



Regular Meeting Minutes

Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

Date: Monday, May 20, 2024

Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Location: Hybrid Tacoma Municipal Building

747 Market Street

Conference Room #243

Tacoma, WA 98402

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

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82775537321?pwd=XFAEbIONsymHQoaTkRuFwEG25Lfbur.1>

Meeting ID: 827 7553 7321

Passcode: 053473

I. Call Meeting to Order (5:30 pm) – Chair Ghayoumi

Meeting called to order by Chair Ghayoumi at 5:46 pm.

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

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 Zepeda

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

Natalie Ghayoumi

Maurice Lekea

~~Linus Nyaga~~

Maricres Valdez Castro. *Vice Chair*

Samantha Le

Andy Mejia – Youth

~~Hugo Nicolas. *Second Vice Chair*~~

~~Alicia Sands~~

Lydia Zepeda

Iuliia Didkivska

Commissioners

Natalie Ghayoumi

Alicia Sands

Samatha Le

Maurice Lekea

Emannuella

Nixon Tenga

Linus Nyaga

Hugo Nicolas

Thierry Ruboneka

Maricress Valdez-Castro

Andy Mejia

Lydia Zepeda

Eunice Kalembo

Iuliia Didkivska

- Eunice Kalembo
- Thierry Ruboneka

- Nixon Tenga
- Emmanuella Shasha

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

- a. Approval of May 20, 2024, Agenda (Aye/Nay Votes)
 - *Motion to approve the May 20, 2024 agenda by Commissioner Zepeda*
 - *Seconded by Commissioner Didkivska*
 - *Ayes have it, approved.*
- b. Approval of April 22, 2024, Meeting Minutes (Aye/Nay Votes)
 - *Motion to approve the April Minutes Commissioner Zepeda*
 - *Seconded by Commissioner Le*
 - *Ayes have it, approved.*

VI. Public Comment (5:40 – 5:50 pm)

No Public Comment Offered

VII. Commission Affairs

- a. Introduction of new Commissioners
- b. Current budget for CIRA and hybrid meeting in June 2024
 - *Potential to use allocated budget for outreach/marketing of CIRA*
 - *Liaison Shattuck to work with staff to develop a flyer and review printing costs*
 - *Potential to have an in-person meeting in June for Commissioners to better acquaint themselves with one another*
- c. Vote on the letter to City Council – Commissioner Sands
 - *Deportation Defense Funding Proposal Letter reviewed at Community Safety Committee and put forward for General CIRA Vote*
 - *Ayes have it, approved*
 - *Liaison Shattuck will send Funding Proposal letter to City Manager and Community, Vitality and Safety Committee Liaison for review and share next steps*
- d. Forming new committees
 - *Chair Ghayoumi to share Committee presentation to be sent out to all Commissioners before the next meeting. Liaison Shattuck will create a doodle poll for Commissioners to offer interest of which Committee they would like to participate in.*
- e. Commissioner Valdez Castro’s recommendation and presentation
 - *Tabled to the next Commission meeting in June*
- f. Proclamation
 - *Vice Chair Valdez Castro is preparing first draft with other Commissioners and will share to Liaison Shattuck to then be reviewed by Commissioners and reviewed for any edits*

Commissioners
Natalie Ghayoumi
Alicia Sands
Samatha Le
Maurice Lekea
Emmanuella
Nixon Tenga
Linus Nyaga

Hugo Nicolas
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Maricress Valdez-Castro
Andy Mejia
Lydia Zepeda
Eunice Kalembo
Iuliia Didkivska

g. Committee Updates

- Governance (of CIRA) Committee Wednesday, meeting held on April 10, 2024
 - Meeting the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 PM
 - Liaison Shattuck to schedule a meeting with Legal for By-Laws follow-up
- Community Safety Committee Wednesday, meeting held on April 9, 2024
 - Meeting the second Tuesday of each month at 4:30 PM
 - Reviewed past initiatives and recommendations to Tacoma Police Department such as translation of Blue Cards.
- Welcoming Week / Recruitment Committee
 - Meeting each Thursday at 1 PM

VIII. City Staff Updates – OEHR Staff

- Presentation of Assistant City Manager Hyun Kim as Acting OEHR Director

IX. Presentation

- a. Mike Chin, Director of the Seattle Office of Civil Rights
 - Presentation shared to Commissioners for review via email.
- b. Possible presentation by a community member
 - No presentation made.

X. Items to Consider for Next Meeting & Announcements

- Election
- Structured Office at City of Tacoma for Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

XI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 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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Commissioners

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