



**City of Davis
Human Relations Commission
Minutes
Thursday, October 24, 2024**

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Baker called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Commissioners present: Felix Alvarez, Kevin Baker (Chair), Connor Gorman (Vice Chair), Amir Kol, Leonie Pickett, Deema Tamimi, Edgar Wong-Chen

Ex-Officios present: Kate Snow, Megan Macklin (for Mikael Villalobos)

Commissioners absent: Ellie Kaplan (Alternate)

Council Liaisons present: Gloria Partida

Others present: City of Davis staff –Carrie Dyer

2. Approval of Agenda

Kol moved with second by Tamimi approval of the agenda as presented. The motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners and Liaisons

- Staff provided an update on the Davis Neighbors Night Out event that took place on October 13.*
- Staff updated on the proclamations presented on October 15 and upcoming on November 12*
- Thank you to Alan Hirsch for extending the invitation to the Women For Peace Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom National Conference.*
- DJUSD superintendent's student advisory on combatting dehumanizing language, symbols and behaviors has met again and is progressing beautifully.*
- DJUSD launching a fellowship for teachers to learn about Jewish American history and launching a partnership with a UC Davis professor of Islam Studies.*
- Rainbow crosswalk in front of DaVinci was vandalized with anti LGBTQ language. It was quickly fixed by the school community.*
- Proud of Davis and County for not reacting in the way that other cities are with recent action to criminalize sleeping outside.*
- October 25 is Larry Itliong Day*
- Saturday, November 2 Día de Muertos event at Cesar Chavez Elementary and another one at the cemetery.*
- Gathering of Arab culture and solidarity event on the quad on campus was very successful.*
- AFSCME 3299 union on campus, made up of primarily frontline service and patient care workers, is currently in contract negotiations and may move into a strike soon.*

4. Public Comment

- *Alan Hirsch – How do we hold conflict, as we'll never eradicate hate. Conflict especially arises during election season. Shared essay on healing Davis. Don't suppress rhetoric, need to figure out how to bring the conflict for discussion.*
- *Nadia Alam – Member of Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom. Was recently alerted about a group called October 7 Coalition who are posting on social media. Causing fear and feeling scared. Would like the City to look into this and take it seriously.*
- *Pattie Fong – Is starting early on planning a film event, similar to the one that HRC sponsored this year in recognition of the National Day of Remembrance of Japanese Americans Incarceration during WWII. Film Kintsurokori – February 19 at the Veterans Memorial Theatre. Would like the HRC to consider co-sponsoring again this year.*
- *Laleh – Concern about Davis October 7 Coalition group and the harassment happening. There is no space for this in a peaceful world, especially in Davis. Need space to talk about differences. Recommend HRC to check their Instagram – very disturbing posts, promoting violence and division.*

5. Consent Calendar

A. September 26 Meeting Minutes

Kol moved with second by Alvarez approval of the September 26 minutes as presented. The motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Pickett

ABSENT: None

6. Regular Items

A. Public Forum on Recent Hate Incidents in the Davis Community (15 minutes)

The Human Relations Commission provided an opportunity to discuss and receive public input on recent hate incidents in the Davis community.

- *Davis Police Department made a hate crime arrest on October 1 for hate slurs and assault.*
- *Worthy of further inquiry and examination. Might consider creating a subcommittee.*
- *The Commission has received numerous emails with concern regarding the Davis October 7 Coalition.*
- *The Commission received a newsletter called the Antisemitism Report that upon research, came from the October 7 Coalition.*
- *The University response to protests and demonstrations is led by Student Affairs. Priorities are around education of campus policies.*
- *Doesn't think chasing one person leading an Instagram account is a good use of HRC time, as there is hate on many social media platforms.*

- *The logo of the October 7 Coalition reflects similarity to the City of Davis logo.*
- *Graffiti was observed in the Davis Food Coop shopping center with swastikas and Hitler painted on the windows. Need to think about how to educate the community on how to immediately report to the City.*
- *IG stories on October 7 Coalition page incites/encourages violence. Need to think about what can happen if people read this. Would like HRC to really think about this seriously.*
- *Would like HRC to think about building bridges.*
- *Building bridges is important, but also need to address hate and direct physical threats and risks.*
- *Commission and community do need to speak up and do something to help community feel safe. Making statements is something we can do. Speaking up for each other is something we can actively do.*

Public Comment:

- *Alan Hirsch – Hate language happening every night in people's home from Fox news. Be aware of how Antisemitism can be weaponized to attack all of us.*
- *Scott Steward – Student assembly on October 7- observed a group of about 12 people made up of students and others about 25 yards away – putting their phones in people's faces instigating and promoting hostility. Encourages HRC to check in on it.*
- *Ann Block – In 30 years in Davis has never observed as much hatred and vitriol as is being expressed now. The October 7 Coalition has both on line and in person have been harassing and intimidating members of the community. Questioning why nothing has been to date by local officials? This group must be denounced and action taken to stop it.*
- *Amy – Heartbreaking to hear of the incidents happening. There is not one Jewish community in Davis. There are many people with many different views. Antisemitism and Anti Palestinian actions need to be addressed.*

B. Continue Discussion of Commission Workplan and Creation of Subcommittees

The Commission continued discussion on updating their work plan.

- *Kol proposed a project called The Olive Branch. Partner with UCD Olive Center for a community project to harvest local olives to create olive oil and bring people together. Would like to have as a City initiative. No funding required.*
 - o *Consider that if doing this to try and bring Israeli and Palestinians together may be problematic, considering the destruction of olive trees in the West Bank.*
 - o *If we do this, do we have people prepared to address dialog?*
 - o *If advertised as a City event, need to think through further details.*
 - o *Important to have all the truth at events. Have good facilitation and good dialog.*

- o *Partner with Hate Free Together?*
- o *Could the produced olive oil be donated to benefit the larger community?*
- o *Community spaces and gathering is important – especially third spaces, where people aren't expected to spend money – just encouraged to gather and socialize.*
- o *In favor of food event but has concerns about event trying to make it about peace without being clear what is happening in Palestine.*
- o *Due to quick timeline needed, good to explore this as a model or something similar for the future.*
- *Tamimi proposed a subcommittee to look into, identify and report on discrimination of Arabs, Palestinians, Muslims and their supporters/allies within the Davis community that researches the following:*
 - o *Gathers and identifies the experiences that people are having in relation to this kind of bigotry*
 - o *Creates a safe space and avenue for those who have experienced this bigotry to report on it*
 - o *Document and gather these stories*
 - o *Report back out to the HRC, Hate Free Together Exec Team and City Council on this*
 - o *Gather information on k-12 students and families by developing a partnership with DJUSD to understand what initiatives are in place to support curriculum around this*
 - o *Ensure that Hate Free Together is aware of what the community is facing and reflects this with the appropriate resources and statements on their site*
 - o *Draft a resolution to advocate against this form of bigotry and express solidarity and care for those impacted*
 - o *Have an immediate goal of working on a response to the concerns about October 7 Coalition.*
- *Gorman interested in creating a subcommittee to research ways for community members to report hate incidents outside of reporting to the police department. Could be in conjunction with Hate Free Together.*
 - o *Concern that people may still have fear submitting incidents in any type of electronic way.*
- *Concern of having one committee focusing on one type of discrimination and not another, which may make people feel excluded.*
- *Could HRC receive monthly updates on number of reported events.*
- *Would like HRC to be a space that builds bridges rather than having multiple subcommittees to police activity.*

(Gorman moves with second by Pickett to finish item 6B and address item 6D and then adjourn. Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None)

Gorman moves with second by Baker to create a subcommittee of Gorman, Baker and Alvarez to explore ideas for researching ways for community members to report hate incidents outside of reporting to the police department. Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Tamimi moves with second by Alvarez to create a subcommittee of Baker, Tamimi and Kaplan to look into, identify and report on discrimination of Arabs, Palestinians, Muslims and their supporters/allies within the Davis community. Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: Kol

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Pickett moves with second by Baker to replace Baker on the Martin Luther King subcommittee. Motion passed by:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Public Comment:

- Alan Hirsch – Just talking also has value to provide exposure.*

C. Committee/Liaison Updates – Postponed to the next meeting

Committees and Liaisons provided updates as needed

- Campus Council on Community and Diversity (Wong-Chen)*
- City Holiday Observances (Gorman, Kol, Pickett, Snow)*
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration (Alvarez, Pickett, Kol)*
- Cesar Chavez Celebration (Gorman, Tamimi, Wong-Chen)*

D. November and December meeting dates

The Commission considered alternative meeting dates for November due to the Thanksgiving holiday and determined that November 21 at 6:00 the Davis Senior Center will work. They will talk about a December meeting date at the next meeting.

Public Comment:

None

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*

8. Adjournment

The Commission adjourned at 9:00 p.m. to the next meeting of November 21, 2024.