



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

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[PROPOSED] MINUTES
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
Meeting of March 1, 2021
Via Microsoft Teams Video & Audio Conferencing

PRESENT: Jarrett Tomás Barrios
Michael Cheung
Kathleen Domingo
Adrian Dove
Jeanette Ellis-Royston
Porter Gilberg
Isabelle Gunning
Derric Johnson
Preeti Kulkarni
Guadalupe Montaña
Fredrick Sykes
Sandra Thomas

ABSENT: Ilan Davidson

STAFF: Robin Toma
Robert Sowell
Pierre Arreola
Grace Löwenberg
Jaye Winter

GUEST: Tonya McKenzie

1. **Call to Order, Flag Salute, and Moment of Silence:** President Guadalupe Montaña called the meeting to order at 12:31 p.m. with a quorum of 12 commissioners in attendance. One commissioner later joined.
2. **Review & Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** It was moved by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Barrios to approve the minutes of the Commission meeting of February 1, 2020. The motion carried with 11 in favor, and Commissioner McKenzie abstaining because she had not yet been duly appointed for the previous meeting.
3. **President's Report**
 - 3.1 **New Commissioner Tonya McKenzie:** President Montaña introduced newly Board-appointed Commissioner Tonya McKenzie, nominated by 4th District Supervisor Janice Hahn. McKenzie shared briefly about her background: Originally hailing from the Bay area, she has been 8 years in Southern California; is a public relations and leadership consultant, and is also vice president of the Black Public Relations Society – Los Angeles Chapter, among her many forms of community engagement.
 - 3.2 **Meeting with County Counsel on CEDAW (Gender Equity/Nondiscrimination):** President Montaña provided the update that the County's progress on incorporating the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) into the County Code continues. She and Executive Director Robin Toma recently participated in an initial informational

meeting with County Counsel to begin discussions with the Women and Girls Initiative and the County Commission for Women on the report back to the Board.

- 3.3. Anti-Asian Hate Crime in LA County:** Mr. Toma reported on a recent hate crime that occurred in Koreatown, where a 27-year-old veteran reported being assaulted by two other men. The agency is tracking the case and is awaiting to have clarified several of its related questions with authorities. With the recent reports of hate acts against members of the Asian community in LA County and around the country, the agency is planning to conduct a press conference and possible day of action later this week, highlighting the LA vs Hate program along with the program's partners. The press conference will be sponsored by Supervisors Hilda L. Solis and possibly Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell. The goal is to raise public awareness regarding the LA vs. Hate campaign, resources that are available to report hate and help victims via 211, and our LA vs Hate Rapid Response Network to link victims to community-based nonprofits who can advocate for them and the affected communities.

4. Executive Director's Report

- 4.1. Meet the Staff:** Commissioners were introduced to Pierre Arreola, Senior Human Relations Consultant who is a lead staff person to the Ad Hoc Committee on Policing & Human Relations, known best for coordinating and advancing the agency's policing reform work. Among his numerous accolades, Mr. Arreola is also an artist, and avid urban and street style dancer, having cofounded the San Fernando Valley-based Gr818ers—a community group and collective that has as its mission to improve racial and social tensions through hip hop culture.
- 4.2. Update on Commission's Office Move and Place in County Organizational Structure:** Mr. Toma announced that by June 30, the Commission staff along with all of WDACS will be fully moved out of 3175 W 6th Street building and to the nearby new headquarters in the new Vermont Corridor building. Pertaining to the County's ongoing restructuring of the department, what with its projected impact on the Human Relations Commission and branch, the CEO has reported that organizational reconfiguring will be a phased-in process with the Commission's location to be determined in FY 2021-22. Commissioners were reassured that the Commission's desire to return to its status as a standalone entity was communicated via the Commission's motion and letter to the Board, the CEO, and WDACS.
- 4.3. Report on IAOHRA Convening of February 25th and Executive Order on Racial Equity:** Mr. Toma recounted the success of a recent International Association of Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) convening that brought together over 100 participants and counterpart agencies from across the country. Among the presenters were the ACLU, Mothers Against Police Brutality, and the chair of the United Nations Working Group on People of African Descent, among others. A recording of the webinar will be made available on the IAOHRA website for those interested who were not able to participate in the live streamed event. He also shared the main points of President Biden's Executive Order on Racial Equity, and the promise and opportunities it holds, along with its limitations.

5. Committee Reports

- 5.1. Ad Hoc Committee on Policing and Human Relations:** Committee Chair Isabelle Gunning noted that committee members continue their work on prioritizing recommendations, while simultaneously working to reconnect with stakeholders and community groups to raise issues around policing, funding, and civilian oversight. Moreover, the committee is connecting with the Youth Justice Coalition around pending legislation and is also going to soon meet with the Probation Department's Oversight Commission's new director.

5.2. John Anson Ford (JAF) Awards Event Committee: Committee Chair Ilan Davidson was absent. In his place, President Montaña relayed that the committee's event planning timeline experienced some delay due to the Second District's transition to Supervisor Mitchell's administration. It is considering a new date for the signature awards event.

5.3. Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning: Committee Chair Preeti Kulkarni shared that the committee had its first convening, illustrating a broad outline of the committee's plans. Its goal is to generate a 2021-2024 strategic plan by July of this year for presentation and final recommendation to the full commission. Additionally, she discussed processes, and varying kinds of assessments as well as analyses to guide the path forward. The committee and staff will also seek feedback from community, and will be reaching out to relevant stakeholders and human relations professionals in that vein. Finally, the committee will work to develop and set high-level Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-based (SMART) goals.

6. Public Comment: None.

7. Action/Discussion Items

7.1. JAF Awards Event: Without objection, the item was tabled due to time.

7.2. Support for District Attorney George Gascon Regarding Hate Crime Enhancements: Without objection, the item was tabled due to time.

7.3. LA vs. Hate Update – West Covina, El Monte, and Anti-Asian Hate Incidents: Without objection, the item was tabled due to time.

7.4. Anti-Racism, Diversity & Inclusion Initiative Update: Without objection, the item was tabled due to time.

7.5. Commission Strategic Planning – Process, Timeline, and Environmental Scan and SWOT input: Mr. Toma presented a timeline and the process for developing the Commission's next strategic plan, which is to include an assessment of the agency's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Without objection, further discussion was tabled due to time.

8. Commissioner Comments/Announcements: Commissioner Dove requested to refer to the Ad Hoc Committee on Policing & Human Relations, an item to discuss the recent effort to recall LA County District Attorney George Gascon.

9. Adjournment: Without objection, the meeting was adjourned in memory of Antonio Bernabe, LA immigrants' rights activist; and Corky Lee, photographer and Asian American civil rights activist, at 2:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ilan Davidson
Commission Vice President-Secretary