



# Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

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## MINUTES

### COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS Meeting of January 6, 2025

PRESENT: Helen L. Chin  
Dandy De Paula\*  
Jeanette EllisRoyston  
Azusena Favela\*  
Isabelle Gunning  
Derric J. Johnson  
Kevork Keushkerian\*  
Preeti Kulkarni\*  
Guadalupe Montaña  
Jason Moss\*  
Fredrick Sykes  
Gay Yuen

ABSENT: Michael Cheung  
Ilan Davidson  
Dandy De Paula  
Lisa Dabbs

STAFF: Grace Lowenberg  
Lorayne Lingat  
Jenita Raksanoh  
Robert Sowell  
Robin Toma  
Siranush Vardanyan

GUEST: Prof. Stacy Lynn- Sant

- 1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgment of Indigenous Peoples:** Commission President Helen Chin called the meeting to order at 12:31 p.m. with a quorum in attendance. President Chin began by reading the L.A. County Land Acknowledgment – which can be found at the following link: [Land Acknowledgment – \(lacounty.gov\)](http://lacounty.gov) - and recognized the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples as original inhabitants of these lands, honoring and paying respect to their elders and descendants; acknowledged that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multi-generational trauma; reminded us of our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation, and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County.
- 2. Review & Approval of December 2, 2024 Meeting Minutes:** The motion to approve the minutes of the

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\* This commissioner, and others marked by an asterisk, attended the meeting via internet video (MS Teams link), providing their location address for inclusion on the posted agenda, in compliance with applicable open meeting laws and policies.

Commission meeting of December 2, 2024 was presented by President Helen Chin. Commissioner Isabelle Gunning made the motion to approve, and Commissioner Fredrick Sykes seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

### **3. President's Report**

**3.1 Spotlight on a Partner- Prof. Stacy-Lynn Sant:** President Chin welcomed Professor Stacy Lynn Sant, a professor who does research at the University of Michigan, looking at sport and strategic planning with a focus on addressing and mitigating human rights issues for large scale sports events. Prof. Sant explained that with the World Cup and Super Bowl coming to Los Angeles, it is important to acknowledge that millions of tourists will be coming into Los Angeles and the work includes proactive planning and management of LA County's impact as the key to generating a positive legacy. She suggested to engage stakeholders early to build trust in and around the events and focus on the issues that are important to them. Additionally, transparency and accountability are also really important to help people have a place to report any issues. Lastly, Prof. Sant recommended research, monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the grievance mechanism falls in line with what is currently being implemented.

**3.2 LACCHR Annual Hate Crime Report Press Conference- Dec 11, 2024:** President Chin briefly shared she had the privilege of attending this event and wanted to acknowledge Commissioners Moss and Sykes for attending as well. President Chin shared that there was a broad attendance and reminded her of the importance of documenting and reporting incidents. Additionally, she shared that all of the Supervisors attended and spoke at this press conference.

**3.3 New Year's message:** President Chin moved on expressing her worries about 2025 and discussed how to move forward with disagreements about the political world by focusing inwardly. President Chin shared a brief passage, "Braiding Sweetgrass" by Robin Wall Kimmerer as a way to remind participants of the importance of solidarity.

### **4. Executive Director's Report**

**4.1 Hate Crime Report Press Conference, December 11, 2024:** Executive Director (ED) Robin Toma began by wishing everyone a Happy New Year and expressed that this last press conference for the Hate Crime Reports was one of the most successful ones that HRC has held considering there were over 3,000 cases received as there was representation from the community, law enforcement, and supporters. ED Toma expressed that having the 5 Supervisors be present was quite beneficial in helping the community and providing resources.

**4.2 Invitation to JFEDLA Celebration on December 16, 2024:** ED Toma shared that he was invited to attend the JFEDLA Celebration event on December 16<sup>th</sup> and that he will be speaking at the upcoming January 25<sup>th</sup> event.

**4.3 Communications Update – Robert Sowell:** Assistant Executive Director (AED) Robert Sowell reported on behalf of PIO Tony Cowser. He shared images of the Supervisors and DA Nathan Hochman at the December 11<sup>th</sup> press conference, expressing the magnitude of PIO Cowser's work. He stated that it does not go unnoticed and emphasized that his work made it possible to successfully organize the press conference. AED Sowell highlighted that the results of this press conference led to an 800% increase of social media mentions.

**4.4 Other Program and Administrative (Budget) Updates:** ED Toma informed attendees that the

CEO of Los Angeles County has asked all agencies to do a budget fulfillment exercise to help identify how funds can be designated and HRC is currently working on this.

## 5. **Committee Reports**

**5.1 Transformative Justice Committee (Gunning):** Commissioner Gunning shared that the committee is still working on the reports, which will be finalized in February or March.

**5.2 Human Rights Committee (Yuen):** President Chin informed all attendees that Commissioner Yuen, chair, was absent, therefore there is no report at this time.

**5.3 John Anson Ford Human Relations (JAF) Awards Committee (Davidson):** Commissioner Montaña reported on behalf of Commissioner Davidson, indicating that she wanted to discuss item 5.3 during the action/discussion item 7.1.

6. **Public Comment: (3 minutes per person):** None was offered.

## 7. **Action/Discussion Items:**

**7.1 JAF Awards Event decisions:** Commissioner Montaña explained that the committee has met and has selected recipients for consideration for the JAF Awards. Commissioners discussed each of the nominees and decided on the top two nominees per district as well as selected awardees for the two county-wide awards. The motion was made to approve the recipients for the two county-wide awards. Commissioner Ellis-Royston abstained and the motion passed unanimously.

**7.2 Update on human rights recognition for LA County:** ED Robin Toma shared that they met with the committee about the investigation for those involved with the **CDOT?**

**7.3 Follow up on annual hate crimes report for LA County:** ED Toma shared that HRC has been drafting a plan in response to the Annual Hate Crime Report that would be an action item for the Board of Supervisors to approve and more information will be provided to Commissioners in upcoming meetings.

**7.4 Collaboration with County Office of Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion (ARDI):**  
Tabled 7.4 without objection due to lack of time.

8. **Commissioner Announcements:** Commissioner Keushkerian shared that he had the honor to attend Supervisor Barger's meeting in the Hall of Administration and was proud to represent the Commission.

9. **Adjournment:** The motion to adjourn in memory of former President Jimmy Carter, Nobel Peace Prize winner and human rights champion and in memory of world-renowned African American poet and activist, Nikki Giovanni. Lastly, in memory of Alicia Gaudet and Betty Jackson, former Commission staff members was made by Commissioner Moss, seconded by Commissioner Davidson. The motion passed unanimously. President Chin adjourned the meeting at 2:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ilan Davidson  
Commission Vice President-Secretary