



City of Seattle



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 17, 2020 | 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via WebEx

Commissioners Present: Annabelle Bachman, Chris Brown, DeAunte Damper, Kari Lerum, Victor Loo, Jessi Murray, Nate Higby, John Rodriguez, Byram Simpson, Deepa Sivarajan, Joseph Suttner, and Manuel Venegas

Commissioners Absent: Michael Garrett

SOCR Staff: Janet Stafford

Meeting Minutes recorded by: Deepa Sivarajan

Guests: Helen Gebreamlak (SOCR), Brett Pepowski

Welcome and Introductions

1. Latosha Correll is on a four-month leave of absence.
2. Congratulations to DeAunte Damper for official approval by Council!

Public Open Comment

1. No public comment.

Approve August Minutes and September Agenda

1. Motion to approve September agenda with below edits. **Motion passes (100%)**
 - a. Add item for discussion and vote on budget request for Disability LGBTQ panel.
2. Motion to approve August minutes. **Motion passes (10 approved, 2 abstained)**
3. July minutes and July special meeting minutes postponed until next meeting for approval.

Committee Reports

1. POC Stakeholders Committee: Report from Victor Loo
 - a. Have been working with the Plate Fund to support restaurant workers – over 30% of restaurant workers are LGBTQ

- b. Plate Fund has raised \$7.8 million to serve 15,600 workers
- 2. Commission Operations: Report by Manuel Venegas
 - a. Did not meet this month
- 3. Social Media & Communications: Report from Jessi Murray
 - a. Working with Community Engagement Committee to coordinate and provide resources for LGBTQ community through social media and website
 - b. Talked about the situation where admins got locked out of Commission Facebook group, will discuss next month reducing the number of people who are admins
- 4. Community Engagement Committee: Report from Nate Higby
 - a. Community Engagement will be meeting this Saturday at 11:30am to talk about looking at how we're doing the ambassador program and how to revamp

Ad-Hoc Committee for Mayoral/SPD Engagement

1. Formed this committee because Seattle Police Department (SPD) and Mayor's Office had promised more information on accountability and SPD budget, but never heard back
2. Mayor's Office responded on September 10 at 12:15pm that someone from could do a 15-minute phone call the same day or the following day during working hours
3. Janet will work to loop in someone from management at SOCR as well to try and get moving on a meeting with Mayor's Office
4. Next steps are to determine what the purpose of such a meeting would be at this point and whether or not it makes sense to move forward with that or if that would be materially different from what we've already asked for
5. Discussion from commissioners:
 - a. Byram Simpson: one of the reasons for forming this committee was because of our special meeting in July where we voted to put out a letter that never went out, but one of the questions was whether to call on the mayor's removal from office. From my perspective, one of the reasons we did not include that demand in our final vote was extending grace to the Mayor's Office that they would engage, but we have yet to see meaningful engagement while the concerns that led to had discussion are ongoing. The abuses and misconceptions coming out of this administration and SPD have continued. I recognize that people on the commission have a diversity of opinions on this issue and I respect all of those, but this is also a call that
 - b. Joseph Suttner: I am not surprised that the Mayor's Office did not respond and I think that we should talk more on social media
 - c. Deepa Sivarajan: I've witnessed what I feel is a lack of respect from the Mayor's Office for the commissions and the work we do. We are volunteers who have been appointed to advise the city and the Mayor's Office does not give us the tools or resources to do so.
 - d. DeAunte Damper: I think that we need to listen to this dialogue from the community and create space for accountability. We should be able to state how we feel about the mayor and anybody else in office and have transparency. Losing the police chief for me was a really hard thing, and I think that if the mayor had advocated for her, that might not have happened.
 - e. Annabelle Bachman: I agree with the general thrust of the conversation. For me it's less about my feelings and more about statement of fact: we didn't even ask for hard data as much as we asked for an estimate of when we received

- f. Chris Brown: What we've asked for includes holding SPD budget to zero-sum accounting – if we can stick to those talking points about what we've already agreed to then we can get on the radar.
- g. Jessi Murray: We sent them an email with specifics – this was not general.
- h. Annabelle Bachman: We had three very specific asks – two were for dates for when we can expect certain pieces of information that were highlighted in the budget briefing we had received, and the third was for when we can expect further engagement. Each of those asks was addressed to a specific named person. There was no ambiguity about this.
- i. Chris Brown: Thank you for that clarification.

Cal Anderson Project

- 1. John Rodriguez attended a meeting hosted by Seattle Parks and Recreation on the Cal Anderson Park project – want to reshape Cal Anderson Park so that it can be more inclusive, not only in commitment but in creation
 - a. The idea and shaping of new design of the park will be centered on the BIPOC population and building.
- 2. There's a survey online that everyone can fill out to provide input, and there will be further meetings on October 7 and 8 to continue hearing input – more info at 2020calandersonpark.com/
- 3. Deepa Sivarajan is also on the Parks District Oversight Committee as a representative of the LGBTQ Commission, so that's another avenue for us to be involved if we want to provide any specific recommendations.

Disability LGBTQ Panel

- 1. Nate Higby is working with Hannah Wilson on the Seattle Disability Commission to bring light to those who live on the intersection of being LGBTQ+ and having a disability
- 2. Decided on having a panel that would feature individuals who live at that intersection
 - a. The panel will be on October 21 (time TBD)
 - b. Working on collaborating with Town Hall Seattle for both marketing support and a virtual platform
 - c. Will have three panelists and Hannah Wilson as a moderator
 - d. Accommodations will include an ASL interpreter and CART
- 3. Panelists:
 - a. Catelleya Storm- Black Deaf individual who publishes videos and content around disability activism and deaf awareness.
 - b. NEVE- Disabled artist (dance, singer, painter, actor) who's work focuses on making dance accessible
 - c. ChrisTiana ObeySummer- Many know her as a commissioner on the Disability Commission but we're going to be asking her to share her work as a community advocate.
- 4. Hope is to compensate each panelist \$200 for their time, which includes prep meetings with Nate and Hannah, individual preparation, and time on the panel
 - a. Vital to compensate panelists, especially because we are asking them to share hardships and trauma associated with having a disability and being LGBTQ+
 - b. Disability Commission approved \$300 for compensation, so asking LGBTQ Commission to match that

- c. Concerns with compensating a sitting co-chair of the Disability Commission (ChrisTiana ObeySummer) – there’s no conflict of interest as long as any kind of participation or voting that happens on the Disability Commission for organizing this event
5. Discussion from commissioners:
 - a. Kari Lerum and : Thank you for your work on this, Nate!
 - b. Jessi Murray and Chris Brown: Please let social media committee know how we can amplify this
6. Motion to approve \$300 to compensate panelists for Disability LGBTQ+ panel. **Motion passes (100%)**

Seattle Office of Civil Rights (SOCR) Report

1. SOCR Policy division staff will be present at commission meetings this year – since commissions are held under Policy division at SOCR, you’ll see staff such as Helen today attending
2. Will be resending the SOCR Commissions handbook to all commissions
3. Commission appointments:
 - a. Get Engaged: Still waiting on confirmations of the cohort
 - b. Nate Higby will likely be moved to a full two-year seat
 - c. DeAunte Damper has now officially been confirmed for a City Council seat
 - d. Brett Pepowski is still waiting on official appointment
4. Discussion by commissioners:
 - a. Many commissioners expressed frustration with the delayed process of confirming commissioners: Brett Pepowski has been waiting for 10 months without confirmation and DeAunte Damper was only recently confirmed after a similar wait
 - b. Delays are coming primarily from the Mayor’s Office who is not approving candidates, and now Council schedule is also delaying
 - c. This is something we can raise publicly along with the other SOCR commissions – general lack of resources and attention afforded to commissions
 - d. SOCR is working hard to advocate for us but still not moving the needle

Announcements, Reminders, & Roll Call

1. None!

(END 8:13)