



## Human Rights Commission

Regular Meeting | May 19, 2026 | 3:30 – 4:30 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 10 North

### Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Casey Bakhsh, Ana Barros, Whitney Cipolla, Drew France, Larissa McNeil, Katie Eller Murray, Amanda Peregrina, Parisa Pilehvar, Joyce Roberts, Tamecca Rogers, Andrea Walker

Commissioners Absent: Dezeray Edwards, Anthony Meadows, Dave Walker

#### I. Call to Order

- a. Chairman France called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm.

#### II. Approve Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairman France entertained a motion to approve the April meeting minutes.
  - i. Commissioner Cipolla made a motion, Commissioner Peregrina seconded.
    1. Aye: 11, Nay: 0, Abstain: 1 (Commissioner Eller Murray)
  - ii. Motion carried, April meeting minutes approved.

#### III. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Recap Tour of The Center for Individuals with Physical Challenges
  - i. Three HRC members and two City staff toured The Center on May 12. It's an incredible facility enhancing the lives of people with physical challenges. They serve a wide range of clients.
  - ii. There is an opportunity for HRC to spread awareness of The Center and the services they provide.
- b. Recap Title V Commissions Chairs & Vice Chairs Meeting
  - i. Heard from City Legal staff about fund management for commissions, reinforcing that commissions are part of the City. It was helpful information to move forward with commission initiatives and events.
- c. Chairman France attended the Hispanic Cultural Night at Union with Commissioner Barros and the Financial and Neighborhood Resource Fair with other commissioners.
  - i. Chairman France advocates for having candy at future tabling events.
  - ii. These events brought to light the need for a refreshed, concise one pager that highlights what HRC does. Commissioner Barros noted that providing materials to folks who speak other languages isn't just about word-to-word translations but also about connecting ideas to their cultural context.
    1. Commissioner Eller Murray suggested hosting focus groups to test out what verbiage properly conveys the message.
- d. Takeaways from Individual Commissioner Meetings



- i. Chairman France and Vice Chair Rogers met with nine commissioners and are still open to those who haven't met with them yet.
- ii. Themes:
  - 1. Agree on why we're here and the desire for equity and access.
  - 2. We need a clear structure for accountability and action. There is opportunity for more role clarity.
  - 3. There's a gap between discussion and execution, need more tangible progress and visible results.
  - 4. Meetings can feel like a rehash of the recent past sometimes making it difficult to know what progress being made. Commissioners are open to more pre-work, action between meetings, and better coordination of community events.
  - 5. Commissioners feel alignment with existing goals and agree it's important work to continue.
- iii. Commissioner France committed to advancing two items:
  - 1. Building succession for commissioners who have specialized duties on HRC.
  - 2. Considering venue changes for meetings or other ways to be out in community.

#### **IV. Updates on HRC Goals**

- a. Commissioner Pilehvar Goal 2 – Increase diverse representation and equitable recruitment practices across all City of Tulsa ABCs
  - i. Chairman France and Commissioner Pilehvar met with Deputy Mayor Reyes, Dana Walton, and Brentom Todd in the Mayor's Office to discuss the memo.
  - ii. Commissioner Pilehvar brought additional data from other reports previously requested by HRC
    - 1. 24% of all ABC seats have turned over under Mayor Nichols's tenure.
    - 2. Over the last 5 years, 62% of seats have someone new.
    - 3. 16% of seats have been occupied by the same person for 10+ years, with less than 2% being filled by the same person for 20+ years.
    - 4. Only 12 of 27 currently vacant seats have an organization affiliation or industry restriction on the seat; only 2 seats have city council district restrictions.
  - iii. Dana and Brentom work very hard to recruit commission members who have relevant background and experience while being mindful of representation gaps.
  - iv. District composition of the ABCs reflects general civic engagement such as voter turnout.
  - v. Commissioner Pilehvar referred to the handout with drafted recommendations to City Council.
    - 1. This document highlights cross-functional potential of solving this issue. HRC can highlight different roles everyone can play.
  - vi. Commission Discussion:
    - 1. Commissioner Eller Murray asked if commissions invite people who are potential future commissioners to their meetings. Commissioner Pilehvar



noted that public engagement looks different across commissions, and Dr. Rogers underscored the importance of personally inviting people. Commissioner Bakhsh suggested actively inviting Compassionate Tulsa folks to stay after their award is given so they can experience a meeting.

2. Chairman France and Commissioner Pilehvar clarified the function of this document is to remind City Council that HRC is ready to present to them, hopefully prompting scheduling a time to present at a committee meeting.

**V. Possible Action: Approve Recommendations Aligned with Goal 2**

- a. One edit made to recommendations document:
  - i. Add a bullet point under the For Human Rights Commission section: Identify commission-specific strategies to engage potential applicants during Title V Commission and committee meeting times.
- b. Chairman France entertained a motion to approve the recommendations to City Council aligned with Goal 2 with one edit.
  - i. Commissioner Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Barros seconded.
    1. Aye: 12, Nay: 0
  - ii. Motion carried, recommendations approved with one edit.
- c. Chairman France will email recommendations to City Council.

**VI. Updates on HRC Goals**

- a. Commissioner Eller Murray: Goal 1 – Improve access to the City of Tulsa Department of Resilience and Equity’s resources
  - i. Chairman France recapped updates from recent months.
  - ii. Commissioner Roberts practiced submitting a human rights complaints form and started comparing questions we ask on our form versus peer cities’ forms.

**VII. Committee, Liaison, and Title V Commissions Calls for Action**

- a. Tomás Rivera Awards Ceremony – Commissioner Barros received a hero in education award. Commissioner Barros reflected on the intentionality of the Hispanic/Latinx Affairs Commission to conduct the ceremony in Spanish, with English speakers using listening devices that provide real time interpretation.
- b. Commissioner Cipolla: June is Pride Month. There are different celebrations taking place, including OKEQ’s Equality Gala on June 20.
- c. Commissioner McNeil: May 30 – June 1, formerly Go Green for Greenwood, is now Tulsa Race Massacre Observance Day. Businesses will light their businesses green and people will wear green in commemoration of the 1921 Race Massacre.
- d. Commissioner Starks reminded folks to think of military families and veterans during Memorial Day Weekend.

**VIII. Old Business** – no old business

**IX. New Business** – no new business

**X. Announcements / Public Comments**

- a. Rudisill Library’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on May 30. The library will close in June to move to their new location, with the opening date undetermined at this time.
- b. HRC meeting June 15, no meeting in July. HRC will need to establish the Humanitarian of the Year Award review committee in June
- c. City Auditor’s Survey Evaluate the 918



- d. Community Conversations are ongoing.
- e. July 21: TYPROS Pub Club Commission Fair
- f. July 24: Title V and Beyond Apology Commissions Retreat
- g. June 16: American Legion Post 1 anniversary, Mayor Nichols will speak
- h. Dr. Rogers is working on a documentary telling the stories of women who are incarcerated for killing their abusers. Will have an event trailer reveal on May 27.

**XI. Adjournment**

- a. Chairman France entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
  - i. Commissioner Peregrina made a motion, Commissioner Pilehvar seconded.
    - 1. Aye: 12, Nay: 0
  - ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 4:31 pm.