

Human Rights Commission

Study Session

Minutes

March 21, 2019

Commissioners Present: Michealea Lemons, Melvin Nobles, Jr., Kim Tosch, Jennifer Vasilez, Natalie Collins, Allen Ratcliffe, Lisa Snyder, Ronita Boullt, Rosita Castellano, Tanisha Lyons, Carol Mitchell, Sarah Nunez

Commissioners Absent: Sarah Lee, Sarah Rumbaugh, Julie Tran

City Staff Present: Andreta Armstrong, Thomas Okae-Asare, Ann Martin

Guests: Steve Victor, Melissa Malott, Annette Bryant

Chair Lemons called the Study Session to order at 5:30pm.

Deputy City Attorney Steve Victor Question and Answer Session

Commissioner Tosch asked the Deputy City Attorney Steve Victor a question about whether there was meaningful consultation between the City of Tacoma and Puyallup tribe.

Mr. Victor stated consultation between the two groups starts with notice and if there is a written objection, then it goes to a consultation. He said the City had followed the same process for every settlement process for twenty years.

Commissioner Mitchell asked about the City Council's authority to take action in this matter.

Mr. Victor stated that a supplemental environmental impact statement would have to be based on what the permit states nothing new.

Commissioner Ratcliffe asked if the project had dramatically changed.

Mr. Victor stated that a number of staff has been monitoring the case and to their knowledge it has not changed dramatically.

Commissioner Snyder asked if the Puyallup tribe was consulted about the relevant zoning matters in the 1990's.

Mr. Victor stated he cannot attest to what in the 1990's.

The Chair recognized Melissa Malott from Citizens for a Healthy Bay (CHB).

Commissioner Mitchell asked whether CHB had enough information to analyze the initial environmental impact statement.

Ms. Mallot states that CHB did not know what the climate change impacts would be. The unknowns of the situation justify a new EIS (Environmental Impact Statement).

Commissioner Mitchell asks Ms. Mallot for her ask of the Human Rights Commission.

Ms. Mallot states that the Human Rights Commission (HRC), has the authority to advise the City Council on human rights issues. It is appropriate to advise the council on human rights issues such as this.

Commissioner Mitchell asks if CHB thinks the Land Use Settlement is a contract. She also asks whether they have filed in action court and if so what was the result?

Ms. Mallot states that in the original EIS; they did not have the information that came out in the SEIS. This involved concerns with methane and other upstream issues.

Chair Lemons asked when CHB realized this; what was their next step?

Ms. Mallot stated that CHB had not taken a position up until that point but after they went through the SEIS, then they came out against the plan. She also noted that they commented in the notice and comment period and have been out in the community against this plan. CHB has been talking to elected officials.

Commissioner Tosch asked what CHB's understanding of what the city can do.

Ms. Mallot stated that the project is different than it was at the start of this process. The environmental impacts of bunkering on ships have not been studied. This shows the need for another supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS). She also stated that could be nothing that detainees of the Northwest Detention Center could do in case of an emergency.

Ms. Mallot added that there is a need to reduce emissions by fifty percent by 2030 and one hundred percent by 2050. We are currently on track for a four degree increase by 2100, whereas we only supposed to have a two degree increase. This is a human rights issue because it will affect our children and grandchildren.

Commissioner Mitchell stated these were very compelling environmental realities, but how would this help our efforts to combat discrimination.

Ms. Mallot states that climate change will impact low income people first and then the rich later on.

Commissioner Ratcliffe asked if they City Council can open a request.

Mr. Victor stated that the City Council cannot initiate a request in an administrative process. He also stated that he is not aware of any avenue of recourse to change the trajectory of the current plan.

Commissioner Collins inquired about why there was so much pushback from the City of Tacoma.

Mr. Victor stated he was not here for pushback but just to give information.

The Chair recognizes Annette Bryant of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians.

Ms. Bryant stated that what the land claim settlement did was to take away right the Puyallup Tribe's rights to their land. She pleads for the HRC to speak for the people. She stated that she was certified in NEPA and she has a Masters. She said a change to the project triggers a supplemental environmental impact study, she stated that this is one of those occasions.

Chair Lemons asked if the tribe was trying to prevent this from being constructed.

Ms. Bryant stated that there was so much information that was not available. One fact is that it was owned by a foreign company. She added that another EIS could analyze a known alternative.

Ms. Bryant also stated if the supplemental EIS was done, then it would either shut down the project or that they would know the truth about what was happening. She said if the commission does not speak for the detainees, then who will? She believes that a letter should be sent to everybody including the mayor, city council and the planning committee.

Study Session adjourned at 6:40pm.

Human Rights Commission

Business Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2019

Commissioners Present: Michealea Lemons, Melvin Nobles, Jr., Kim Tosch, Jennifer Vasilez, Natalie Collins, Allen Ratcliffe, Lisa Snyder, Ronita Boullt, Rosita Castellano, Taniesha Lyons, Carol Mitchell, Sarah Nunez

Commissioners Absent: Sarah Lee, Sarah Rumbaugh

City Staff Present: Andreta Armstrong, Thomas Okae-Asare, Ann Martin

Chair Lemons called the meeting to order at 6:45p.m

Roll Call was taken. A quorum was present.

Agenda Approval

- Special Meeting Minutes were approved with corrections to the Commissioners' names.

Public Comment

- There was no public in attendance for comment; however Rebecca Stich is recognized.

Chair Reports

- Chair Lemons went to the Ijeoma Oluo and What. The. Frack. Tacoma! Events.
- She also went to the zoning meeting; said it was very informative.
- The Chair would love to have guests come. HRC would want guests to come in the study session for their opportunity to speak. A month and half's notice would be optimal.
- Commissioner Boullt asked what The Chair meant by a guest
- The Chair clarifies that when a person wants to come and speak to the HRC about an issue that is going on in Tacoma, then that is a guest.

Commissioner Reports/Introductions

- Vice Chair Nobles suggests the Commissioners to introduce themselves to everyone.
- Commissioner Carol Mitchell has a passion for disability rights.
- Commissioner Lisa Snyder is a huge disability rights advocate.
- Commissioner Taniesha Lyons is a recent graduate from the Tacoma Community College and is advocate for racial equality in the health care system.
- Commissioner Al Ratcliffe is very active in human services. He is involved in an effort to bring together physical and behavioral health care.
- Vice Chair JR Nobles works in higher education and is a real estate broker.
- Chair Michealea Lemons is originally from San Antonio, Texas. She works at an elementary school and Sylvan Learning in Tacoma.
- Commissioner Ronita Boullt is a disability advocate originally from New Orleans. She works for the human services sector.
- Commissioner Sarah Nunez grew up in Hilltop in Tacoma. She is passionate about immigration issues; she is the child of immigrants.
- Commissioner Jennifer Vasilez is an elementary school principal.

- Commissioner Kim Tosch is the co-chair of the policy and advocacy committee, she is drawn to women's and children's issues.
- Andreta Armstrong introduced herself as the link between the City Staff and the Commission.
- The Chair asked if there was any other important information that should be addressed.
- Commissioner Snyder stated that her committee was looking for people.
- Chair Lemons also said that the Racial Justice Task Force is looking for people.

New Business/Drafted Proposal for City Council

- The Chair opened a discussion on the proposed letter from the Policy and Advocacy Committee to the City Council.
- Commissioner Snyder stated a concern as to whether the City did their due diligence.
- Chair Lemons is concerned about the safety of the detainees in the Northwest Detention Center.
- Commissioner Mitchell shared a concern about conflating the concerns of human rights with environmental justice.
- Commissioner Vasilez voiced a concern about the narrowing of the scope of committee being discriminatory against native peoples.
- Commissioner Tosch proposes a motion to send the letter to the Council as is.
- The motion was taken off the table after Commissioners continued to discuss the possibility of altering the letter.
- Commissioner Vasilez proposed for the Policy and Advocacy committee to add more information to letter regarding the direct effect of the LNG plant on the culture of Puyallup Tribe.
- The motion passes for sending the letter back to the Policy and Advocacy Committee.

**Human Rights Commission
Special Business Meeting (Via Conference Call)
Minutes**

March 7, 2019

Commissioners Present: Michealea Lemons, Melvin Nobles, Jr., Kim Tosch, Jennifer Vasilez, Natalie Collins, Allen Ratcliffe, Lisa Snyder, Taniesha Lyons, Carol Mitchell. Sarah Rambaugh, Julie Tran

Commissioners Absent: Sarah Lee, Ronita Boullt, Rosita Castellano, Sarah Nunez

City Staff Present: Diane Powers, Andreta Armstrong, Ann Martin

Guest (conference call): Rebecca Stith, Melissa Mallot, CHB

Chair Lemons called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

Roll Call was taken. A quorum was present.

Agenda Item

The purpose of the Special Meeting was to:

- Discuss and approve draft letter written by Policy and Advocacy regarding Liquefied Natural Gas; and
- Discuss documents received from the City

Special Meeting Notes

- Commissioner Rambaugh mentioned, that as a new commissioner, it was unfortunate the decision on whether or not to approve sending a letter of proposal to City Council, had to be done over the phone.
- Commissioner Mitchell also expressed a similar concern. She stated that the new commissioners hadn't received enough time to understand the role of the Human Rights Commission and exactly what approving the drafted letter entails.
- Commissioner Tosch explained that the drafted letters purpose was not to take a stance for against LNG, but to advise City council to conduct thorough SEIS and communicate with the Puyallup Tribe of Indians throughout the review.
- Commissioner Collins motioned that the decision to send a letter to council be postponed until the March Commission meeting. Also any information that would assist Commissioners in making an informed decision would be distributed prior to the March meeting. It was seconded and approved.

- Commissioner Ratcliffe was worried about the timeline of the letter being sent after the March Commission meeting, as we are attempting to beat a March 29th deadline. On March 29, the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) will release its responses to public comments and potentially the final SEIS.
- Chair Lemons referred to the handout distributed from Citizens for a Healthy Bay at the February Commission meeting. She mentioned that the information released after March 29th by the PSCAA will initiate another public review and comment process, as well as another public meeting.
- Andreta Armstrong offered Commissioners to send any additional questions for the City by the end of business on March 11, 2019 and she could gather the responses and have them available at the March 21, 2019 commission meeting.

Public Comment

- No Public Comment

Meeting is adjourned at 5:24 pm