



**Seattle Immigrant and Refugee Commission**  
**April 6, 2011, 6:00-8:00 PM**  
**Room CH-370, City Hall**

**Meeting Minutes**

- Commissioners Present:** Devon Alisa Abdallah, Ph.D., Jesus Rodriguez, Lesley Irizarry-Hougan, Yasemin San, Michael Neguse, Ashraf Alazadi, Tsegaba Woldehaimanot, Shree Ram Dahal
- Commissioners Absent:** Andrea Caupain, Paulina Lopez Bermudez, Cherry Cayabyab, Mohamed Sheikh Hassan, Pradeepta Upadhyay, Bincy Jacob
- Commissioners by Phone:** Magdaleno Rose-Avila
- SOCR Staff Present:** Julie Nelson, Glenn Harris, Rosalinda Hoskins
- Guests:** Not applicable
- Guest Speakers:** Not applicable
- Call to Order:** Call to order at 6:00 PM
- Approval of Minutes:** March 2, 2011 minutes approved, with edits

**1. Welcome/Housekeeping/Announcements**

Jesus made a suggestion to discover areas beyond the city and state levels where the work of the Board can collaborate with other organizations' work, to look at areas that are impacted by the budget, such as Youth Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

<http://refugeeyouthproject.org/resources>

Or the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants <http://www.refugees.org/resources/for-refugees-immigrants/>

Yasemin received a message from Interpreter Services, the House just released the funding for 2012-2013, it is not for a in-person Interpretation Program, so she asks that everyone call their legislators and ask them to fund at least 80 percent of medical interpreter services in the new budget.

Jesus – Trusted Advocates at White Center has Monthly Story-telling, this month is Bosnian on April 15, 5:30-7:00. You are all invited, we do not have all cultures represented so, if you think you have a good story or would like to try it, call me.

Michael is doing something similar with the East African communities, Somali/Eritrean/Sudanese/Ethiopian, the first Thursday of every month at the Myers Way Joint Training Facility, tomorrow will be the Sudanese culture, the program is intended for the Police Department because we want them to know our culture.

Shree announced that there is a new Nepalese language program for children, started from a pilot program last year. April 23 is Nepalese Community Program, cultural program and buffet dinner.

## **2. Action Items**

### **Appointments/Reappointments Updates**

- Rosalinda explained that there are three new unconfirmed commissioners in attendance, Shree Ram Dahal, who will be a City Council appointee and Tsegaba Woldehaimanot and Ashraf Alazadi, who will be Mayoral appointees. We have two others who are not in attendance, Pradeepta Upadhyay and Bincy Jacob. There are three commissioners who will be reconfirmed, for a full commission. New Commissioners then introduced themselves.

### **SMC Update**

Julie gave an update on the ordinance changes for the Board. Rosalinda is on the verge of getting it completed and submitted to the Budget Office and Law Department, it will then be transmitted to the Mayor and City Council, then it will be finalized, but it has been a process that has taken some time.

### **SOCR Report**

Julie sends out the full report via email, but touches on some highlights of the report.

- The first is some sad news, as you may know the Enforcement function of the Office of Civil Rights is where we investigate discrimination and the law, Nolan Lim, the Enforcement Manager, has resigned to take a position as a legal counsel for an employment group. He was a source of stability and vision and will be missed. In the interim, three different people will be serving in that position on a 3-month basis each and we will not fill their old positions.
- The City's budget over the last 3-4 years has entailed drastic cuts. Although the expectation was that last budget year's budget would be sustainable, that is not the case. More cuts are likely.
- On the Race and Social Justice front, you may want to look at some national media exposure we received. Kudos to City Attorney Peter Holmes who provided accurate information and did an amazing job. To have an elected official who was proactive, was assertive, had his facts straight and was really on point, is a strong testament to the work we are doing.  
[http://www.seattle.gov/rsji/docs/Response\\_FoxNews3-11-11.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/rsji/docs/Response_FoxNews3-11-11.pdf).
- Julie invited everyone to a dinner organized for Yemane Gebremicael on April 19th 5:30 at Habasha Restaurant - 1809 Minor.

## **3. Report back from 5-Commission Meeting:**

There are four other commissions that are also housed in the Office for Civil Rights, the Human Rights Commission, the LGBTQ Commission, the Commission for People with Disabilities and the Women's Commission. Five Commission meetings are held quarterly and this is the first one that the Immigrant and Refugee Commission attended. (Devon, Tsegaba, Michael, and Yasemin) on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Beth Goldberg, the Budget Director, spoke a bit about the budget, and how the budget process works. Councilmember Harrell talked about working with City Council. He also said do not hesitate to contact the Councilmember's offices directly. Danette Smith, the new Director for Human Services, spoke of a major reorganization in the Human Services Department, their services had been somewhat disjointed before and they are now streamlining, a one-stop process.

Julie explained that 5 Commission quarterly meetings vary between informational and interactive between commissions.

#### **4. City Council Work Plan Report Back**

Julie, Glenn, and Rose did the work plan report to City Council. Glenn highlighted the three priorities for 2011, there were four City Councilmembers present, Harrell, the lead for Technology, Energy, and Civil Rights, Council President Conlin, Councilmember Licata, and Councilmember O'Brien. Most of their interest was around translation and interpretation. They were very engaged and asked you to invite them to a future meeting. They also mentioned the wage theft legislation and how it could affect the immigrant and refugee communities (information via email).

Goal #3 was not represented in the work plan, Jesus will forward the information again, Goals 1 and 2 will also be forwarded and Rosalinda will put all three together and email out to the Commission. Commissioners are asked to update or make edits and will then compile the final information into the work plan.

#### **5. Workplan Presentation for Mayor:**

Mayor McGinn is coming to the June meeting. We have a half hour to present our work plan and explain to him what we are doing and answer any questions he may have. Each point will be 2-3 minutes and we have three main points:

- Immigrant and Refugee Youth Services - since Lesley will be on maternity leave in June, she will forward her notes, Ashraf volunteered to present this piece, Tsegaba and Michael will assist.
- Yasemin will present Interpreter Services, there are some specific points in the Translation and Interpretation Statement of Legislative Intent. Michael Davis from the City's Workgroup will be at the meeting in May to provide an update, so it may be best to wait until that happens so we have a chance to review that work and recommend modifications, if any.

The reports will have four parts, 1) the performance measures – identifying successful, cost and time efficient models, which languages are most translated, 2) the language Bank, making proposals to strengthen, 3) community partnerships, identifying cost-effective partnerships with CBO's, schools, etc. 4) city-wide practices reviewing the current standards for interpretation and translation.

- Jesus will present Police Accountability – discussion took place about linking the Youth Education piece to the Race and Social Justice Youth and Families Initiative Roundtable work, demonstrating a link with safety concerns and academic success.

Lesley will step down as co-chair, if anyone is interested we will vote for a new co-chair at the next meeting. If anyone has questions, feel free to email Lesley or Devon.

Devon put forth the idea to vote via email on items such as supporting other commissions' work when materials come in they could read and vote on it rather than having a full presentation at a meeting. Bullet summaries are helpful in the body of the email as people do not always have enough time to read a full document, but also include the document as an attachment. Tag words to use in the subject line for action

items that need to immediate response, subjects may be VOTE, ACTION, INFO, FEEDBACK/COMMENT, URGENT, etc. **Voted – Passed.**

**Bylaws need to be checked for changing if Voting via email is not allowed.**

**Commission Asks:**

New Contact List

Interpretation & Translation Report (add to next month's agenda for Work Plan)

Resend Goals

Need Bylaws to check on voting (Devon and Lesley have them)

Orientation for New Members, old members' would like to be involved

Commission Binder

Website update, Bios and Photos to update Commissioners

Placards and Badges

Business cards

Checking Board and Commission Board Room for availability to change meeting location and time to include the listen line for public call-ins

Snack List

***The Meeting Adjourned at 8:10 PM***