



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Leon L. Williams San Diego County Human Relations Commission

Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2023 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

1. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 10:00 AM

2. Roll Call

- **Present Commissioners:**

Pedro Anaya, Kay Coleman, Estela De Los Rios, Angela Elliot-Santos, Eleanor Evans, Sarah Farouq, Rodney Fowler Sr., David Garcias, Taha Hassane, Dennis Hodges, Adeem Ismaiel, George Khoury, Julia Legaspi, Kelly Martinez, Nicole Murray Ramirez, Ellen Nash, Gina Roberts, Summer Stephan, David Vance, Alex Villafuerte

- **Excused Absences:**

Cinnamon Clark

- **Absent:**

Kate Clark, Christina Griffin-Jones, Julia Legaspi

- Introduction of 3 new members: Kay Coleman, Sheriff Kelly Martinez, David Vance

- Sheriff Martinez informed HRC that touring the jail(s) can occur in May – more to come

3. Land Acknowledgement

- Mr. Strong read a script recognizing and acknowledging Indigenous people that called (what is now) San Diego County home for a millennia

4. Teleconferencing Meeting Option Pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(e)

- Standard motion, however, will be going in person in March
 - More to come at the end of today's meeting
- Commissioner Roberts motioned, Commissioner Khoury seconded the motion

- Vote:

- Anaya – Aye
- Clark, K – Absent
- Clark, C – Absent
- Coleman, K - Aye
- De Los Rios - Aye
- Elliot-Santos – Aye
- Evans – Aye
- Farouq – Aye
- Fowler Sr. – Aye
- Garcias – Aye

- Griffin-Jones – Absent
- Hassane – Aye
- Hodges – Aye
- Ismaeil – Aye
- Khoury – Aye
- Legaspi – Absent
- Martinez - Aye
- Murray Ramirez – Aye
- Nash – Aye
- Roberts – Aye
- Stephan – Aye
- Vance - Aye
- Villafuerte – Aye

5. Public Comment: Opportunity for members of the public to speak to the Commission on any subject matter within the Commission’s jurisdiction, but not an item on today’s agenda
 - No public comments

6. Celebratory/Awareness Month or Day: Transgender Awareness and Human Trafficking
 - Transgender Awareness Month:
 - Commissioner Vance – Briefly gave background on Transgender Awareness month
 - Commissioner Anaya – Requested a formal presentation occur next month/meeting
 - Human Trafficking Awareness Month
 - Commissioner Stephan – Briefly gave a background on Human Trafficking Awareness month

7. Essential partners contract to conduct a phased series of dialogic interventions and capacity-building that will support the commission and the communities it represents as they move toward rebuilding trust and living out its mission of promoting positive human relations
 - Mr. Strong read letter that Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ) sent to Human Relations Commission (attached)
 - Chair Nash welcomed Essential Partners presenters and goals with working with Essential Partners
 - Essential Partners (EP)
 - John Sarrouf – Co Executive Director
 - Presented a PowerPoint (attached)
 - Introductions by: Brian Blancke, Meenakshi Chakraverti, Winnie Rugamba
 - Winnie & Brian will be main point of contacts
 - What’s to come:
 - A survey will be sent to all Commission members.
 - 1-1 interviews will also be conducted with some members & some community members.
 - What does this mean to your community?
 - Why do we do this? Because it will shape how we design and facilitate.
 - What do we need to know to make this work relevant and attuned to who you are
 - Will work with Chair Nash, Andrew and other commissioners to create a Planning Committee to guide and shape EP’s work.
 - Planning Committee - will be advisory
 - What do we [EP] need to know?
 - Committee provides feedback
 - EP works with input and tweaks and edits as necessary to design and facilitate a process for and across the communities within the

County

- 5-8 people in committee
- EP will come to San Diego in February or March to meet HRC in person
- Pilot Dialogue – Will begin in March
 - 8-10 people
 - Commissioners and members of the community
 - Would like to have first face to face dialogue on the same trip as the first trip to San Diego
 - If unable to meet face to face for dialogue a virtual meeting will occur
 - Meant to foster mutual understanding, connection and trust that allows for bridging that builds the foundation of healing on this conflict with Clergy & LGBTQI communities in San Diego
- 2-Day Training in March or April
 - Dialogue design and facilitation
 - For community members
 - Give skills for organizing and conducting these dialogues when conflicts arise
- Questions/Comments:
 - Commissioner Evans:
Q: This is for us to come together as a unit, absorb and take out to the community?
 - A: (B. Blancke) – First phase is with the commission to have initial conversations to pilot the work and will be a basis for broader community wide conversations.
 - Q: How many meetings for this?
 - A: (B. Blancke) – Initial pilot is 2-4 within the commission and then over larger period of Spring/Summer we will be able to bring it out to the community where hundreds of folks are able to participate in the conversations.
 - Q: How do we establish accountability? And not personalize this? I'm concerned if this is really going to work and not tear us apart?
 - A: M. Chakraverti – You are absolutely right to be worried; this is very difficult. What you are describing is what we are going to invite you to do and it is very hard. It is exactly the kind of speaking that you just did, that will help us design and facilitate a process that will invite commissioners to speak about what's most important to them in a way that that can be heard and invite commissioners to listen, even if they disagree... We are not coming in saying this is easy and we have a format and we create a trusting space. A trusting space is not declared, we are not declaring that now you can trust each other and speak. We will ask you in the surveys "What do you need to be able to speak in a way that others can hear what is most important to you?", "What do you need to be able to listen even when you profoundly disagree?".... there is more that I would ask you, Commissioner Evans and other Commissioners, and there is much more I would listen for, before we can create this process and invite you into it. It's a short response, but not a complete response because there is so much work beyond and behind this response.
 - Comment: Vice Chair Murray Ramirez:
We have to remember this affected a resignation from one of our commissioners and you should all know the physical and mental of one of our Commissioners is still suffering through it, and then we must also remember that this is not only about our

Commission, it's also affected parts of the religious community, African American community, LGBTQ community, and what goes on here, trust me we all know about what happened last year that involved these communities and pressures for members of the LGBTQ community to resign because of the hurt and damage that this caused.... Also, though we are progressing, there is still that cloud over this commission because of this issue. I am willing to be a part of this, but I have serious concern, this will resonate outside of the HRC also, there will be many community leaders watching and how everyone is treated and the end result in this is.

- Comment: Commissioner Roberts
I would like to be a part of the process and work with EP.
- Comment: Commissioner Khoury
I have major concerns in general, there are many subjects that are beyond this commission and even beyond our communities to resolve.
- Commissioner Anaya:
- Q: To Andrew: What is the budget for this project? Where are the funds coming from? What are the actual deliverables in the scope of work? What is the scope? What is the term of this engagement?
- Q: To EP: I did not see much Latino representation among your (EP) leadership or staff, we are a border town, with the work you are doing how would you address that?
- A: Mr. Strong – We are asking EP to do three phases of the work. This was an RFP process, and our budget was \$150k, we received only 1 proposal, we did a lot of recruitment to local organizations to see if they would want to participate and direct emails to organizations across our region to see if they would want to participate, but only one responded. We will share Statement of Work and Contract with everyone so you can see the scope of work and what we are asking and the specifics.
- Commissioner Anaya – As we go through this process, if there is any change orders, or extensions on the contract, if the Commission can have input and feedback.
- A: J. Sarrouf (EP) – In regard to representation your exactly correct Commissioner Anaya, representation and the way the practitioner team comes and works with the community and the identities that we bring is important to build trust, building relationship, having understanding of certain cultural norms and pieces of the work that are vital to a successful project. That is why we work with the planning team... If we find that it was important to have a person of Latin descent to be successful in supporting this, we will certainly be in conversation with your team about that.
- Comment: Commissioner Evans:
What I have heard over the past year is that, the women on the commission is not as “respected” as the men are. The men have a tendency to want to take over the meeting or disregard what the women are saying. So that is something that needs to be addressed in the future. I personally don't feel that way, but it has been expressed to me more than one female. This falls under relationship with people, it needs to be addressed in some kind of way.
- Commissioner Hassane:
Q: How diverse religiously is your team? Whether you have a good understanding of faith-based communities and organizations? Also, whether you have experience working with different religious groups? I just want to make sure you take into consideration

different voices from different faith communities and every faith community has the right to raise their voices and define themselves.

- A: M. Chakraverti – Indian Muslims/Hindu was one of the first conflicts when I wanted to learn how to engage.
- A: J. Sarrouf – I can share some reports and stories of work we've done. I can also put people in touch with other people that we've worked with so you can get a sense of their history and working with us.
- Comment: Tom Packard (member of the public):
Please share documents with the Public on your website. Reach out to people that have spoken out at Board of Supervisors meetings to try and get them involved with your dialogue.
- Chair Nash: With diversity issue we can ensure that we add all those voices to the table, including starting with the Planning Committee, what is lacking here, we can make up for it. We will hold ourselves to that standard until those voices are in the room in this space, I personally take that challenge to ensure all voices are in the room. There is a lot of strength here.
- Mr. Strong – We will send out a follow up email with the RFP, proposal, detailed information that was asked for, as well as a request that if you would like to be apart of the Planning Committee to send an email to Cindy Jones and myself.

8. Legislative Subcommittee Presentation

- Nerea Urtasun presented 2023 Legislative Program (attached)

9. Subcommittee Updates

- Communication Subcommittee - Commissioner Evans –
 - Meet & Greet/Townhall –
 - January 28, 2023
 - 1-3PM
 - Oceanside Downtown Public Library –
330 N. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, CA 92054
 - Refreshments provided
 - Will have townhall meetings in every district in the future
 - Commissioners, please share within your organizations as well; spread the word

10. Discussion of community raised matters relating to the Commission promoting positive human relations. Discussion is limited to 15 minutes which may include the Commission placing the matter on a future agenda for possible action.

- None

11. Staff Updates

- Anti-Defamation League (ADL) will apply for HRC to vote on in the future
- Next meeting on February 21st, we will have an in-depth review of the Brown Act, By-laws, Rules of Order, as well as future meetings being in person starting in March

12. Announcements

- None

13. Adjournment

- Adjourned at 11:56 AM

Next Meeting of the Commission:

Tuesday, February 21, 2023

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.