

**Human Rights Commission  
Study Session  
Notes**

**February 21, 2019**

**Commissioners Present:** Lorenzo Cervantes, Brad Bates, Jen Haggard ,Rebecca Stith, Kim Tosch, Jennifer Vasilez, Natalie Collins, Allen Ratcliffe, Lisa Snyder, Melvin Nobles, Jr., Michaela Lemons, Sarah Lee

**Commissioners Absent:** Natalie Collins

**City Staff Present:** Andreta Armstrong, Wesley Taylor, ChiQuata Elder, Thomas Okae-Asare, Ann Martin

**Guest:** Anna Bean, Tracy Wiegman, Nikie Walters, Carol Mitchell, Dakota Case, Terin Fifethunder, Annette Bryan, Erin Dilworth

**Commissioner Lemons called the Study Session to order at 5:30 p.m.**

**Presentations**

**Citizens for a Healthy Bay**

Melissa Malott, Executive Director of Citizens for a Healthy Bay (CHB), gave a presentation regarding their stance with the Puyallup Tribe, against the Puget Sound Energy liquefied natural gas (LNG) project taking place on the Tacoma tide flats. She explained how their proposal triggered and environmental review from the City of Tacoma knows as an Environmental Impact Statement. This was required because the project has the potential to cause significant environmental impacts. One of the impacts expressed by the CHB is the emissions emitted from the project would be equivalent of 145,000 more cars being on the road.

The CHB is asking for the Human Rights Commission to urge the City of Tacoma to conduct its own Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and request that the Department of ecology co-lead the review. In addition to have the Puyallup Tribes feedback and meaningful input, considered with the project moving forward.

(A handout was also distributed to the commission from the CHB)

**Puyallup Tribe of Indians**

Dakota Case- Water Warrior, Anna Bean and Annette Bryant – Water Warriors and Puyallup Tribal Councilwomen. – Discussed the fight the Water Warriors have been in against the Puget Sound Energy liquefied natural gas (LNG) project.

They noted that PSE had sent notices to all the people within a 400 foot area of where the facility would be, with the location being in the tide flats, no residents live within the area where the

notices were sent. They talked about PSE and the City of Tacoma not having any real conversations with the Puyallup Tribe about the location, the impact of the project or the feedback they had, as they have been using the area and resources of the waterways for years and years. They mentioned the changes that have occurred to, and how that leads to a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). They are concerned the residents in Tacoma feedback, input and thoughts are not being taken into consideration with the city to do the right thing. In November 2018, the City told the Puyallup Tribe of Indians they would conduct an independent analysis to determine whether an additional EIS would be needed, and as of yet not heard back.

**Study Session adjourned at 6:30pm.**

**Human Rights Commission  
Business Meeting Minutes  
February 21, 2019**

**Commissioners Present:** Lorenzo Cervantes, Brad Bates, Jen Haggard ,Rebecca Stith, Kim Tosch, Jennifer Vasilez, Natalie Collins, Allen Ratcliffe, Lisa Snyder, Melvin Nobles, Jr., Michaellea Lemons, Sarah Lee

**Commissioners Absent:** Natalie Collins

**City Staff Present:** Andreta Armstrong, Wesley Taylor, ChiQuata Elder, Thomas Okae-Asare, Ann Martin

**Commissioner Lemons called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.**

**Roll Call was taken. A quorum was present.**

**Agenda Approval**

Commissioner Cervantes moved to approve the agenda of the business meeting. The motion was made, seconded, and carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Ratcliffe moved to approve minutes from the December and January business meeting. The motion was made, seconded, and carried.

**Public Comment**

There was no public in attendance for comment; however Commissioner Ratcliffe wanted to recognize the presentation from the Citizens for a Healthy Bay and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians presentation regarding the liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant, and the issues it has raised, that occurred during the study session.

Commissioner Vasilez brought up the topic of having the HRC compose a letter to the city council, regarding the actions on the LNG plant, the City of Tacoma needs to have their own study conducted regarding the possibilities, and a response be given to the Puyallup Tribe of Indians who will be heavily affected by the plant. Commissioners Vasilez and Stith would work on creating the letter.

Commissioner Stith proposed to have the Policy and Advocacy draft a letter within the next week to circulate among the commissioners to have presented to city council. The motion was made, seconded, and carried. A special meeting can be facilitated through Andreta.

Commissioner Snyder moved to phone conference meeting regarding the letter to take place before end of current commissioner's term. The motion was made, seconded, and carried. The special meeting will be for Thursday February 28, at 4:30pm.

**Chairs Report**

Commissioner Lemons attended the “Let’s Talk Race and Immigration” Thought it was a great event, and get a good understanding of immigration.

Commissioner Lemons also attended the Rental Housing Code informational meeting that was led by ChiQuata Elder.

Commissioner Lemons also talked about the Equity Index tool on the Office of Equity and Human Rights page.

### **Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner Vasilez gave recognition to the people who are leaving the Human Rights Commission.

Commissioner Stith made a motion that the chair begins either the study session or business meeting by giving recognition that meeting is taking place on tribal land starting next month. The motion was made, seconded, and carried.

### **Policy and Advocacy**

The group met Tuesday to discuss projects to work on such as LNG plant; they are also interested in exploring the topics of sex trafficking, domestic violence and possible edit to the 1.29 code. The focus would be around the domestic violence change code, currently the code says if there are a number of cases or calls related to domestic violence, this can be seen a public nuisance and could hinder a victim through being evicted.

### **Commission Operations & Quality Assurance**

They discussed how the process of administrative rules can be simplified for commissioners. In addition to the responsibilities of the Human Rights Commissioners (HRC) when certain cases are presented, and how each of the different areas of a finding are explained.

### **Race and Justice Task Force**

Cancelled the February meeting, they have selected March 23 and April 27<sup>th</sup> as the days for the community conversation, The Grand event will be May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The finalization of the meetings and agenda will be coming out soon.

They have been in communication with Megan Snow from MCO on how to get the information out to the public in a digital format. When there is a commission sanction event, then MCO can provide publication and services, however this can be a lengthy process to be set up and going. Commissioner Haggard proposes the HRC to have the Race and Justice Task Force act on their behalf in utilizing the events and activities through MCO. The motion was made, seconded, and carried.

### **New Business**

Commissioner Nobles mentioned in January we celebrate Martin Luther King Day, as does the city. At the City of Tacoma’s MLK Jr. Day Celebration in January, they were able to staff a table at the event, and will be able to pass information along regarding the commission and what the commission does. In addition February is Black History Month,

and there are several days left in the month of February, and find something to do, learn among the black culture.

Commissioner Cervantes noted there was a change in the date from February to March 16, 2019 as the National Black HIV & AIDS Awareness Day Health Fair at Evergreen State College in Tacoma.

Commissioner Lemons mentioned the upcoming retreat as being on April 13<sup>th</sup>; the event will be for 6 hours. Allowing the meeting to be longer, to allow orientation onboarding for the new commissioners.

### **Staff Reports**

Andreta introduced the new Employment and Public Accommodations cases investigator Thomas Okae-Asare.

February 28<sup>th</sup> at the UPS Rotunda will be the author of “So You Want to Talk about Race” Ijeoma Oluo.

**Meeting is adjourned at 7:42 pm**