

# Regular Meeting Agenda

## Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

**Date:** Monday, July 22, 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/82877122622?pwd=FbHmsjwJibWTHM79AB3QEJztWETK.utpPpGgtC8SsX7Bk>

Meeting ID: 828 7712 2622

Passcode: 98402

**Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call (5:34 pm) - Chair Ghayoumi**

x Maricres Valdez Castro, *Vice Chair, late*  
x Iulia Didkivska  
x Natalie Ghayoumi, *Chair*  
Eunice Kalembo absent  
x Samantha Le absent  
x Maurice Lekea  
x Andy Mejia, *Youth*  
x Hugo Nicolas, *Second Vice Chair*  
Linus Nyaga absent  
Thierry Ruboneka absent  
x Alicia Sands  
x Emmanuella Shasha  
Nixon Tenga absent  
x Lydia Zepeda

**Also present: Vickie McLaren,, Nancy Shattuck, Allen McKenzie for CPAC, Officer Ali, Anika Moran, Stephanie Love**

**Statement of Purpose** – Commissioner Didkivska

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.”

**Land Acknowledgment** – Commissioner Mejia

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.

**Consent Agenda** - Chair Ghayoumi

a. Approval of July 22, 2024, Agenda (Aye/Nay Votes)

**Lydia moved and Maricres seconded. Approved unanimously.**

b. Approval of June 24, 2024, Meeting Minutes (Aye/Nay Votes)

**Lydia moved and Alica seconded. Approved unanimously.**

**Public Comment** - Chair Ghayoumi

*All written public comment must be submitted in writing at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.*

Allen McKenzie understood that TPD COS will be reporting on visit to the NWIPC, but she is not present

Anika Moran, CIRA Pierce County wants to know what are doing and collaborate for Welcome Week.  
Maricres- TCH is hosting Welcoming Week this year and open to other participants collaborating, meeting on Wednesday 4pm.  
Stephanie Love - CIRA Pierce County Wants to collaborate on Welcome Week

## **Commission Affairs**

- a. Officer Election Process - Chair Ghayoumi
- Review of Secretary Position Responsibilities -

**Natalie nominated Lydia Zepeda as Secretary starting immediately for one year, approved unanimously.**

- Due to OEHR internal transitions, City requests elections be scheduled for September.

**Lydia Zepeda nominated Samantha Le for chair starting October 1 for one year, unanimous election of Commissioner Le.**

Maricres nominated Iulia Didivska as 1st vice chair, she declined the nomination  
Sam nominated Alicia Sands as 1st vice chair, she declined the nomination.

**Maurice nominated Emmanuella Shasha for 1st vice chair starting October 1. She accepted the nomination. Shasha was voted unanimously.**

**Maricres nominated Iulia Didkivska as 2nd vice chair starting October 1. She accepted and was voted unanimously.**

- Natalie reviewed her meeting with Vicky McLaren: New staff with new assignments.

The Office of Equity and Human Rights has placed some of their staff in other departments. The City leadership is asking for better understanding of all commissions and CIRA should be in alignment with resolution that created CIRA.

Natalie: The City would like to a strategic plan for CIRA. Natalie has asked for 3 goals, but we did not do it.

McLaren: CIRA must be alignment with Tacoma Municipal Code (meaning the resolution that created CIRA). Can advocate for things that are not local.

Minutes will be written by Secretary.

Natalie: We are asked to send the agenda items to liaison who will create the agenda and the city will find people to fill the needs. Up until now we have made our own agenda and found our own speakers.

McLaren clarifies that CIRA has been in compliance. As to agenda we can make suggestions, but cannot invite nonprofits because it would give them an "unfair advantage."

Natalie: Shouldn't CIRA advise the City if nonprofits should be funded?

Lydia indicated that having the liaison setting the agenda violates both our bylaws and Robert's Rules of Order which we are required to follow. In addition, CIRA does not have any control over the budget so how can we be providing nonprofits with unfair advantage? Since we work with AIDNW and Tacoma Community House, which are both nonprofits that have gotten money from the City, it would be discriminatory not to work with other nonprofits.

Natalie wants to understand why we are making more work for Nancy; having her do the agenda has delayed getting the agenda out in a timely way.

McLaren states that we cannot create our own agenda until we do a strategic plan by the end of the year.

Natalie: Is the Human Rights agenda done by the liaison?

McLaren says it is.

Hugo; we have asked for a strategic plan meeting for the past year, but it hasn't happened.

McLaren: confirms that she will send out a poll for a possible retreat in September or October not the holidays as she originally proposed.

Alicia supports a retreat.

Natalie: asks for confirmation about removing commissioners who are absent

McLaren: you can only make recommendations.

Natalie: Regarding the amendments to bylaws, she talked to City Legal and they say they are binding since we voted on them last year.

Nancy: At the last meeting bylaws were sent to Governance for amendments; need to send them to legal first, then would come to full CIRA for vote. Legal does not have an opinion on our bylaws unless the staff has specific legal question.

Natalie asked for written policies for agenda, bylaws, stating they have changed each time we have had a staff change. We need this information to function.

McLaren: Nancy is working on standard operating procedures (SOP) for all commissions.

Shasha; As we wait for SOP, can we get a draft?

McLaren: we will try to get it to you asap but cannot put anything in writing unless it aligns with city code (meaning the resolution that created CIRA)

#### b. Welcoming Interactive America - Commissioner Lekea

Welcoming Week is a world-wide celebration in September 13-22, 2024

The city paid for him to go to the welcoming conference.

Lekea goes over the creation of Welcoming City certification and his experience at the Welcoming Week conference.

Natalie asks if Maurice will write a letter to the City asking them what they have done to make Tacoma a more Welcoming City.

Maricres: She asked Raeshawna where we are in the certification process; we are in the formative phase, also asked that Maurice put that in his letter.

Natalie: please contact Natalie or Nancy if you want to help Maurice write the letter.

#### c. Mental Health Outreach - Vice Chair Castro

Proposes a coffee and conversation to the community once a month. She is transitioning to mental health manager for Asian and Pacific Island Cultural Center

#### d. Committee Updates

- Governance (of CIRA) Committee - Chair Ghayoumi

Asked Nancy to send the Governance link to Commissioners Le, Sashaka and Didkivska for the 2nd Monday of each month at 5:30-6:30.

- Community Safety Committee, July 8, 2024 - Commissioner Zepeda

#### Report on NWIPC committee July 1:

- CM Kristina Walker met with Rep Kilmer's staff: suggested a letter from City to Rep Kilmer before January on NWIPC. NWIPC committee will discuss as next meeting in September.
- Rule making for HB1740 (unannounced inspections of NWIPC by State DOH which goes into effect September 2024). Progress is slow, many details.
- La Resistencia reported on NWIPC: dirty water in facility; detainees reported 4 unknown people inspected facility; asked City for power drop (like AIDNW has); asked to be able to put up a permanent monument to Mr. Daniel; asked questions about AIDNW (a nonprofit). CM Walker offered to make introductions between LR and AIDNW.

#### TPD updates - Officer Ali

- TPD Blue Cards: there is a new link on cards.
- TPD Website has info in multiple languages.
- TPD did a walk through with Bruce Scott, Warden of NWIPC; TPD Chief of staff Michelle Woodrow; Deputy Chief Younger; and Officer Ali June 19th. COS Woodrow will come to CIRA monthly meeting to report on tour.

#### CPAC report- Allen McKenzie

- CPAC is on pause on policy until a TPD person is assigned. CPAC is currently looking at TPD complaints.
- CPAC expressed the same frustration as CIRA that they can't post or do outreach and that the website is out of date.

**Next meeting 13th August 4:30.**

Maricres: Afghani told Maricres about an incident that involved a truck driving on their property, she helped them report it to TPD.

Lydia: information is available on the TPD website in Dari and Pashto.

Officer Ali: goes to the Mosque every Friday, his squad car is in front, he can answer questions.

- Welcoming Week / Recruitment Committee - Maricres Castro  
There is a meeting tomorrow at 3pm it is on TEAMS, ask her for the link.

Hugo: there is a lot of fear and hate directed at immigrants being expressed in this election. We need efforts to reassure immigrants.

Sands: we need to outreach to reduce hate

Lydia: We proposed a "Be Kind Tacoma" campaign to the City many months ago, but have not heard any response from the city.

**City Staff Updates**

a. Trauma Informed Policing Proposal update  
was sent to TPD and we are waiting for them to respond back

b. Deportation Defense Funding Proposal update  
sent to CVS and waiting to hear back from them

c. City will co-sponsor Welcoming Week with TCH (a nonprofit)

**Adjourned at 7:33pm**

**Question: the next meeting was listed on the Agenda as August 12, but it should be August 26**

**Items to Consider for Next Meeting & Announcements**

Malou Chávez, ED of NWIRP for meeting August 26