

## Human Rights Commission: Meeting Summary

July 2, 2019

Commission Members	Present/Absent	Guests
Danielle Meyer, Chair	P	Holly Larsen
Felicia Bechtoldt, Vice Chair	P	Lacy Ramirez
Lowell Alik	P	Louann D.
Krista Aquinas-Gallagher	P	Corissa Neufeldt
Angelo Arredondo	P	
Bella Borja	P	
Alexandra Dass	P	
Renee HK Leblonde	P	
Wilma Marchbanks	A	
Daniel Rollings	P	
Nathan Schmidt	A	
Tricarico Schwartz	P	
Rita Song	A	
Michael Watters	P	
<b>Staff</b>		
Dan Atchison	P	
Sarah Strahl	P	
Sgt. Stephen Smith	P	
Kelli Blechschmidt	P	

### 1. Call to Order, Welcome and Review of Agenda

Chair Meyer called the meeting to order, welcomed the group and introductions were shared.

### 2. Public Comment

No public comment.

### 3. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Both the July 2, 2019 agenda and the June 4, 2019 meeting minutes were approved.

### 4. Action Item: Library Relocation/ Inclusive Space

Sarah Strahl and Dan Atchison gave a review of the library relocation project including its scope, purpose and needs of the library. The Library Renovation Council Subcommittee has been in the process of reviewing potential temporary space for a full service Library during the seismic retrofit. As options for that space came to the committee, one of the potential spaces includes the old Capital Press building, owned by Salem Alliance Church. The Subcommittee requested the Human Right's Commission's input into ensuring all races, creeds, religions and identities continue to be welcome in the new space, as they are in the current location. Chair Meyer asked Commissioners to review the draft statement from the Commission to see if there were any changes they would like to make.

Vice Chair Bechtoldt draws members to the fourth paragraph, second line of the draft statement which says, “[i]t is offensive to members of the Commission, and to some in the local LGBTQ community, for the City to enter into a contract with, and pay money to, an entity that may be experienced as unwelcoming to members of the LGBTQ community” to instead read “it is offensive to some in the local LGBTQ community....”

Member Watters suggests taking out the language of “members of the Commission” and instead read “Commission” to make it more general. Member Dass clarified with staff if this statement should be coming from the HRC and not the LGBTQ Task Force. Member Borja stated if the location will be the place of the library, it would be beneficial to add language about how the library could make itself more inclusive.

Member HK Leblond agreed and felt it was important it is stressed in the statement that the Commission is there to help the library and the community and wants more information about the experiences of people with the organization; this is seconded by Member Aquinas-Gallagher. Chair Meyer says she has personally not experienced discrimination, that no formal complaint has been made to the City or the Commission and that she feels like the statement is both accurate and necessary.

Member Schwartz shared feedback from a member of the public and Vice Chair Bechtoldt shared her experience of her work place choosing to not hold events at another church owned property. Member HK Leblond asks how the City plans to react if the library moves in and there are community concerns. Chair Meyer stresses that she is confident the City and its staff would not act discriminatory, but is concerned about the perception. Dan Atchison was able to clarify that this would purely be a business transaction as the City has with other rental sites across the city and this is a policy issue rather than a legal issue.

Member Dass circles back to Member HK Leblond’s question about issues that may arise after the library moves in and how the library plans to handle those. Librarian Sarah Strahl shares this is why the Library Renovation Council Subcommittee has approached them for feedback and how they can make the space more inclusive. Chair Meyer thanked Sarah and says that the Commission will continue to be a resource to the library through this process.

Vice Chair Bechtoldt makes a motion to amend the statement to read that “[i]t is offensive to members of the Salem community for the City to enter into a contract with, and pay money to, an entity that may be experienced as unwelcoming to members of the LGBTQ community.” This is seconded by Member HK Leblond and passed unanimously.

Member Borja asks if the Commission wanted to provide clearer direction to the Library staff about ways the Library could be more inclusive if the location was selected. Chair Meyer and Member Tricarico suggest adding a sentence explicitly stating the Human Rights Commission and the LGBTQ Task Force are here to provide support to the community and the Library. Dan and Sarah confirm the plan for the Library move is November, so there is time to plan more concrete suggestions if that is desired.

Member HK Leblond read aloud from Chapter 97 of the Salem Revised Code which helps guide the Commission and says that she wants to add the sentence regarding support. After discussion among the group, Member HK Leblond motions for the sentence, “[t]he Commission will continue to be available for reports of discrimination in the community” to be added to the end of the second paragraph. This is seconded by Member Watters and approved unanimously by the Commission.

Member HK Leblond then motions for the entire statement as amended to be approved by the Commission, this is seconded by Member Dass and approved unanimously. Dan lets the Commission know he will make their amendments to the statement and then provide a copy for Chair Meyer to sign on behalf of the Commission. He shares he anticipates the issue going before Council on July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **5. Information Items**

### **A. Bias Crime Report**

- a. Sgt. Smith provided the Commission a bias crime update noting there was an incident on June 3<sup>rd</sup> involving a person who entered a downtown building and made slurs against the LGBTQ community and threw a chair. The police were called and they were arrested later in West Salem. Vice Chair Bechtoldt asked if those involved in the incident had been reached out too and Chair Meyer let the group know that Gretchen had reached out to them.

### **B. Complaints and Contacts Report**

- a. Kelli Blechschmidt provided the Complaints and Contacts report supplied by Gretchen.

### **C. Meeting time adjustment**

- a. Chair Meyer discussed changing the meeting time to be between 6:15PM and 8:15 PM rather than the current 6PM-8PM to allow for more members to attend the full meeting. A motion was made by Vice Chair Bechtoldt and seconded by member Watters to change the meeting time; this passed unanimously.

### **D. National Night Out**

- a. Chair Meyer announced there will be no regularly scheduled August meeting and instead encouraged Commissionaires to attend a National Night Out function instead. Sgt. Smith will be contacting Gretchen to make sure that she has the most updated information to supply the Commission with for locations and events.

## **6. Task Force Updates**

### **A. Awareness**

- a. Commissionaire Watters shared his new brochures and plans for future materials. Member Dass asked about materials being printed in multiple languages-specifically Spanish. Chair Meyer asked if the City has a policy about the qualifying community percentages to have City materials made in other languages. Kelli said that she will follow up with Gretchen to see if there is such a policy, but that materials such as what Commissionaire Watters is describing can easily be made into Spanish.

B. Core Response

- a. Member Arredondo shared that Member Borja graciously offered to provide a presentation to the Commission regarding trauma informed care. Chair Meyer thanked Member Borja and would work with Gretchen and Vice Chair Bechtoldt to get that scheduled at a future meeting

C. Housing

- a. Chair Meyer had nothing to report

D. LGBTQ

- a. Chair Meyer shared they have been working on the Library relocation and announced that the revisions to Chapter 97 passed for a second reading which will be July 8<sup>th</sup>.

E. Liaison

- a. Member Aquinas-Gallagher echoed Chair Meyer's excitement about Chapter 97 which also includes changes to closed captioning and shared that work is being done with CCTV.

F. Town Hall

- a. Member Arredondo shared updates on the work toward organizing a town hall and asked for feedback on themes. Confirmed with Librarian Strahl that the library would still be open in October to hold the event.

G. Youth Outreach

- a. None-Commissionaire Schmidt out.

**7. Staff Updates**

- a. None

**8. Presentations**

Dan Atchison gave two brief presentations: one regarding public meetings law and another regarding basic ethics. Asked if Commissionaires had additional questions to let him know.

**9. Community Calendar/ PRIDE Tabling**

Chair Meyer briefly shared the community calendar and details of PRIDE. Acknowledges this time of year was busy and there were plenty of opportunities to table and events.

**10. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM. Next meeting will be September 3, 2019.**