and Washington. Maybe forming a joint coalition for the county would be a good idea. And connecting with surrounding grassroots organizations and individuals is beneficial to racial equity, especially in education.
- Chair Lemons. Sharing other commission's (such as TACOD) contact information could help advocate for injustices along with our group. Please send joint coalitions in pierce county that you know about that we could join.
- Commissioner Lynch. Let's send a letter of support to Tacoma Public Schools and surrounding districts.

Adjournment 6:22pm

Tacoma Human Rights Commission
BUSINESS MEETING

DATE November 18, 2021

TIME 6:30 p.m.

PLACE Zoom Meeting

Minutes

Call to Order (1 min) 6:31pm

Roll Call (1 min)

Commissioners present: Westbrook, Lemons, Johnson, Lynch, Jimenez, Brickhouse, Culbertson, Washington, Oswal, Boullt, Lyons, Acoff, Nobles

Guests: Deputy Mayor Keith Blocker

City Staff: Samantha Kaauamo (OEHR), Andreta Armstrong (OEHR)

Approval of Business Meeting Agenda (1 min) Commissioner Lyons motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Brickhouse seconded. Agenda approved.

Approval of October Meeting minutes (2 mins) Commissioner Westbrooke motioned to approve the Minutes. Commissioner Culbertson seconded. Minutes approved.

Staff Reports (5 mins)

Washington State Human Rights Commission cases received. Case closed due to failure to find complainant. WSHRC has jurisdiction over cases in Tacoma based on housing and employment. There's an 8 month backlog. HUD and EEOC approved WSHRC to pass along backlog cases to the City of Tacoma's Human Rights Office to alleviate investigation load.

New Business (40 mins)

Discuss December meeting

- Possibility of cancelling December 16th meeting
- Jimenez, Culbertson, Westbrooke, Oswal: cancel meeting, keep mtg to discuss upcoming housing issues and year end
- Commissioner Westbrooke motioned to keep regular business meeting in December, Commissioner Oswal seconded. Motion to keep December meeting approved.

Discuss Project Presentation – Dep. Mayor Keith Blocker

- CVS Council members making rounds to commissions to keep lines of communication open and bridge any gaps. Let's partner and stay engaged with each other.
- VC Jimenez: letter sent to council, camping ordinance topic for previous CVS meeting. Blocker: respond, resources, legal, officers not first point of contact, no systems in place to provide adequate support, broaden conversation with HRC voices
- Commissioner Lyons: 6th Ave houseless neighbors, did the city make a plan for those that didn't go to the Tiny Homes offered? Has the city tracked those with mental health crisis and sweeps. Individuals are shifting from one street to the next. Design of shelter location

has everything funneled to Tacoma. DM Blocker: criteria for moving into the tiny homes. City does consider all factors, but lack of resources/shelter/budget/mental health.

- Commissioner Washington. Pierce County Homeless Coalition. Groups visit encampments and share resources. Health Dept brings covid vaccination to encampments. There has also been a group started to find ways to prevent homeless.
- Commissioner Westbrooke. Manny Ellis updates. Chief Ake shared a report last Wednesday. Administrative process report in December coming.
- Commissioner Brickhouse. Day job supports City of Tacoma in homelessness. Additional resources in Fife, Lakewood, Puyallup. Kudos to Tacoma for the work they are doing to help with this.
- Commissioner Boult. Resident of Graham. Catholic Community Services looking to support unincorporated Pierce County houseless. Care with Compassion Community another resource.
- Chair Lemons. Please be vigilant in the organizations that are approved to support community. Letters will be resent to council. Future report to be sent to CVS.

Committee Updates

- Housing Equity Task Force – Commissioner Brickhouse: phase 1 to be voted on next month. 1 block decreased to half a block. Northeast and North Tacoma areas. Multi Family Tax Credit and affordable units. Anti displacement strategies and consultant hired. New council will be coming in on phase 2. Vice Chair Jimenez: are you pleased with the way phase 1 is going? Or are there concerns with new council members coming along and disrupting timeline? Chair Lemons: would like a more direct plan focused on racial equity.
- RJEC – Chair Lemons: researched nationwide work plans. Looking into connecting with other Human Rights commission work.
- Commissioner Oswal – community survey making progress
- Education and Outreach – Commissioner Lynch: will have updates next month

Elections – 3 positions open and speeches given from those nominated

Nominated: Jimenez (Chair), Acoff (Vice Chair, respectfully declines nomination), Culbertson (2nd Vice Chair), Westbrooke (Vice Chair)

Chair – Andre Jimenez

Vice Chair - Amanda Westbrooke

2nd Vice Chair -Mason Culbertson

Commissioner Brickhouse motioned to accept the 2022 nominations as proposed. Commissioner Johnson seconded. Nominations approved.

Vice Chair Nobles. Sends gratitude and congrats to commission and Chair positions. Looks forward to the great future work.

Public Comment (2 mins) None at this time

Announcements (10 mins)

Heal the Heart Update: none at this time

Share upcoming events: none at this time

Adjournment 7:33pm