



Seattle
Human Rights Commission

Seattle Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 4, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Hosted online on Zoom and in Seattle City Hall, 600 4th Ave, Board and Commissions Room #L280.

Call to Order 6:02 p.m.

Land Acknowledgement

“We are currently occupying the unceded lands of many First Peoples, Coast Salish people, Muckleshoot, Suquamish, Stillaguamish, and Duwamish. We acknowledge and thank local First Nations for their centuries of land stewardship that long predates the arrival of European settlers. We remind you to be aware of the spaces you occupy locally, that these lands were stolen from First People in the name of white settler colonialism and that you seek ways to continue your education and give back to local Indigenous communities.” (Duwamish Tribe’s website)

“We must acknowledge that much of what we know of this country today, including its culture, economic growth, and development throughout history and across time, has been made possible by the labor of enslaved Africans and their descendants who suffered the horror of the transatlantic trafficking of their people, chattel slavery, and Jim Crow. We are indebted to their labor and their sacrifice, and we must acknowledge the tremors of that violence throughout the generations and the resulting impact that can still be felt and witnessed today.” (Dr. Terah “TJ” Stewart)

Roll Call

Commissioners:

- **Co-chairs Present:** Commissioners Hultgren, Quander, Lewis
- **Members Present:** Commissioners Leydon, Catsambas, Munger, Bailey, Tibbs, McCullough, Gonser, Smith, Kristina, Lassiter
- **Nominated Members Present:** Nominees Monson, Hector Rueda Garcia
- **Members Absent:** Commissioners Koss, Ortega

- **Members Arriving Late:** Commissioner Duston

Public Comment

Commissioner Quander - Jessa Davis LGBTQ Commission submitted public comment. Jessa's comment relates to the Seattle Coalition for Relationship Equity, and the SHRC drafting a letter of support to help the Coalition pass an antidiscrimination ordinance. A proposed draft of the ordinance will be distributed, a presentation for a future meeting and additional legislative info.

Commissioner Lewis - This letter is regarding the Federal Fair Housing Act, which currently doesn't include marital or partner status. The want is to close this loophole in the Act.

Chelsea Stevenson Introduction. Former Commissioner, background working in youth violence prevention work. Reached out to Quander to volunteer on the Criminal Legal System Reform Task Force.

Hector Garcia Introduction. New Get Engaged Nominee. (Commissioner Hultgren was the previous Get Engaged Nominee. With Nominee Garcia now in that seat, Commissioner Hultgren will transition to a SHRC Nominee until he is re-appointed to the Commission.)

Kim Kwafkwao Introduction. Kim is volunteering with the Housing and Homelessness Task Force.

Approval of Minutes

1. Commissioner Hultgren moved to approve; seconded by Commissioner Quander.

Ayes: Commissioners Hultgren, Quander, Lewis, Leydon, Catsambas, Munger, Bailey, Tibbs, McCullough, Gonser, Smith, Lassiter

Nos: Commissioner Kristina

Abstains: None

Motion to approve the 8/7/2025 regular meeting minutes passes.

New Business

Mercy Housing

- Commissioner Tibbs Introduces speaker Elysa Hovard
elysa.hovard@mercyhousing.org

- Mercy Housing is the largest builder of public affordable housing in the Nation. Secular roots.
- National Presence, regionally in WA, ID & OR with >50 communities.
- Rehab and lending along with resident services. Demographics: avg household income is <\$25709/yr with living for ~7yrs
- 19 projects in active pipeline in WA & OR
- 1400 units opened between 2022-25
- Key Partners: City of Seattle, KC, Pierce County, WA St HTF,
- Transit Oriented Development, Early Learning Centers, Facilities with Healthcare Hubs.
- Resident Services provided on site, food pantries, health care clinics and mobile clinics, financial and housing stability services, banking partners, engagement voter registration
- Housing Development Consortium works on policy reform and advocacy to clear the path for developers to build the properties.
- Policy Needs: zoning & land use reform, counter NIMBY opposition
- Funding; protect & grow housing trust funds, support services & operating subsidies
- Community Voices; mobilize letters & testimonies, partner w/faith schools and orgs
- There is a Lobbyist working with Mercy Housing.
- Always looking for volunteers and donations for drives.
- Education program - Mercy Scholars, engage parents especially those who are ESL along with students to support kids in schools.

UW Report from Center of Human Rights by Commissioner Leydon

- Potential speaker to the Commission. Commissioner Gonser to coordinate.
- If folks are interested in discussing the report and engaging in that work, respond back to previous email.

Unfinished Business

Letter to Derrick by Commissioner McCullough

- Ask for an update on Executive Committee action item to send drafted letter to the Office for Civil Rights Director.
- Commissioner Lewis mentions the letter hasn't been sent yet. Action Item taken to send a letter and organize a follow up meeting with Derrick to discuss.

- i. Commissioner Smith asks to be part of the follow-up meeting.

Committee Reports

Executive

- Commissioner Quander - Goutham is no longer on the commission.
- Commissioner Lewis - Comp Plan Letter Updates
 - City Hall is hosting final Comprehensive Plan meeting on September 12th at 3pm. Letter of asks from the 5 Chairs meeting linked in the meeting chat. This is the last public meeting on the Comp Plan.
 - Commissioner Bailey created a survey that will soon be circulated regarding:
 - identifying commissioners' districts for discussions with representative Council members to discuss the Comp Plan.
 - considering income skew associated with districts in relation to proposing a stipend for appointed members of the 5 Commissions.
- Commissioner Quander - Baseball Game Outing was fun. More info to come on the next outing.
 - Agenda Item Request Form is live
 - Demographics Mapping

Appeals by Commissioner Leydon

- No appeals meeting the month of September.

Treasury by Commissioner Munger

- Confirming last meeting voted to approve funds for community engagement event ~\$507.15.

Communications by Commissioner Duston

- Another communications meeting in two weeks.
- Developing the comms for Human Rights Day. Hope for more info available by then about speakers, locations, dates and times.
- Commissioner Quander - Sebastian emailed about a website that's available right now. Should register it with DNS. Request the URL and it shouldn't change the cost for the website additionally.

- Commissioner Duston - RE: Gmail account - how are the funds sent to that account? Normally we manage via reimbursement, so we need a way to pay for it. Latrice is the City point of contact for the credit card. Sebastian is looking to schedule with her.

Events by Commissioner Hultgren

- Still looking for a Human Rights Day venue. Currently initiating coordination with Seattle World School other venues. The next meeting is on the 10th.

Task Forces

Criminal Legal System Reform by Commissioner Quander

- Draft Ordinance language related to unmasking of law enforcement was shared
- Outreach event scheduled at Garfield Community Center on Sept 22nd. Working with OPA and Community Police Commission
- Councilmember Rinck and Staff Kenny offered to attend outreach event. They drafted council bills discussing a pilot program on expanding use of CCTV and automatic license plate readers in various locations throughout the city.
 - September 9th Councilmember Rinck will have a press conference to discuss these draft bills and folks are encouraged to attend if interested.

Housing and Unhoused by Commissioner Bailey

- Save the Date Nov 7th, hosting a showing of Evicting the American Dream at 415 Westlake Ave N with a panel discussion to follow.
- Thanks to Tibbs for facilitating Elysa speaking tonight. There are additional speakers that the Task Force is coordinating with to speak at future meetings.

Human Trafficking by Commissioner Gonser

- Getting caught up to speed with WASHACT and FIFA and getting good data on what trafficking looks like in Seattle.
- Considering working with other orgs working with immigrants in Seattle on rights advocacy. Looking to other NGOs and what they're doing to support.

Seattle Office for Civil Rights Updates

- MARTA!!! is back part time. Getting back up to speed and involved in commission communications/activities.
- Live Aloha Festal Event September 7, 2025 at Seattle Center 11a-6pm
 - Commissioner Gonser to table in the afternoon.
- Proposed City Budget coming out soon. 4th or final Tuesday in September, 90 days prior to the end of the year. Snapshot of where the City will put resources that align with our work.
- United Commission Summit, Saturday October 25th 10am -2pm.

Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

- Next Commissioner Get together still to be determined. Late September through early October

Adjourned at 7:23 p.m.