



**City of Davis
Human Relations Commission
Minutes
Thursday, February 27 2025**

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Baker called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

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

Ex-Officios present: Mikael Villalobos

Commissioners absent: None

Council Liaisons present: Linda Deos

Others present: City of Davis staff - Carrie Dyer

2. Approval of Agenda

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

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners and Liaisons

- Commissioner and Council Liaison Introductions to welcome Council Liaison Linda Deos*
- DJUSD has two students who are interested in being the HRC student ex-officio. One will be the regular and one will be the alternate.*
- A number of commissioners expressed a desire for the Commission to address concerns directly with each other and, as the HRC, to model how to have hard conversations with each other, while demonstrating civility.*

4. Public Comment

- Alan Hirsch – expressed concern about the title of the Hate Free Together program. Very interested in how to have civil conflict and the Principle of Charity. Provided a handout to the Commission. Assume people come with good motives and have a dialog.*
- Sara – passed out They Call Me a Lioness book for everyone*
- Erica, Annie, Ann Block and three non-identified people expressed concern that a commissioner was criticized by another commissioner during City Council public comment. Would like HRC to have protocols for when there are personal conflicts.*
- Dean Johansson – Has Civil Rights training and an attorney for many years. “Hecklers Veto” is the concept that a party will shut down the freedom of*

speech. You're entitled to your own opinion, but you're not entitled to your own facts.

- *Daphney O'Neill – Freedom of speech does not mean it is okay to spread hateful speech. What can HRC do address hate speech?*
- *Reem Awad-Rashmawi – Palestinians in this community are faced with hate every day. Concern that individuals in the community don't want them speaking up in protest cause it's considered violent.*
- *No name provided – Would like to recognize that the concern being raised during the Council meeting was about potential hate speech. There is an enormous problem with Antisemitism in Davis and at UC Davis. Encourages HRC to fight against hate speech.*
- *Micah – Had a lovely experience at a Shabbat Service at the encampments.*

5. Consent Calendar

Tamimi moved with second by Wong-Chen approval of the January 23 minutes as presented. The motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

6. Regular Items (7:05)

A. Public Forum on Recent Hate Incidents in the Davis Community

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

Public Comment

- *Alan Hirsch – Booth at Farmers Market that attacks basic values of Davis and the University. The Flat Earth booth is a conspiracy theory and we laugh at it. That is how we could consider reacting to other peoples statements. Concern that we take small incidents and blow them up.*
- *Sara Mitchell – Hearing about more racism coming from the schools during lunch and recess, causing concern amongst the community and kids going to school.*

Commissioner Comments:

- *ICE arrest in Davis last week. Parent of a student in Davis. Proud of how our community responded with NorCal Resist, etc. Lots of support for the family happening.*
- *Feels like comment made at City Council meeting last week felt like hate directed directly at them.*
- *Concern that we are entering into a scary new world. Suggestion to channel this energy in a constructive way. We need to respect the process and respect that everyone's voice matters. This is an*

opportunity to test the HRC to prove to the community that HRC can build more bridges than take them down.

- *It is racist to say that because someone cares about Palestinians that they are racist and Antisemitic.*

B. Annual Thong Hy Huynh Awards

The Commission determined the Thong Hy Huynh nomination review sub-committee to review the nominations received for the Thong Hy Huynh awards and make recommendations back to the full commission for consideration.

Public Comment:

None

Pickett moves with second by Tamimi to appoint Alvarez, Kaplan and Wong-Chen on the nomination review subcommittee committee. The motion passes as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Kol

ABSENT: None

C. Webpage Review

The Commission discussed interest in reviewing the Human Relations Commission webpage and created a sub-committee to provide recommended updates.

Public Comment:

None

Commissioner Comments:

- *Consider expanding subcommittee work to look at other City pages as they relate to the HRC and if there are updates that could be considered, as suggested via email to the Commission regarding the History and Symbols page as well as expand upon the Land Acknowledgement.*
- *In favor of taking a broader view to look at various aspects of City website.*

Alvarez moves with second by Tamimi to create a subcommittee to review the HRC webpage, along with other City webpages as they relate to the Commission. Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Gorman moves with second by Kaplan to have Alvarez, Pickett and Tamimi on the webpage review subcommittee. Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

D. Committee Updates

Committees provided updates as needed

- Campus Council on Community and Diversity (Wong-Chen)
 - *Significant discussion on Land Acknowledgment. Opportunity to learn from UC Davis on how they are proceeding with guidance on how to engage with Tribal communities.*
- City Holiday Observances (Gorman, Kol, Pickett, Snow)
 - *No update at this point.*
- Civil Rights Ordinance Process (Baker, Kaplan, Wong-Chen)
 - *Committee will come back at the next meeting with additional recommendations.*
- Cesar Chavez Celebration (Gorman, Tamimi, Wong-Chen)
 - *Committee is currently working on program and has secured the Central Park for April 26 with the Bike Hall of Fame as back up.*
 - *Theme – Sí, se puede – The Power of Collective Action*
- Research Ways to Report Hate Incidents (Alvarez, Baker, Gorman)
 - *Discussions and types of reporting are happening. Important to decrease barriers to reporting and bring awareness to ways to do so. Focus on ways to support the people experiencing hate incidents.*
- Inquiry into Discriminations against Arabs, Palestinians, Muslims and their supporters/allies within the Davis community in 2023 and 2024 (Baker, Kaplan, Tamimi)
 - *Committee has met twice since last meeting.*
- Investigate and document incidents of Antisemitism and discrimination within the City of Davis and propose strategies to combat it (Kol, Pickett, Wong-Chen)
 - *Encouraging Jewish community to create a group to host an event during Jewish American Heritage Month. A community group has been created for the planning.*
 - *Goal is to have an event on May 31 and would like HRC to consider co-sponsoring.*
 - *Community picnic in Central Park with food and music and maybe some banners and quotes to support the theme.*
- Commissioner Comments
 - *Likes the idea of celebrating the Jewish community. Would like it to be done in an inclusive way to ensure that involves various groups for input.*
 - *Contact Jews for Justice if not already.*

- *Would like to see more information about the plan ahead of time.*
- *Concern that organizers might have concerns about working with Jews for Justice.*
- *Not sure that HRC can endorse it, based on maybe not being able to work with all groups.*
- *Hope that for a few hours that people with varying viewpoints could come together to celebrate community.*

Alvarez moves with second by Kaplan to extend the meeting to 9:00.

Motion passed as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

- *Public Comment:*
 - *Alan Hirsch – Can't speak for all of Bet Haverim, but believes they would be in support. Jews for Justice is also a group to include.*
 - *Annie – love the idea of honoring Jewish Americans. Would like to reach out to Jews for Justice for participation.*
- *Sanctuary City (Alvarez, Gorman, Pickett, Snow)*
 - *Reviewed current resolution and all the times that it has been reaffirmed. Talked about reviewing language and adding additional language to strengthen it.*
 - *Looked into becoming a Welcoming City, as other cities are.*
 - *Talked about law enforcement agencies coming together to provide information to the community and if that is allowed.*
 - *Look into adding text to include other protected groups into the resolution. Sanctuary for oppressed and marginalized groups, specifically for trans rights and reproductive and gender affirming care.*
- *Commissioner Comments:*
 - *There are groups in town thinking about this, including Culture of Community, so might consider reaching out to them for ideas and resources.*

Public Comment:

- *Ann Block – Regarding the Sanctuary City subcommittee, would like to suggest that the City Council to reaffirm the resolution. Concern that ICE will be coming more into our community. Be aware of what is said to justify arrest isn't always true. Community members are scared to leave their houses or go to work.*

7. Future Agenda Items/Long Range Calendar

The Commission reviewed the long range calendar topics to determine priorities and discussed items that can be removed. The current long-range items are as follows:

- *Huynh Award Nomination Review – March*
- *CCRU presentation – April*
- *Land Acknowledgment/ City of Davis Patwin Relations -*
- *Bill HR 9495*
- *Highlighting and Reviewing Federal Policy Changes, DEI and how it effects existence of commission*
- *Review workplan and calendar items for the upcoming year*
- *Free Speech*
- *Multi-culturalism event for youth in Davis*
- *Critical Race Theory/Ethnic Studies Counter Narrative*

The Commission discussed a change of the regularly scheduled March meeting date, due to the DJUSD and UCD Spring Break schedule. The Commission will reconvene for their next meeting on April 2, pending room availability.

Public Comment:

- *Alan Hirsch – Encourages HRC to engage with HFT on their strategic plan. Expand upon Principles of Civility and what it is. If the next meeting is a Special Meeting, would like the special meeting to have general public comment.*

8. Adjournment

The Commission meeting adjourned at 9:13 by consensus.