



City of Portland, Oregon  
Chabre Vickers, Chair  
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## Meeting Minutes

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Date: May 4, 2016 4:45pm-6:00pm

Location: 421 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 500 Portland, OR

Commission Attendees: Chabre Vickers, Audrey Alverson, Allan Lazo, Alisha Zhao, Daniel Franco Nuñez, Deyalo Bennette

Excused: Marcia Suttenger, Theresa Soto

Absent: none

Staff: Tatiana Elejalde

### **Welcome and Gathering**

The meeting commenced at 4:45pm

### **Executive Committee Update**

Chair Vickers announces the commissioners not in attendance. M. Suttenger is attending the Citizen Review Committee meeting, T. Soto is travelling. Additionally, there have been three new resignations: D. Turner, S. Edmo, and today, prior to the meeting, R. Naga. There is no quorum at the start of the meeting and acceptance of minutes and agenda are not possible. According to the agenda public comment is at 5:30 and there are community members planning to speak. The administration of justice retreat was held, all members currently present except, for A. Zhao, were in attendance. The retreat did not follow the slated agenda, but instead commissioners expressed their concerns which had been building up over time.

The executive team suggests the need to restructure. Chair Vickers proposes taking a pause of 2 months, possibly 3. Chair Vickers invites the commissioners to comment. A. Alverson echoes what Chair Vickers said and states that many resignations are indicators of a problem, and adds that purposeful capacity building and building a sound foundation are important. D. Franco says it could be good to look at other HRCs as models, for example, San Francisco. D. Bennette says he is fine with the pause because he wants HRC to be effective. Chair Vickers adds that communication to the community is key. A. Zhao says the pause can be beneficial to the commission's productivity and impact. A. Lazo says during the pause they can reexamine the mission, also, he sees HRC is in a different place than when it began.

## **OEHR Director's Report – D. James**

Director D. James is welcomed back by the commissioners. D. James states his support, if the Commission decides to take a pause. He says that the pause is a chance to evaluate. Everyone wants to do the work, how, is the question. Ask what structure will get you to the place where you achieve the outcomes you want. A. Lazo clarifies that this decision is an internal decision by the executive committee.

### **Public Comment**

Kevin Martonik was joined by Megan and Marty from Amnesty International. Kevin updated the commission on the status of their meetings with elected commissioners' staff regarding the issue of supporting the closure of the Guantanamo Bay base. Marty states that Amnesty International has taken a stand against Gitmo since the beginning, many detainees have been cleared, but have not been released. Megan asks the Commission for any suggestions on outreach and influence for moving their efforts forward, but recognizes this ask comes at a time where the Commission is possibly taking a hiatus. Chair Vickers thanks the group for always coming and updating the Commissioners, we appreciate your work, she adds. Megan, who also works with IRCO (Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization) announces IRCO is having their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> 6p.m. at the Nines Hotel. Many commissioners showed interest and would like to attend.

### **Closing statements**

Chair Vickers invites staff T. Elejalde to share her thoughts. T. Elejalde states that a time such as this is an opportunity. She adds that revamping procedures and improving systems are areas of expertise for her and is something she enjoys, therefore, working with the Commission on improving and restructuring will be a great opportunity to create a framework by which the Commission can feel successful in achieving its goals. T. Elejalde adds that a careful revamp of the capacity building process, as A. Alverson stated, is of most importance. Additionally, from staff's viewpoint, improving the structure will hopefully help create a framework that does not burden the Commissioners, who, as volunteer community members give so much of themselves and their time.

Chair Vickers states the last order of business is to ask who would like to join the restructuring workgroup with the executive committee. The workgroup will consist of: Chair Vickers, Vice-Chair A. Alverson, A. Lazo, and D. Franco.

A. Alverson moves that the HRC to go on a 2 (possibly 3) month hiatus, D. Franco seconds, motion passed unanimously. The Human Rights Commission is officially on pause. There will be no June and July meetings.

### **Agenda and Minutes**

D. Bennette moves to accept the May agenda and April minutes, A. Zhao seconds, motion passed.

### **Additional items**

Commissioners asked staff whether the budget allows for them to purchase a table at the IRCO event on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Staff will inquire.

A. Zhao shares that she was recognized nationally in Washington, D.C. She was selected as one of the national honorees of The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards for her work as founder and executive director of the non-profit, Kids First Project. ([kidsfirstproject.org](http://kidsfirstproject.org)) The Commission congratulated her on her accomplishments!

**Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm**