

**Human Rights Commission
Study Session
Notes**

November 15, 2018

Commissioners Present: Lorenzo Cervantes, Brad Bates, Jen Haggard (by phone), Rebecca Stith, Kim Tosch, Natalie Collins, Lisa Snyder, Michealea Lemons

Commissioners Absent: Jennifer Vasilez, Allen Ratcliffe, Melvin Nobles, Jr., Sarah Lee

City Staff Present: Andreta Armstrong, Wesley Taylor

Commissioner Stith called the Study Session to order at 5:32 p.m.

Committee and Task Force Work

1. Committee Reports

a. Policy & Advocacy

- i. Commissioners Haggard and Tosch provided an update on the status of gender-neutral bathroom labeling ordinance. Commissioner Haggard called in with details on the updates, including her meeting with several City staff and Councilmembers and her November 8 presentation to the Community Vitality and Safety Committee. Commissioner Tosch noted that they had met with Diane Powers and Andreta Armstrong about expediting the proposed ordinance. Commissioner Haggard stated that it should be on the City Council agenda in December.

b. Commission Operations and Quality Assurance

- i. Commissioner Stith stated that the recommendations to enhance the HRC webpage and keep the Commission in the loop, both approved by the Commission in September were emailed to Andreta on October 9. Andreta will provide an update on the status of the recommendations at the December meeting.
- ii. Commissioner Stith stated that the Committee had met in early November and discussed elections of officers & possible future amendments of the By-Laws. She asked Andreta to send an editable Word version of the By-Laws for the Committee's use. She also noted that Commissioner vacancies would be posted soon, probably in January, and asked current Commissioners to think about who might be interested in serving on the Commission.

c. Education and Outreach (no report)

2. Task Force Reports

a. Charity Care Access

- i. Commissioner Bates gave a review of the October 30 forum at UPS, "Removing Language Barriers to Charity Care," showed key slides from the event, and noted that the videos posted by CHI-Franciscan and MultiCare on language access were created because of the Task Force's work on this issue. Commissioner Stith noted that the agenda packet included a page with the weblinks for the hospital's videos as

well as links to information on the Public Charge rule changes recently proposed by the federal government, which were discussed by an attorney-advocate who spoke at the forum.

b. Racial Justice & Equity

- i. Commissioner Lemons stated that the Task Force had narrowed down the Grand Cinema movie event to four films and stated that one will be chosen soon. She reported that the Task Force will be developing a shortened version of Race: Power of an Illusion (RPOI) training. She discussed possible venues for the training.

c. Amend 1.29

- i. Commissioner Stith discussed work being on hold to determine interest and support from Commission on Immigrant & Refugee Affairs (CIRA). She noted the Council's recent amendment of TMC 1.29 to add source of income under housing discrimination and noted its passage of the landlord-tenant protection. She noted that both ordinances were based on work by ChiQuata Elder, and that ChiQuata and Andreta had made presentations to the Council on the proposed ordinances.

Miscellaneous

1. **2019 Retreat:** Commissioner Bates discussed the timing and planning of the retreat. The suggestion was made to have the retreat in the spring after new Commissioners are appointed.
2. **2019 Projects:** Commissioner Stith stated that Commissioners should be thinking of what projects they want to pursue in 2019 including possibly continuing the work of task forces or rolling that work into the standing committees. Commissioner Tosch discussed a documentary she had recently seen about homelessness, and mentioned the idea of having a project on homelessness done with the Tacoma Housing Authority. She suggested having a showing of the film for interested Commissioners.

Study Session adjourned at 6:35pm.

**Human Rights Commission
Business Meeting
Minutes
November 15, 2018**

Commissioners Present: Lorenzo Cervantes, Brad Bates, Rebecca Stith, Kim Tosch, Natalie Collins, Lisa Snyder, Michealea Lemons

Commissioners Absent: Jen Haggard, Jennifer Vasilez, Allen Ratcliffe, Melvin Nobles, Jr., Sarah Lee

City Staff Present: Andreta Armstrong, Wesley Taylor

Commissioner Stith called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

Roll Call was taken. A quorum was present.

It was noted that Commissioner Gina Fonseca Crescioni has resigned as a Commissioner.

Agenda Approval

- Commissioner Stith called for a motion to approve the HRC Business Meeting agenda for November 15, 2018. The motion was made, seconded, and carried.
- Commissioner Bates noted that agendas are supposed to be posted prior to the meetings so the public can see them and the November agenda had not been posted yet. He also noted that some minutes were also missing from last summer. Commissioner Stith noted that she has copies of the minutes if OEHR needs them. Andreta Armstrong stated that the November agenda would be posted.

Approval of Minutes

- Commissioner Stith called a motion to approve the Study Session and Business Meeting Minutes of September 20, 2018, and Special Meeting from September 26, 2018. A motion was made, seconded, and carried.

Public Comment

- No members of the public were present.

Chair's Report

- Commissioner Stith stated that the Council passed the Indigenous Peoples' Day Resolution on October 2, which designates the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples' Day. She reported that the Mayor thanked the Commission, including Commissioners Tosch and Vasilez, for their work on the resolution.
- Commissioner Stith reported that she attended the October CIRA meeting at the invitation of its chair. She told the CIRA Commissioners that HRC wanted to work with CIRA regarding the border policy. The CIRA liaison stated she understood the Mayor and Council wanted CIRA to take over the resolution. Commissioner Stith asked Andreta to find out the status of

the resolution and who is taking the lead on it. Andreta will follow up and report what she learns.

Commissioners' Reports

- Commissioner Lemons and Tosch provide a recap of the Race and Pedagogy conference. It was enjoyable and fun. One of the main highlights was the number of the keynote speakers and especially the last day. They provided a breakdown of the sessions that were happening after the morning keynote speakers. The art in addition was quite enjoyable. Both expressed appreciation for the chance to attend and noted that the conference motivated them to look at “race” in new ways.
- Commissioner Stith discussed the October 13 Tri-Commission Equity Training and noted those Commissioners who were able to attend. She provided the link to the OEHR-produced movie shown during the training. She and Commissioner Collins praised the facilitation by Andreta and Lucas Smiraldo, liaison for the Area Commission on Disabilities. Commissioner Tosch stated that the training, topics and different exercises were excellent. Andreta noted there would be another training soon for those who could not attend this one, and information about the next training will be shared with Commissioners. Commissioner Stith suggested that members of other boards and commissions, in addition to CIRA and the Commission on Disabilities, could be invited to attend the next training. Andreta will ask about this.
- Commissioner Cervantes noted that National AIDS day is December 1st. This is the day the whole world recognizes and acknowledges those who have passed from AIDS. There will be a Pierce County AIDS Foundation event at the Washington History Museum at 6pm; it is a free event. Andreta will send an electronic copy of the flyer to Commissioners.
- Commissioner Lemons talked about the neighborhood council meetings she has been attending. She stated they are worth attending for one’s corresponding neighborhood, but also pointed out s occur at the same time and day as the HRC meetings.

New Business

- Commissioner Stith announced that she will be Chair through the December meeting and then step down. She explained the procedures for general and special election of officers under the By-Laws. She noted that her current term as a Commissioner ends in February as do the terms of Brad Bates, Jen Haggard, and Lorenzo Cervantes. She stated that she has not decided whether to seek re-appointment but is stepping down as Chair after the December meeting to help the transition of the next Chair. Commissioner Bates stated that he will be stepping down as Vice Chair after the December meeting and was not likely to seek re-appointment. Commissioner Stith stated that there would be nominations to fill the Chair and Vice Chair positions at the December Study Session and a special election at either the December or January Business Meeting. She explained that a Commissioner could self-nominate or nominate another Commissioner as long as the other Commissioner had consented to the nomination. She asked Commissioners to email nominations to her and Andreta. She also stated that nominations could be taken at the Study Session. She noted that this election was not a regular election and she would talk to Andreta about whether there would need to be absentee ballots. Andreta stated the Commission could possibly wait for new Commissioners before electing officers. Commissioner Stith recommended that new officers be elected before new Commissioners were appointed because current Commissioners know each other and have experience, which will benefit the new members.

There was general agreement to put the upcoming Retreat on hold until the new members are on board and up to speed. Andreta will find out when the Community Vitality and Safety Committee will be interviewing applicants to fill HRC vacancies.

Staff Report

- **Case Recommendations**

Staff Wesley Taylor reported on four cases: one closed due to Withdrawal with Settlement, one closed due to Failure to Cooperate, and two Pre-Finding Settlements.

The two case closures reported out were:

Gehl v. Stadium View Condominium Association, HRC4782 (Withdrawal with Settlement), and *Wells v. Westside Estates Apartments*, HRC 4836 (Failure to Cooperate)

The two Pre-Finding Settlements were:

Owens v. Enslow, HRC 4848 – Respondent agrees to settle the complainant by reasonably accommodating Complainant’s request to have one emotional support animal in the property as a reasonable accommodation.

Several Commissioners asked questions about the facts of the *Owens* case. Commissioner Stith then called a motion to approve the Pre-Finding Settlement of the *Owens v. Enslow* case. A motion was made, seconded, and carried.

Englert v. Flynn, HRC 4850 – Within 30 days of mutual execution, and HRC’s approval of this agreement, Respondent agrees to pay Complainant a settlement of \$ 250.00.

Some questions about the facts of the *Englert* case were asked and answered. Commissioner Bates then called a motion to approve the Pre-Finding Settlement of the *Englert v. Flynn* case. A motion was made, seconded, and carried.

Commissioner Bates requested that written summaries of the case facts for pre-finding settlements and conciliations be provided to Commissioners as has been requested and sometimes done in the past. He noted that it is frustrating to have so little information about a case when asked to approve a settlement. Andreta and Wesley stated that written case summaries would be provided going forward.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:40 pm