



DRAFT Minutes of Meeting
City of Reno Human Rights Commission
Teleconference Meeting
November 19, 2020 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order – Roll Call

Chair Savoy called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. Community Liaison Opferman took roll call. A quorum was established.

Members Present:	Commissioners Alex Goff, Scott Youngs, Marco Castro-Borjorquez, Alexis Adams, Henry Sotelo, Cesar Minera, Thomas Hassen, Zeina Barkawi, Vice Chair Cortney Young, and Chair Sean Savoy.
Members Absent:	Commissioners Erin Eddings, Atty Garfinkel, and Bert Ramos
Positions Vacant:	None
City Council Liaison:	Councilmember Naomi Duerr
Community Liaison:	Tess Opferman
Also Present:	Julie Towler, Brian Soudi, Tori Sundheim, Susana Sandoval, Joshua Cooper, Dr. Vickie Casanova, and Mari Potts

2. Public Comment

Two letters of public comment were received prior to the meeting regarding the City’s facility naming policy and are included in the public record for the meeting.

No live audio comment was available during the meeting, but comments were sought prior to the meeting by voice mail or email. Community Liaison Opferman announced that persons viewing the meeting may submit comments by phoning the telephone number on the agenda or emailing her at opfermant@reno.gov during the meeting. She advised that she would monitor this email address throughout the meeting and will present any comments received to the Commission prior to adjournment.

3. Approval of Agenda – For Possible Action

A. November 19, 2020

Motion was made by Commissioner Young and seconded by Commissioner Minera to approve the agenda for the November 19, 2020 Reno Human Rights Commission (RHRC) meeting as presented. The motion carried with Commissioners Goff, Youngs, Castro-Borjorquez, Adams, Sotelo, Minera, Vice Chair Young, and Chair Savoy assenting. None opposed. Commissioners Hassen and Barkawi were not present for the vote but arrived at 5:12 p.m. Commissioners Eddings, Garfinkel, and Ramos were absent.

4. Approval of Minutes – For Possible Action

A. September 17, 2020

Motion was made by Commissioner Young and seconded by Commissioner Castro-Borjorquez to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2020 Reno Human Rights Commission meeting as presented. The motion carried with Commissioners Goff, Youngs, Castro-Borjorquez, Adams, Sotelo, Minera, Vice Chair Young, and Chair Savoy assenting. None opposed. Commissioners Hassen and Barkawi were not present for the vote but arrived at 5:12 p.m. Commissioners Eddings, Garfinkel, and Ramos were absent.

5. Liaison Announcements

Councilmember Duerr advised that she was present to hear their discussion and was very interested in the agenda item surrounding the City guidelines for the naming or renaming of parks, etc.

Community Liaison Opferman stated that there have been several reappointments to the Commission including Commissioners Savoy, Sotelo, Goff, and Minera who had been reappointed for two years. Commissioners Ferguson and Garfinkel were not reappointed and their terms expire on December 31st. Newly appointed Commissioners will participate in their first meeting in January.

Councilmember Duerr provided a short biography for Tori Sundheim whom she recommended for appointment to the RHRC. She stated that she is an attorney working for the Attorney General in Carson City and is an environmental engineer with a passion for human rights. Councilmember Duerr requested onboarding for Ms. Sundheim and other newly appointed Commissioners. Chair Savoy recommended watching a recent meeting of the RHRC which held a lot of procedural information regarding the Commission's bylaws, and Councilmember Duerr also recommended new Commissioners review recent meeting minutes in order to familiarize themselves with the focus of the RHRC.

Community Liaison Opferman advised that minutes from the joint meeting regarding the City's policy and/or guidelines for renaming will be on the next agenda for approval.

Community Liaison Opferman announced that the City's Neighborhood Advisory Boards (NAB's) are going to recommence meetings in January of 2021 and that all five NAB's have availability for new members.

6. Human Rights Commissioner Announcements

No announcements.

7. Presentations and Updates

A. Presentation on the principles of Human Rights with a municipal lens and the role of Human Rights in local government – Marco Castro-Borjorquez and the Human Rights Cities Alliance (30 Minutes)

Chair Savoy opened the topic and reflected that it is in alignment with the Commission's goal of education and staying current on pertinent topics related to human rights as identified in their action plan. He thanked Commissioner Castro-Borjorquez for his work in putting the presentation together.

Commissioner Castro-Borjorquez thanked the individuals who were in attendance to provide the presentation regarding Human Rights Principles. He introduced Dr. Vickie Casanova, a nonprofit

administrator, teacher, and Fellow for the United States Human Rights Network. He also introduced Joshua Cooper, Director of the Hawaii Institute for Human Rights, and Susana Sandoval who works with indigenous peoples in Chicago, Illinois.

Joshua Cooper gave a brief introduction to his work with the Hawaii Institute for Human Rights which is active in Europe, Asia, and the Americas. He noted that Hawaii was the first U.S. state to adopt a resolution relating to the protection of human rights. He added that the institute works proactively by involving its citizens in the decision-making process and in the development of sustainable goals.

Dr. Casanova provided a presentation entitled “Bringing Human Rights Home”. The presentation provided a framework for understanding and articulating a basic understanding of human rights which are defined as universal, inalienable, indivisible, and interdependent. She stated that human rights are broader than civil rights, proactive vs. reactive, and continually evolving. She added that there is no Utopia, and that no government or society has realized all of these rights.

Dr. Casanova cited the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): “Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world”. She provided a history of the UDHR as a document which was developed from the events of World War II and concurrent with the creation of the United Nations.

Susana Sandoval acknowledged the history of the original inhabitants of the Chicago area. She cited that Native Americans in the State of Illinois represent the third largest population in any state in the U.S. She advised that she investigates human rights violations and serves as the youngest member of a group of elders in a permanent forum. She shared the importance of education and the need to be proactive rather than reactive in human rights, starting with basic respect.

Vice Chair Young extended her gratitude to the presenters as well as to Commissioner Castro-Borjorquez for coordinating the presentation. Commissioner Youngs specifically thanked Dr. Casanova for her perspective on disabilities which he noted are sometimes overlooked but are considered the largest diversity issue. Chair Savoy thanked the presenters and stated that the foundation of the presentations helps the Commissioners understand what the work of human rights is, summarizing that it contains a broad scope of work, beyond civil rights, and is proactive rather than reactive.

8. Board Discussion and Action Items – For Possible Action

A. Review, discussion, and possible recommendations regarding City guidelines and potential policy related to naming or renaming City streets, parks, and other facilities (For Possible Action)

Community Liaison Opferman advised that the goal of this discussion is not to approve the draft document presented, entitled “Procedural Requirements to Name or Rename City of Reno Facilities”, but to provide recommendations and summarize changes before it is brought back to City Council. She commented that the document has been updated with changes from the August meeting and that she is seeking further comments from the Commission.

Chair Savoy reviewed the suggestions made during the joint meeting and added that funding recommendations had not changed and were left to the City Council. Concerns regarding the

application cost in section C for an individual seeking consideration of a name change were discussed at length. Community Liaison Opferman advised that an analysis of the cost is required, but the cost of that analysis does not fall on the requestor.

Vice Chair Young stated that her specific concerns were that the application fee remains as a nominal procedural fee and is not prohibitive. Councilmember Duerr responded that if the City considers the renaming, the City will pay for the name change and it is not the responsibility of the advocate for the renaming. She recommended that the Commission conveys this directive in their comments. Commissioners Castro-Borjorquez, Barkawi, and Hassen concurred.

Community Liaison Opferman summarized the direction from the Commission to the Council that they recommend that costs not be prohibitive and that the advocate not bear the burden of the name change. She added that it is helpful if the advocate provides their research and works with City staff. She advised that she would pass this on to Council.

In section D, the Commission concurred regarding the makeup of the committees to be appointed annually. The importance of the committees being appointed annually versus ad hoc was discussed.

Within section E, Community Liaison Opferman asked for recommendations regarding the timeframe for action on a request. Chair Savoy recommended simplification of the timeframe but concurred with Vice Chair Young's concerns that the timeframe be no longer than 120 days as in the original policy.

Community Liaison Opferman requested that Commissioners send any further recommendations to her so that she can incorporate their recommendations into the document to be presented to Council.

B. Discussion and possible approval of the Human Rights Commission work plan, with a focus on the bylaws' key areas of education, research, advocacy, and outreach (For Possible Action)

Chair Savoy requested that the Commissioners review the document prior to January's meeting. Council Towler advised the Commissioners to direct their comments to Community Liaison Opferman to avoid an open meeting law issue. Chair Savoy noted that the assignments given to Commissioners would be reviewed when the work plan is presented at the RHRC meeting in January.

9. Identification of Future Agenda Items – For Possible Action

Commissioner Goff requested that the end-of-life discussion and consideration of a proclamation of support for the legislation being presented to the State be placed on the next agenda as requested by Vice Chair Young in September. He also stated that he would like discussions on racist campaign materials and racism as a health crisis on a future agenda.

Election of officers (i.e. Chair and Vice Chair) was discussed for inclusion on the January meeting agenda.

Determination of assignments to fulfill the responsibilities of the Commission's work plan would be discussed in January after approval.

10. Public Comment

Community Liaison Opferman announced that no public comment was received during the meeting. She did note that the letters received from two members of the public regarding the City's renaming

policy will be entered into the public record. Any members of the public wishing to comment were encouraged to email her at opfermant@reno.gov.

At this time, Commissioner Castro-Borjorquez announced that he is going to relocate for several months back to Mexico to help his family due to losses from Covid-19 after which time he hopes to return to Reno. Chair Savoy thanked Commissioner Castro-Borjorquez for his participation on the Commission and expressed condolences on behalf of the Commission.

11. Adjournment – For Possible Action

Chair Savoy asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

It was moved by Vice Chair Young and seconded by Commissioner Castro-Borjorquez to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. The motion carried with Commissioners Goff, Youngs, Castro-Borjorquez, Adams, Sotelo, Minera, Hassen, Barkawi, Vice Chair Young, and Chair Savoy assenting. None opposed. Commissioners Eddings, Garfinkel, and Ramos were absent.