



**City of Davis
Human Relations Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 26, 2024**

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Baker called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Commissioners present: Felix Alvarez, Kevin Baker (Chair), Connor Gorman (Vice Chair), Ellie Kaplan (Alternate), Amir Kol, Leonie Pickett (left at 7:34), Deema Tamimi, Edgar Wong-Chen

Ex-Officios present: Kate Snow,

Commissioners absent: None

Council Liaisons present: None

Others present: City of Davis staff –Carrie Dyer

2. Approval of Agenda

Pickett moved with second by Alvarez approval of the agenda with moving item 6C to between 6A & 6B and adjourn time at 8:00 instead of 8:30 as documented on agenda.

AYES: Alvarez, Baker, Gorman, Pickett, Kol, Tamimi, Wong-Chen

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners and Liaisons

- Introduction of new Commissioner Ellie Kaplan*
- Davis Neighbors Night Out is October 13*
- Legislature declared October as California Hindu Awareness & Appreciation Month*
- City presented Hispanic Heritage Awareness month proclamation*
- Community vigil on October 7 in Central Park at 6:00 p.m.*
- October 5 and 6 is the International House IFest*
- First student advisory group on eliminating and dehumanizing combative language will happen the week of September 30.*
- California American Native Heritage Day is September 27*
- October 18-20 at Mondavi Center – Dance troupe performance with theme of feminism and anti-Asian violence.*
- Hate Free Together artist events were good and would like to see more and available to a wider audience.*

4. Public Comment

- No public comment*

5. Consent Calendar

A. August 22 Meeting Minutes

Kol moved with second by Tamimi approval of the August 22 minutes with edits made to minor typos.

Motion passed as follows:

AYES: Alvarez, Baker, Gorman, Pickett, Kol, Tamimi, Wong-Chen

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

6. Regular Items

A. Consider Council Subcommittee Proposed Process to Place Tasks/Items on Commission Agendas

Clarifying Questions

- *Is there a process around this already?*
- *Timeline- what is the expected turnaround time for review and putting an item on the agenda?*
- *Is approval needed for every item to discuss?*
- *Asterisks needs clarification. Unclear where it relates to.*
- *Who are the staff that approve or disapprove moving something forward?*
- *What is the criteria or guidelines for approving or denying?*
- *Do the not approved items also go to the City Council? Confusion with the third bullet point in not approve box.*
- *Should it be re-routed back up after modifications?*
- *Is the intent for City Council to assign tasks so there is a work plan?*
- *What is the time frame for reviewing and implementing this new process and how it will impact decisions being made currently?*
- *How is feedback being channeled back?*
- *What is this trying to solve?*
- *Is the intention for all agenda items need to be approved before anything is talked about?*
- *Can the work plan be developed to work on and go forth? What is the threshold for adding new items?*
- *If the proposed item falls under the purview of the commission functions, what does need to be approved?*
- *What is the charge of commissions? To serve the council or be independent? How is independence interpreted by Council? How is it to be interpreted in the Commission Handbook?*

Comments

- *Feels like micro-managing to not even discuss things without approval*
- *Supports A&B (on flow chart) and hopes that council will take more of an interest in commissions*
- *Commissions should be more independent and discuss what they think is important*
- *Would like direction from council about what to work on and what not to work on*

- *At municipal level, the state law authorizes and sets forth roles and responsibilities for Human Relations Commissions*
- *Visual of flow chart is helpful*
- *Appreciates intention to address questions*
- *Good start to help clarifying things*
- *Likes the staff/council approval step to help streamline the timing*

The commission appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback, but would like answers to questions before finalizing thoughts and comments. As they understand it now, there is concern if implemented that the proposed process might affect the opportunity to good work and puts restrictions on work of the commission. The commission would like another opportunity to review with clarifying questions answered, prior to going to Council.

Public Comment:

- *Elaine Roberts-Musser - Concern that this plan is micro-managing and can block commission work for any reason.*
 - o *Commissioners are experts in their field and have different perspectives that Council needs to hear*
 - o *Commissioners should be able to take up innovative ideas*
 - o *Commission should be taking up public interest not City Council*
 - o *Not sure what it is trying to solve*
- *Alan Hirsch – City has problem with collaboration and dealing with conflict. How do we talk about civility – HRC can be the commission to provide that guidance. Citizens need to be empowered.*

B. Discussion of Commission Workplan and Creation of Subcommittees

The Commission began a discussion on updating their work plan and established subcommittees on the following items:

- *Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 2025 Celebration*
 - § *Amir Kol, Kevin Baker, Felix Alvarez*
- *Cesar Chavez*
 - § *Edgar Wong-Chen, Connor Gorman, Deema Tamimi*

Public Comment:

- *Alan Hirsch – MLK's message was how to have productive conflict, could be a theme for 2025 event.*

C. Committee/Liaison Updates

Committees and Liaisons provided updates as needed

- *Campus Council on Community and Diversity (Wong-Chen)*
 - o *No update*
- *City Holiday Observances (Gorman, Kol, Pickett, Snow)*
 - o *Subcommittee met and came up with suggestions that could be incorporated for this year with further work to be done in future years.*
 - § *More groups to participate in activity portion of the evening (Solstice, etc.)*

- § *I-House collaboration to see if any groups who participate in IFest would be interested in participating in the tree lighting event*
- § *Change letter writing to Santa to more winter themed activities*
- § *Add fire spinners as a performance group*
- § *Encourage performers to diversify their song list and decentralize Christmas*
- § *Change downtown banners to be more winter themed instead of red and green*
- § *HRC booth to provide opportunity to receive feedback at event*
 - *What do you love about this Davis tradition?*
 - *What would you suggest doing differently?*
 - *What would you like to contribute?*
- o *How do we recognize and celebrate major holidays throughout the year, winter and otherwise for all members of the community?*

Public Comment:

- *No public comment*

7. Future Agenda Items/Long Range Calendar

- *Review workplan and calendar items for the upcoming year*
- *Webpage Review*
- *Free Speech*
- *Multi-culturalism event for youth in Davis*
- *Critical Race Theory/Ethnic Studies Counter Narrative*

Public Comment:

- *No public comment*

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:02 to the next regularly scheduled meeting of October 24, 2024.