

## Seattle Immigrant and Refugee Commission

February 5, 2019 (6:00-8:00 PM)

Call-In due to Weather

### Meeting Minutes

**Commissioners Present:** Maya Babla Appiah, Medhanit Abebe, Shelani Vanniasinkam, Gina Aaftaab, Maria Zepeda Flores, Farhiya Mohamed, Riddhi Mukhopadehyay, Ankita Patel, Johnson Nguyen, Eric Holzapfel, Jennifer Calleja, Marilena Morales

**Commissioners Absent:** Luis Ortega, Vanesa Gutierrez, Medhanit Abebe, Riddhi Mukhopadehyay, Farhiya Mohamed

**OIRA Staff Present:** Maha Jahshan

**Guests:** Will von Geldern

**Call to Order:** 6:00 pm

#### Welcome (Co-Chairs)

Ankita and Maya opened the meeting.

#### Ventures Presentation (Will von Geldern)

Will von Geldren, the Director of Advocacy & Communications shared the work [Ventures](#) is doing to support immigrant and communities. One of the initiatives he mentioned is working on to legalize home cooking in Washington state, where it is currently illegal to sell most home-cooked food and it is something they want to encourage the state legislature to bring home cooking into formal economy to create opportunities for micro-entrepreneurs who do not have access to the capital or connections need to start a restaurant. He shared the petition [link](#) and invited the commission to sign on.

#### OIRA Report (Maha)

Maha shared current updates on the work OIRA is doing.

#### Census 2020 Updates (Eric)

Eric is part of the Washington Census Alliance and shared about the summit that was held and how the commission can connect to the work happening.

## **Commission & Subcommittee Updates (All)**

Commissioners shared events and brainstormed potential upcoming connections for the subcommittee work. They also talked about the revised workplan that they are going to present to the Gender Equity, Safe Communities, New Americans & Education Council Committee on 2/27.

## **Adjourn**

The commission adjourned at 8:00pm