



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

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[PROPOSED] MINUTES
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
Meeting of June 1, 2020
Via Microsoft Teams Video & Audio Conferencing

PRESENT:	Jarrett Tomás Barrios	Derric Johnson
	Ilan Davidson	Preeti Kulkarni
	Adrian Dove	Guadalupe Montaña
	Jeanette Ellis-Royston	Fredrick Sykes
	Isabelle Gunning	Sandra Thomas
ABSENT:	Michael Gi-Hao Cheung	Sam Liu
	Porter Gilberg	
STAFF:	Robin Toma	Grace Löwenberg
	Robert Sowell	Jaye Winter

- 1. Call to Order/Flag Salute and Moment of Silence:** President Jarrett Barrios called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m. with a quorum of 10 commissioners in attendance.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** It was moved by Commissioner Sandra Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Isabelle Gunning to approve the minutes of the Commission meeting of May 4, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3. President's Report:** No report.
- 4. Executive Director's Report:**
 - 4.1 Update on Hate Activity Due to COVID-19, Anti Hate Initiative, and Board Motion:** Executive Director Robin Toma shared that the Board recently approved a motion relating to the Anti Hate Initiative (AHI) and in support of federal legislation to condemn recent rise in hate incidents. A subsequent motion will follow next Tuesday for which Supervisor Solis staff is asking the Executive Director to assist in developing the motion's language. Specifically, the motion will aim to address the rise in hate by pressing the DOJ and FBI to collect data for hate related acts, and call for County departments to join in supporting the AHI.
 - 4.2 Updates on Countywide Equity in Response and Budget:** Regarding the Countywide Equity Initiative (CEI), the official recommendation for a County 'Office of Equity' or otherwise central 'Equity' mechanism, has yet to be decided. Discussions continue among the coordinating group made of up of DHR, WDACS/HRC, and, CEO. The consensus is, however, that the County's more than 25 equity-

related efforts and projects that at the moment are spread across several departments, ultimately stand to benefit from such an office or more formalized central coordination and support.

Relating to the County budget, Mr. Toma reported that the Board is in the process of finalizing and adopting a Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget soon. The CEO's pre-COVID-19 recommended budget naturally did not foresee the \$1-2 billion shortfall, which may necessitate the County now drawing from its reserves. Additionally, the County may experience a reduction in vacant positions beside the already-implemented hiring freeze. Nonetheless, our Human Relations Branch continues advocating for its budget. Commissioners were likewise encouraged to speak with their respective Board offices about the HRC and branch budget. Mr. Toma will investigate and report back on the exact amounts in the County's reserves.

5. Committee Reports

- 5.1 Ad Hoc Committee on Policing and Human Relations:** Committee Chair Gunning suggested a special meeting of the commission early next week to discuss at length the long-awaited and now timely policing report in light of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Black Lives Matter related demonstrations, as well as to officially vote on the committee's report for publication.
- 5.2 John Anson Ford (JAF) Awards Event Committee:** Committee Chair Ilan Davidson reported that some nominations have been received, and further encouraged commissioners to submit nominations. The deadline being extended to June 15.
- 5.3 Ad Hoc Policy & Advocacy Committee:** Committee Chair Guadalupe Montaña conveyed the committee's recommendation that the Commission request that the Board of Supervisors designate it as an independent commission, with Dispute Resolution Program (DRP) remaining housed in Human Relations. The intent is to have Human Relations return to its pre-Great Recession state as an independent entity. The recommendation includes the proposition that the HRC and Branch report and answer directly to the CEO and Board. If received favorably, the details of budget implications for such administrative areas as human resources, procurement, IT, etc., would be fleshed out in due course.

6. Action/Discussion Items

- 6.1 Nominations for FY 2020-21 Commission Officers:** Committee Chair Preeti Kulkarni presented the slate of Commission officers for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. The slate comprised of Commissioners Fredrick Sykes for vice president (representing District 1), Derric Johnson for vice president (representing District 2), Guadalupe Montaña for president (and representing District 3), Davidson for vice president/secretary (and representing District 4), and Sandra Thomas (representing District 5). Nominations from the floor were invited, and none were received.

It was moved by Kulkarni and seconded by Dove to approve the slate of Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Commission officers as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

- 6.2 Commission Statement on COVID-19:** Mr. Toma and Barrios summarized the content of their jointly drafted statement on behalf of the Commission pertaining to COVID-19 and health equity. The statement highlights the very origins of the commission as stemming from the Zoot Suit Riots—where racial/ethnic inequities were similarly at the epicenter. Now, to ensure equity in health in light of COVID-19, an equitable recovery from the pandemic countywide, and to establish reliable assessment of its long-term implications, the statement urges diligent and nuanced tracking of the response to inequities and proactive

promotion of equity through County's efforts such as the Countywide Equity Initiative and Anti-Hate Initiatives, for which the Commission is a leader.

6.3 Commission Letter on its Place in County Structure: It was agreed Mr. Toma will produce the official letter stating the Commission's recommendation with respect to its position within County structure and will have it distributed to each Board office. Commissioners Davidson and Montañó offered that they will approach their respective Board offices on the subject following the letter's dissemination.

It was moved by Davidson and seconded by Ellis-Royston to approve the Policy & Advocacy Committee's letter—"Commission Letter County's Organization Structure"—on behalf of the full Commission, as a recommendation to the Supervisors. The motion carried with Dove abstaining.

6.4 Policing & Human Relations Report & Recommendations: See item 5.1 above.

It was moved by Dove and seconded by Barrios to convene a special Commission meeting next Monday, June 8, 2020 at 12 pm, for the purpose of discussing and voting whether to approve the policing report. The motion carried unanimously.

6.5 Killings of Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor: Barrios invited Commissioner Johnson to introduce the item. Johnson led a brief discussion with respect to the current process and developing further the process—of the Commission's prompt formulation and issuance of official statements in the event of such tragedies as those that claimed the lives of Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor. Commissioners weighed in, particularly in light of item 6.3—should the Board receive favorably the Commission's recommendation to become independent of WDACS.

7. Commissioners' Comments/Announcements: Barrios invited members of the public to introduce themselves. Ms. Shadeequa Smith, a County Probation employee, briefly introduced herself and greeted the commission. Separately, Barrios announced that he will start as senior vice president for 'Programs & Strategy' at California Community Foundation in the coming weeks.

8. Adjournment: It was moved by Dove and seconded by Sykes to adjourn the meeting in memory of Larry Aubry, former Senior Human Relations Consultant; as well as George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, recent victims of police brutality across the nation. Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 1:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Guadalupe Montañó
Commission Vice President-Secretary