



## HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

### MINUTES

March 26, 2024

6:00 p.m.

VIRTUAL

Approved: DRAFT

#### Call to Order

Vice-Chair Miriam Cummins called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

#### Roll Call

Members present: Alyssa Nydegger, Allyson Dean, Jamie Jones, Robyn Davis, Miriam Cummins, and Hedio Schulte

Members absent: Greg Soriano

#### Election of officers: chair and vice-chair

**Nomination:** Commissioner Robyn Davis nominated Commissioner Allyson Dean for the position of chair. Dean accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Dean was elected to the position of chair 6-0.

**Nomination:** Commissioner Jamie Jones nominated Commissioner Robyn Davis for the position of vice-chair. Davis accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Davis was elected to the position of vice-chair 6-0.

#### Business from the public

There was no business from the public.

**6:10 p.m.**

#### Approval of February 27, 2024, minutes

**Motion:** Commissioner Miriam Cummins moved to approve the January 23, 2024, minutes. Commissioner Robyn Davis seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

**6:10 p.m.**

#### Meeting time, format, and frequency

The group decided to continue to meet once a month on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. They will take a break in December and possibly in November. Some members expressed a desire to meet in person. There was discussion on having a hybrid format. It was suggested to meet in person every other month. Another suggestion was to keep the format consistent to avoid confusion among the public and the members themselves. Cummins said that she would like to see childcare and food provided to make it easier for people to attend in person. Staff liaison Kim Lyddane said there was not a budget for that type of provision. Staff will survey the group to determine how often members could meet in person.

**6:11 p.m.**

Land acknowledgement recommendation to the City Council

**6:27 p.m.**

The subcommittee did not meet prior to this meeting but plans to meet next week. Lyddane reported that she has not heard back from the tribe but continues to reach out to them. The subcommittee will provide a draft of the acknowledgement's language to include in the agenda packet for the group to review ahead of the April meeting.

HRC name change recommendations

**6:30 p.m.**

The group discussed the two different name options. Some members preferred keeping the current name.

**Motion:** Commissioner Robyn Davis made a motion to vote on three name choices: 1) Human Rights Commission, 2) Equity and Inclusion Commission, and 3) the current name of Human Relations Commission. Commissioner Allyson Dean seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

The vote ended in a tie between choice number two and number three. Discussion followed on the reasons why members voted the way they did. A couple of reasons to support choice number three were that by keeping the current name you could avoid confusion and could avoid possible division. A reason to support choice number two was that it would convey the Commission's charter, whereas the other two choices are too broad and leave people to question what the Commission is for. Jones said that she would like to have additional names to consider.

**Motion:** Commissioner Allyson Dean made a motion to table the name vote until the next meeting. Commissioner Jamie Jones seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Members will consider other names to bring back to the next meeting. Staff will send members a link to the Commission's charter to aid in consideration of other name suggestions.

Annual Report

**6:54 p.m.**

Members decided to request a joint meeting with the City Council on Monday, June 10, 2024, during the Council's work session. Lyddane will make the request to the Council. Lyddane and Dean will work on an agenda for the meeting.

Event debriefs and potential event involvement

**6:57 p.m.**

Davis has made tentative plans to attend Linn Benton Community College's Unity Celebration on April 4, 2024, as a representative of the Commission.

Members would like to have the Commission represented at the Albany Farmers' Market at least one Saturday a month. Members will convey which Saturdays they can attend. An activity will be planned for each attendance.

Business from the commission

**7:03 p.m.**

Cummins notified the group of a racist incident that was forwarded to her from the Mayor. A woman experienced a racist remark while shopping at a local store. Dean shared a repeated incident against a boy at an area playground. The members discussed how best to handle these and any future incidents. It was decided to discuss this at the joint meeting with the City Council. Lyddane will research a reporting method where incidents could be reported to the HRC and not interfere with the statistical data collected through the Albany Police Department's reporting system.

Dean will invite Fay Stetz-Waters, director of civil rights and social justice at the Oregon Department of Justice, to speak at an upcoming meeting. Commissioner Alyssa Nydegger and Dean will form a subcommittee to create a resource list to help people who come to the HRC with issues. Members will send the subcommittee any resources they are aware of, or become aware of. The subcommittee will define what is meant by "racial bias" as a part of the work.

Jones shared her concern over the increasing prices of permits to build a house and wondered if the City could offer preapproved plans for people to use. As a member of the Community Development Commission. Davis will bring Jones' concern to the next meeting. Lyddane will ask a City planner to come and speak about affordable housing at an upcoming HRC meeting.

Cummins asked about the issues with the City's water billing system. Lyddane explained how the needed software transition had some hiccups. The automated payment option is one of the hiccups and is temporarily unavailable. There will be no water shutoffs or late fees until the issues have been worked out.

Staff updates

There were no updates.

Next meeting date

The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Dean adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Dean will be absent for the April meeting and asked Davis to act as chair. Davis agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

*Signature on file*

*Signature on file*

Gina Burrese  
Recorder

Kim Lyddane  
Staff Liaison