



City of Seattle

Seattle LGBTQ Commission



Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2022 | 6:30 – 8:30 p.m

Virtual Meeting via WebEx

Commissioners Present: Victor Loo, Andrew Ashiofu, Steven Pray, Brett Pepowski, Jessi Murray, Nate Higby, Raja Fouad

Commissioners Absent: N/A

SOCR Staff: Janet Stafford, Meredith Stone, Kyana Wheeler

Guests: Lillian Williamson (Get Engaged Commissioner – pending appointment), Leo Segovia, Julia Ismael, Roberto

Meeting Minutes recorded by: Raja Fouad

Next meeting minute taker:

Welcome and Introductions

Introductions were done, including guests. Jessi's last meeting. Lillian getting appointed soon.

Public Open Comment

No public comments

Approve Minutes and Agenda

- March minutes: added that we approved winter retreat notes. **Passed with unanimous consent**
- April minutes: no amendments made. **Passed with unanimous consent.**

Connecting with SOCR Interim Director, Derrick Wheeler-Smith

- Intro from Derrick & his start.
- Brett: What do you see as the roles of commissions in your office & in the city? How do you see us as collaborating/influencing city views especially when it comes to participatory budgeting?

- Derrick: I'm a values-based leader and for me that means you should lead from your values. Starts with being able to have values and agreements for us to hold space with each other. Laid out in commission handbook are values/agreements & process of grievance & I think those are important on how we work effectively & participate fully. Important to be actively involved on projects and make sure they delivering on their promise. And that when they are not, you are holding us accountable to make sure we are moving in the right direction.
- Brett: What are you expecting from us with these projects & what is the best way to keep in touch with your office about those things?
- Derrick: have the kind of conversations that matter & how do we create mutual accountability so when things are not in alignment? When they are not, we should be able to have courageous conversation about that & what is going to get us back on track. Different nuances & liaisons that you work with & within each of those entities. How do folks want to show up in relationship to that work & what things are important or missing & that's why I said all perspectives are valid to avoid blind spots on projects as we think about who is impacted in those projects/spaces. The greater role for me is that it isn't so much. What are ways to build the bridges that have been broken apart? If we disagree, can we agree to disagree long enough that we come to enough of a shared understanding that we could make a collective decision in a way that moves us forward. I want to convene folks in conversations that matter & not pull up & show how you should do your work.
- Brett: Maybe we need to learn from these projects on our own time & then as these people are interested in showing up in different ways, we can reach out to you and indicate when and how we want to be involved.
- Derrick: Proximity is important. It's hard to understand things you are not close to & there are staff that lead these different bodies of work & it may be a good to have them show up to meetings as guest presenters
- Brett: Role is filled by social media outreach committee
- Jesse: Is there any discussion about potentially becoming an independent entity & do you have any perspectives on it?
- Derrick: there are conversations about what it could like & some stuff being developed in partnership with the council. The process is being devised where it doesn't lean too far one-way pr the other to develop something where the role of the director is put under the council but that can be dangerous as new council members come inn, we can recreate the same problem so we are looking to devise a way where there is balance and where they can show up to speak truth to power as we think through the challenges that exist within these systems. I've had some conversations with the mayor & council already where I ask when we disagree, can you handle that & how are you going to handle that? We have to be able to hold the institution accountable. The longer you work in the system, the harder it is for them to acknowledge it & they tend to start advocating more than for the community they are called to serve so we want to maintain & have integrity.

- Brett: What suggestions you have for us to be effective change makers within the community/city?
- When I think about it, I think there is a lot of work that has to happen for us to heal I feel like a lot of conversations I come into, I find myself saying, hi put the sword away. For many of us who have experienced oppression & marginalization from the system, that creates this narrative that has us centered and focused on tearing down the things that are harmless & not as powerful as building so the outcome that is created is where we experience isolation. The opportunity for us to be thinking about what it means to create systems & structures of belonging because that's really what we are attacking. What does it look like to create those systems & structures of belonging & how do we trace these things to policy when we think about effective change makers, that where I think the effect of change really is & how we can work to transform & change policies that produce these equitable outcomes that we experience?
- Brett: How do we work with other parts of the city to stop sweeps. Can we do anything to support you on it?
- Derrick: Important to note that there was a time with previous administration where we would monitor sweeps & document whether the city was following its own rules & we had the power to stop a sweep if we determined that they did not follow & follow up with a report to council. Fractured relationship with OCR & previous mayor's office over how the mayor chose to engage as a bully. I am working on bridging the relationship & meeting with deputy mayor that oversees sweeps & beginning a conversation. Invited to a meeting where we had those conversations with different departments about these sweeps. It was a technical space, working on making it an adaptive space because of complex issues that need to be addressed as they are being solved without recognizing the interdependence that we have across these different sectors, departments & domains. I will need to think about how we can partner better together as we are just getting invited back to the table.

Underperforming Community Police Commission– Brett/Julia Ismael (Seattle Human Rights Commission)

- Julia- went over how the commission started & how it advocated for the office of police accountability in 1999 & the long history of the commission on an advisory role & representing the community for over 50 years. The commission was a major proponent to the Justice department to investigate SPD. Also advocated for women & minority business enterprise ordinance as well as the immigrant & refugee commission as well as the department that supports them, the office of immigrant & refugee affairs. Attending community police & commission meetings to make sure we hear from individuals who are hurt.

Update on Recruitment – Victor

- 4 new applicants. Nate, Brett & Victor volunteered to take lead & start the process next month. Jesse completing her term after being on since 2017. Lillian to be appointed Apr 27 by council. Andrew, Brett & Nate up for reappointment. Waiting on Stephen appointment by council.

Pride– Victor

- Went over Asia Pride & proclamation happening on May 29 in Chinatown & asked for approval on proclamation.
- Andrew moves a motion to support, Raja seconds. Unanimous approval reached.
- Victor brings up motion for the proclamation to declare June as Pride month. Goes to review. Brett suggest cutting first part of proclamation “the city of Seattle is a national leader in anti-discrimination policies based on sexual orientation & gender identity in marriage, employment, housing, health care, human services, and public accommodations”. Steven ok with removing it but no strong feelings either way. Andrew agrees removal of either the word leading the house or the whole sentence. Janet brings up motion to remove the first part.
- Budget request for Pride- Nate/Brett: looked at locations in collaboration with disability commission. Ideas include having a cardboard cutout scene of the city hall or Cap Hill theme or having giveaways. Giveaway will have a higher budget. Cost for cutout & water for volunteers request of \$800. **Motion to approve funding up to \$800 for Pride costs – Motion approved unanimously.**
- Also requested Janet if OCR can spring costs for flyers.

Committee Work Report out – Andrew/committee chairs

- Social media & community outreach. Statement/announcement of what schools were doing on Apr 1st & activities happening Apr 9th is regards to anti trans bills. Also pride discussion.
- POC committee: no updates.
- Comm Ops: Lillian interested

Trans inmate in King County Jail – Andrew

- Call to action for trans folks going through abuses in the system & wanted to bring it up to the commission as requested by someone in the organization behind the call. Brett joining Andrew in joining further meetings/email thread

SOCR Report

- Spring/Summer Recruitment 2022 – Nate, Brett and Victor have volunteered to interview 4 new applicants and will likely start this process in May.
- Commission Term updates- Terming off the commission is Jessi Murray. Ending their current term and seeking reappointment include Nate, Andrew and Brett and bringing this to a commission agreement.
- Get Engage – Lilian Williamson will be reappointed on April 25th at a Council meeting with other Get Engage Commissioners. This will be broadcast on Seattle Channel
- Upcoming 5-chair meeting is May 11 from 5:30-7:30pm.

Co-chair Updates

Announcements & Reminders – Farewell and thank you’s to Jessi Murray. Andrew running for State Representative. Next meeting scheduled for May 19 from 6:30-8:30p.

