



City of Davis
Human Relations Commission Minutes
November 21, 2024

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Baker called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Commissioners present: Felix Alvarez, Kevin Baker (Chair), Connor Gorman (Vice Chair), Ellie Kaplan (Alternate), Amir Kol, Leonie Pickett (arrived at 7:42), Deema Tamimi, Edgar Wong-Chen (arrived at 6:22)

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

Commissioners absent: None

Council Liaisons present: None

Others present: City of Davis staff –Carrie Dyer

2. Approval of Agenda

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

AYES: Alvarez, Baker, Gorman, Kaplan, Kol, Tamimi

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Pickett, Wong-Chen

Public Comment:

- Alan Hirsch – Wants public comment on every item. Agenda should be clear and it should be noted on every time.*

3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners and Liaisons

- Dyer provided an update on the annual tree lighting event*
- AFSME 3299 is on strike pending negotiations with UC Davis.*
- Training by the Institute for the Understanding of Anti-Palestinian Racism was very helpful*
- Attended Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom conference and was a really good experience and provided opportunity for more understanding of complexities of humans engaging at this time.*

4. Public Comment

- Alan Hirsch – wondered why the public forum item was moved from this agenda*
- Leah Hibbel – concern that the commission has not done anything in regards to ongoing public comment documenting Antisemitism incidents, however created at subcommittee to look into anti Palestinian discriminations and an Instagram account.*
- Concern about subcommittee that was created to look into local anti-Palestinian discriminations and Instagram accounts. HRC is supposed to study equity for everyone.*

Dan Ovejda –Would like HRC to investigate various other groups/

- David Segal – Has never seen anything so ridiculous as to what happened at the last HRC meeting in regards to creating the sub-committee to look into anti Palestinian acts and the Instagram account, especially when there has been ongoing acts of Antisemitism in town.*

5. Consent Calendar

Gorman moved with second by Alvarez approval of the October 24 minutes as presented. The motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Pickett

Public Comment:

Alan Hirsch – When public documents are submitted they should be included as part of the minutes.

6. Regular Items

A. Continue Discussion of Commission Workplan and Creation of Subcommittees

The Commission continued discussion on updating their work plan and consider establishing subcommittees, in relation to the workplan on the following items:

- Civil Rights Ordinance Process*
 - § City has Civil Rights Ordinance that identifies the role of the HRC. The commission has suggested that the ordinance be updated to reflect updates to state and federal law. Suggestion that the commission review the current ordinance and make recommendations for updating language of ordinance. Look into the functions of the HRC that the ordinance stipulates.*
 - § Would like more background and well defined output and time frame before deciding to form a subcommittee.*
 - § The subcommittee would do research and bring the information back to the full commission for education and review.*

Kaplan moves with second by Tamimi to create a subcommittee to review the Civil Rights Ordinance Process. Motion passes as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Pickett

Tamimi moves with second by Kol to have Baker, Kaplan and Wong-Chen be the subcommittee members. The motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Pickett

Public Comment on Civil Rights Ordinance Process

- *Dan Ovejda - What will this committee will be focused on?*
- *Leah Hibbel - How will it be integrated with UCD?*
- *Alan Hirsch - Does commission want to spend time on technical law vs. relationships*

Commissioner concern about how the subcommittee on Inquiry into Discriminations against Arabs, Palestinians, Muslims and their supporters/allies within the Davis community in 2023 and 2024 was created and would like the commission to reconsider the members of the subcommittee.

Public Comment

- *Alan Hirsch – The subcommittee could consider inviting a member of the public to participate in the subcommittee to reflect the Jewish perspective.*
- *Feels it's important for the subcommittee to have members that feel safe for members of the public to express incidents that have happened to them. Could other subcommittees to be formed to address other areas of hurt?*
- *Leah Hibbel – anyone on the commission should be able to be on any subcommittee to reflect different viewpoints. If there are legitimate concerns about a member of the commission, there needs to be an investigation.*
- *Supports commission action to create the subcommittee to investigate Inquiry into Discriminations against Arabs, Palestinians, Muslims. The inquiry is beyond just statements made on Instagram, this is in regards to calls of hate.*
- *David Segal –Concern is not that there is a subcommittee created for Inquiry into Discriminations against Arabs, Palestinians, Muslims. It is that the HRC has been hearing complaints for a year about Antisemitism acts and hasn't done anything.*
- *Dan Ovejda – Supports all inquiries of acts of hate in town. However, nothing has been done from the commission in relations to the numerous data provided on Antisemitism incidents.*
- *Has observed that many young Jewish people are afraid to wear their Star of David necklace.*

Would be in favor of having another committee to address Inquiry into Antisemitism acts.

Staff informed commission that there was a Council subcommittee on Antisemitism. Staff is not aware of current status of the Council subcommittee.

Kol moves to re-establish the subcommittee members assigned to the committee on Inquiry into Discriminations against Arabs, Palestinians,

Muslims and their supporters/allies within the Davis community in 2023 and 2024. Motion fails for lack of a second.

Kol moves with second Alvarez by to create a subcommittee to investigate and document incidents of Antisemitism and discrimination within the City of Davis and propose strategies to combat it. Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Kol moves with second by Alvarez to have Kol, Pickett and Wong-Chen on the subcommittee. Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

- *Land Acknowledgment Support*
- *Other Workplan Items*

B. Co-Sponsor Request for Film Screening

The Commission considered a request to co-sponsor a film screening of Kintsurokori, in recognition of the Day of Remembrance of Japanese American Incarceration during WWII. The free film screening is scheduled for February 19, 2025 at the Veterans Memorial Theatre and will be open to the public.

Commissioner Comments:

- *Important for Commission to elevate the event and provide resources to the community regarding concerns*
- *As co-sponsored event, does City take care of all accommodation needs?*

Public Comment:

- *Is an immigration attorney in town and people are already reaching out with concerns about deportation. Important to elevate and provide resources to the community.*

Pickett moves with second by Tamimi to cosponsor the film screening event.

The motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Wong-Chen moves with second by Pickett to extend the meeting to 8:35 p.m. Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

C. Committee/Liaison Updates

Committees and Liaisons provided updates as needed

- *Campus Council on Community and Diversity (Wong-Chen) – no update*
- *City Holiday Observances (Gorman, Kol, Pickett, Snow)*
 - o *Committee is making progress on working towards moving towards a winter celebration and less representative of Christmas.*
 - o *Would like to have a menorah during the days of Hanukkah in the public domain.*
 - o *Consider all winter celebrations, including Lunar New Year, etc.*
 - o *Instead of trying to neutralize everything, consider celebrating everything and providing education.*
- *Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration (Alvarez, Pickett, Kol) – no update*
- *Cesar Chavez Celebration (Gorman, Tamimi, Wong-Chen) – no update*
- *Research Ways to Report Hate Incidents (Alvarez, Baker, Gorman) – no update*
- *Inquiry into Discriminations against Arabs, Palestinians, Muslims and their supporters/allies within the Davis community in 2023 and 2024 (Baker, Kaplan, Tamimi) – no update*

Public Comment:

Alan Hirsch – Reform movement, largest Jewish movement in the United States, does not publicly celebrate Hanukkah

Leah Hibbel – Think about looking into seasonally celebrated holidays and how those can be reflected and celebrated.

D. December Meeting Date

The Commission will consider an alternative meeting date for December, due to City closures.

Pickett moves with second by Kol to not have a December meeting, allowing subcommittees time to do their work. Motion passed as follows:

AYES: Alvarez, Baker, Gorman, Kol, Tamimi,

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Wong-Chen

ABSENT: Pickett

Public Comment:

Alan Hirsch – Would like to have December meeting with general public comment, even if a special meeting.

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*
- *Bill 9495 consider for January and taking off if needed*
- *What does Davis being a Sanctuary City mean and reaffirming status and how to truly support immigrants - January*
- *Highlighting and Reviewing Federal Policy Changes, DEI and how it effects existence of commission – February*
- *Huynh Award - January*

Gorman moves with second by Pickett that the agenda has items to reaffirm and strengthen City's Sanctuary City status and item discussing bill around non profits. Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Pickett

Public Comment:

- *Alan Hirsch – shared information on UC Davis study about campus being Antisemitic. Would like to note that it was a very small study to create fear in community. Would like to add Bill 9495 and Sanctuary City status for discussion on long range.*

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.