



Human Relations Commission

WEDNESDAY, September 18th, 2024
In-Person Meeting, 6:00 p.m. – 7: 00 p.m.
Location: San Diego City Council Chambers
202 C. Street, 12th Floor, SD, CA 92101

Minutes

Commissioners: Olympia Beltran, Rickie Brown, Sara Brown, Faye Detsky-Weil, Yessica Diaz-Roman, Tyler Duncan, MH Fields, Julia Legaspi, April Purcell, Tootie Thomas, Ryan Trabuco, Daneyel Walker, Nicole Murray-Ramirez.

Staff Liaison Executive Director: Gerald Brown

Item 1: Call to Order: Chair Tootie Thomas

Item 2: Commissioner Roll Call Vice Chair Tyler Duncan

Excused absences: Commissioners April Purcell and Julia Legaspi

Item 3: Minutes Chair Tootie Thomas

Motion to accept July Minutes: Commissioner Faye Detsky-Weil so motioned, and it was seconded by Secretary Commissioner Ryan Trabuco. Roll call vote made; all commissioners voted to accept minutes. No opposition. No abstentions.

Item 4: Motion - To amend and revise the Human Relations Commission's Bylaws, Article 3 (Organization and Meetings) Section 3.5. 3.5 Meetings and Attendance. To read:

The Commission shall meet monthly in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act. It is the responsibility of each Commissioner to attend all meetings. All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act. The Commission may at the discretion of the Chair, adjourn the meeting twice a year in August and December to allow Commissioners time for to meet additional obligations. The Chair may also adjourn meeting in advance due to lack of action items or a quorum. The Chair reserves the right to call an emergency meeting if needed. (Only the ite/s that caused the emergency meeting may be addressed at meeting This will be done in council with the Executive Committee, Executive Director and Director of the Office of Boards and Commission.

Roll call vote made: All Commissioners voted in the affirmative to make the necessary change to the Bylaws. No opposition. No abstentions.

** Up on review by the City Attorney's Office, the Commission cannot make the change. The City's Municipal Code states that the Commission shall meet monthly. The only exception for not meeting is quorum was not met. **

Item 5: Commissioner Reports

Chair Tootie Thomas

Commissioner Sara Brown: Alerted everyone that the Jewish community time of celebration, High Holy Days and reflection are upon us. Beginning with Rosh Hashanah, then it will be Yom Kippur, then it will be Sukkot, then it will be Shemini Yetzet, and Simchat Torah. Commissioner Brown said, this means that apart from Yom Kippur, we'll be eating a lot of food and, gathering as a community, but I also want to flag that it's a time of high tension, because in the middle of the Jewish High Holy Days, we will be commemorating one year since the Hamas terror attack and massacre and genocidal rape of community members in Israel, and there are still 101 hostages who are being held in Gaza. She asked the Commissioners to be aware if they have Jewish communities in their area, to check in, wish them a Happy New Year, but also be mindful that it's a really hard time for the community. We will be hosting a community vigil on October 7th, and if anybody would like details, or if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us. We're expecting several thousand people to come, and I'd be happy to offer details.

Commissioner Daneyel Walker: our business district, the bid in our area, our district now is rebuilding itself, and we are now looking for board members. If you know anyone that is in our district that would be interested in becoming, a board member of the business district then let me know because I am going to be a part of the board the next meeting is on October 3rd, the meeting will be at the Southeastern Live Well Center. She also said, they are in the process of renaming the business district. On September 21st from 12 to 1:30 pm we will be featuring at the Mental Bar Cafe the San Diego United Against Hate. We will be presenting Serenity and Strength Meditation and a Sound Bath so please, come be a part we will be kicking, of the week.

Commissioner Nicole Murray Ramirez said, that she was excited to announce that 18 years ago, after a Hate Crime was committed against four individuals outside of San Diego Pride, myself and some businessmen got together and got a hold of Crime Stoppers and raised \$35,000 to establish a Hate Crimes Fund for all communities. She said 18 years later, we discovered they never implemented it. Crime Stoppers never enacted the fund, which, of course, you can't blame the current board. They didn't even know there was such a fund. 18 years ago, it was a whole, different Crime Stoppers, Board of Directors. The sad part of it is I think of all the Hate Crimes that have been committed in the last 18 years in all of our communities where I think this reward would have been helpful. But I had a meeting with the Crime Stoppers and their president and their new board, which were, of course, very apologetic. But the good news is, of course, the money was still there. They just never enacted it. But I have made a commitment and I'm signing an agreement with them that this Hate Crimes Fund is going to be re-established and they have committed \$2,000 for any hate crime against any community. That reward will be automatic. On October 7th, the Crime Stoppers and the police chief, the district attorney, the mayor, will be having a press conference, announcing the special Hate Crimes Fund for all of San Diego County. All of you are invited to this conference. I had a conversation with Reverend Brown about the funds. I came up with a suggestion which they agreed upon and maybe some of you might know of some incident where the funds could be used. Commissioner Ramirez said, it's important when we announced this Hate Crimes Fund, the reestablishment, that we also announce some rewards for some that have not hated crimes in the past that have happened. I also brought up to the Crime Stoppers about my concerns about the leaflets, hate leaflets that have been distributed around the Jewish community, which doesn't actually fall in it, but they're going to now change their bylaws so we could offer reward with that. If any of you know of a hate crime that was committed against the Jewish

community, was done in the last years or even the last year that you think would be a good one to bring forth. And the district attorney certainly is looking some of these up that we can offer rewards. As a commissioner had just stated concerning that that is also the day of what happened in Israel, and the terrorist attack. But we all know that attack, what has happened here in the United States, which is the Jewish community, as well as the Muslim community being targeted, we will focus on that situation.

Commissioners Olympia Beltran: Tomorrow, local tribes are going to be observing Kupihau, which is Kumeyaay New Year. There's going to be a celebration at Tsikwan Cultural Center at 5.30 p.m. if anybody would like to attend. The address is 910 Willow Glen Drive. And then on September 27th of this month, you'll also be observing California Indian Day. And there will be a celebration at Pechanga Indian Reservation all day long. September 27th is California Indian Day, and tomorrow is Kupihau, Kumeyaay New Yea

Specifically, California Indians have their own day, and then there's Indigenous Peoples Day. Next month, and there's only an American Heritage Month coming up. But California Indians celebrating our own history and particular experience in this state is on September 27th.

I will be attending the Lead San Diego Visionary Leadership Awards to recognize leaders throughout San Diego County who are working to support San Diego and the work and the organizations they're

Item 6: Agenda and Non-agenda Public Comment

Exec. Dir. G. Brown

There was No Public Comment on Agenda or Non-Agenda

Item 7: Proclamation/Certificate Awards

Commissioner Diaz Roman

Commissioner Diaz Roman introduces Maria Garcia and presents Proclamation Award. I am honored and so excited to see Maria Garcia, an activist leader, and a mentor of mine. Thank you for accepting our invitation to join us this evening in honor of Latinx and Hispanic Latino Heritage Month. Just to share some background about Maria Garcia. In 2003, Maria Garcia retired as a school principal from Emerson Biondini Elementary School. More recently, she has received wide recognition, in the San Diego region for her series titled "The History of Neighborhood House in Logan Heights." She is a retired educator and Chicana activist turned historian, chronicles the influence of the Neighborhood House from its inception. at the turn of the 20th century to the early 1970s on the working class, largely Mexican American, community of Logan Heights. Maria has received numerous awards as an educator, activist, and historian, including the 2017 San Diego Union Tribune, Latino Champions Award, the 2017 Governor's Historic Preservation Award, the 2017 Five Delta Kappa Citizen of the Year, and the 2015 Soho Cultural Heritage Award for her Neighborhood House series. She is also a 2016 inductee, in the San Diego County Women's Hall of Fame. She is one of six women of the year in 2015 recognized by Senator Ben Hueso. The San Diego City Council proclaimed December 5th, 2017 as Maria Garcia Day. Maria is a member of the Latino Baseball History Project Advisory Board and the San Diego City Council's.

It's an honor to welcome you. Thank you for being here.

Honoree Ms. Maria Garcia gives a PowerPoint Presentation on the History of Latinx and Mexican American in San Diego County.

Thank you so much for this honor. I really appreciate it. And I want you to know more about my writing. I loved being a principal. I loved being a teacher. I thought I was going to change the world. All of us do when we go into education. And then I'm also very naive in that I thought by the year 2000, there wouldn't be racism because we're going to raise kids that aren't racist, and it would all be taken care of and done and over with. Well, the year 2000 got here, and I was very, very disappointed.

My presentation is a teaser. It's about my book, my second book, "We Made San Diego." And I want to tell you how I picked the title. I wanted people to either say, what do you mean you made San Diego very nicely, or what do you mean you made San Diego? Either response. I was ready to... or a question that was ready to answer. I'd like to start this presentation in Solana Beach, because nobody ever thinks of Latinos in Solana Beach.

This is the cover and I used different places in the city. The reason being that I wanted people to know we're all over. We're not just in one tiny little community, we're everywhere. And sometimes people don't want to recognize us. If the lion does not tell its own story, the hunter will. I love that proverb. And I think we all need to remember; we need to write our stories. We should not wait for others to write them.

La Colonia de Eden Gardens. If you're going to the racetrack, instead of turning left to the racetrack, you turn right, go up about two streetlights, and then you'll find this sign, La Colonia de Eden Gardens. This is the first time I've seen this. This is before the railroad track, well, no, the railroad track was, this is before the freeway. Interstate 5 cut into all; it was Avocado fields. It was Citrus. There was a lot of fields.

This man is Tony Gonzalez, and he's the original owner of El Hakal. Mr. Gonzalez came from LA on a bus and was made to sit in the back of the bus. He was coming with the promise there would be work in the fields. Two graded schools were in Solana Beach. By the way, just about every community had a segregated school. And that was always, they would always hide behind, we're teaching them English. You know, they must be in this school because they don't know English. By the time they knew English for 10 years, they were still in the same school. They had to be in the same school. Next, this is Cipriano Gonzales and St. Neal's was a church in Solana Beach. It was a focus of the community. They had dances there, weddings, everything you could think of. Sunday, you know, first you go to church, then you go to grandma's house.

All of that was there. But the diocese of San Diego decided that we didn't need this church and they were going to close it. I think it was twofold. They didn't like the idea that the Mexicans were all up there in one spot. Maybe just maybe they would get some ideas. And, they really didn't want a mass in Spanish. So along with some of the community, she took it on and sent a petition to the diocese. Well, the diocese said, no big deal.

But this is what I think is so brave about Mrs. Gonzales. She sent it to the Vatican. I would not have had that nerve. But she sent it to the Vatican. agree and they've designated it a mission and you cannot close a mission go ahead, so there it is the St. Leo's Mission and it's an operating church, it's not just a mission that you go visit next this is the first couple that were married at St. Leo's.

Commissioner Rickie Brown introduces Sarah Buchanan

Certificate of Recognition. Ms. Sarah Buchanan was not notified to attend the meeting per the Executive Director. Commissioner Brown received the award for Ms. Buchanan, and she will deliver it to

her. Commissioner R. Brown shares with Commission why she nominated Ms Buchanan for recognition. Sarah Buchanan is, she works for the San Diego housing Federation. She has done amazing work on ensuring affordable housing in San Diego. She also helps to run united, which is a bunch of individuals that live in affordable housing, teaching them to be advocates for affordable housing. They're actually having a club, not a class. They're taking some people up to Sacramento to advocate for affordable housing on the 25th in Sacramento. She's very active in the community. Sarah is just a wonderful person all the way around.

Item 8: Subcommittee Report

Vice Chair Tyler Duncan

A. Updates on San Diego United Against Hate

First, thank you to all of the commissioners that have supported in making San Diego United Against Hate Week come to life. Thank you to our community partners, to our community members that are here with us today. We really appreciate you being here to support the Human Relations Commission and we are excited about this week. Thank you. events. I also would like to give special thanks to, commissioners on the subcommittee. Commissioner Purcell, Commissioner Sarah Brown, Commissioner Ricky Brown, and Commissioner M.H. Fields. I appreciate your work on the proclamation on the vision for where we were taking San Diego United Against Hate Week, and all the in-betweens; whether that be contacting community partners, doing some of that outreach as well, and then of course also Commissioner Walker for being a participant as a Black-owned business in San Diego United Against Hate Week. We appreciate your representation there as well. A point of order, the proclamation has been signed, sealed, and delivered. We are all set on that. So again, we did send out our updated 2024 United Against Hate Week proclamation. It was sent over to Mayor Todd Gloria's office for review and approval, and it has been signed and is in our possession. We're really excited about that. We are still pending a final presentation on the proclamation. So we're really excited about that. We are still pending, details on the press conference. I anticipate being able to release that tomorrow morning, but we are working closely with being able to get that information out to the commissioners as well as our community partners, because we want as much representation there as possible.

San Diego United Against Hate Week kicks off this Saturday, September 21st at the Mental Bar. The Mental Bar will be hosting a Serenity and Strength Meditation and Sound Bath with San Diego United Against Hate. It is posted on social media, and we're working on getting it onto our events page on our website. Please share with your network. September 21st through 27th. And we are very appreciative for all our community partners that have committed to programming during the week.

Saturday, September 21st getting things kicked off at the Mental Bar.

Sunday, September 22nd, from 10.30 to 11.30 a.m. We have an event called Why the Jews? So understanding the long and tragic history of anti-Semitism. Commissioner Sarah Brown, you have definitely helped coordinate and bring it to life.

I can't take full ownership of this. There were two other organizations, that stepped up when I reached out and said, we need to do a program that's educational. We are in

partnership with our Jewish Community Center, the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, and also with the Combat Anti-Semitism Now Network and St. Paul Episcopal Church. It's a two-part series. We're hoping everyone can make it for the first one.

On Tuesday, September 24, from 6 to 7.30 p.m., the NAACP is hosting an event at the Southeastern Live Well Center, the Interfaith Prayer Visual, s for the National Day of Mourning for African Americans Killed in Police Involved Interactions.

On Wednesday during the day from 1 to 2.30, the NCRC has the Art of Inclusive Communication. Later that evening, the Council for American Islamic Relations of California will be hosting an event as well.

On Thursday, we have some additional training by the NCRC of the National Conflict Resolution Center, the Bystander Challenge. NCRC are going to be hosted virtually, you can feel free to click on the link there and attend.

Also on Thursday, the LGBTQ Stop the Hate Education Center. The San Diego LGBT Center, will be hosting this educational event from 11.30 to 1 p.m.

On Friday Stop AAPI Hate, who is the PI in AAPI? This is hosted by the AAPI initiative, and this is also going to be a virtual event. We have the opportunity to partner with Joanne Fields on this amazing initiative.

So, we have made a good effort in making outreach to communities. We hope to continue to improve our outreach to communities and get more participation and solidification in the week as we continue to move forward. This is, again, one of our stable events and initiatives that we take ownership.

- B. Proclamation - SDUAH Press Conference – TBA. All Commissioners encouraged to attend
**No Press Conference was held. The Communication Department had multiple commitments and was short of staff. **

C. Each Commissioner is asked to attend 1 or 2 of the scheduled events and to publicize it through your own networks.

D. List of events occurring the week of 21st to the 27th of September. Please read above text.

Item 8: Standing Committee- Discrimination and Equal Protection

Exec Dir. Gerald Brown

Our standing committee met last Monday, we had two Commissioners, and me.

Chair Thomas said, in the past, we would make the initial contact and then nobody follows up, but we want to make sure that we put a period on the end of every one of these cases and follow it through to the end. So that's what we're doing. One of the things that we are doing. Another thing that we're doing, is more outreach and that's Speaker what this law enforcement in Hillcrest after the shooting. And I was amazed by how willing they were to talk with us. They extend themselves. One of the things that the group had, the group that in attendance had asked was, is there a way that, terribly unfortunate, just around City Heights, there have been several officers involved shootings, and that's something that distresses me. There was also a very large brawl that happened.

in the gas lamp and our officers don't look like they were doing the best job in the gas lamp. It looked like it was mainly black and brown people, being roughed up by the police. And of course the language was off the chart to all of us, but I think that it behooves us as commissioners to contact them and, show our concern, and also say that we would like a full report for the full commission. But I'm just saying that I would just recommend, and I'll do respects that when these things happen, that because it's fresh in the mind and what happens on the reports and so forth, I call and say, hey, this is what I've noticed. What is the background on that? And sometimes they're not good answers and sometimes they're more understanding than what we saw on the news. That's all I'm saying.

ED Brown said the Code of Conduct is not out yet. We're yet waiting on that from the Rules committee.

Discrimination and Equal Protection code of Conduct and agreement

Documentation – Process and Procedures

Process and procedures are available on the HRC Website.

Training for Commissioners

There are two trainings taking place by the National Conflict Resolution Center. The Art of Inclusive Communication and the Bystander Challenge

Item 9: Executive Director Report (Gerald Brown)

- A. Appointments/Resignations
- B. Code of Conduct – Update – In Rules
- C. Compliance Department – Would like to meet with Commission next month or whenever we have an opening. They will be covering the City of San Diego Title VI Program.
- D. Law Enforcement meeting – Scheduling - Chief Wahl SDPD Chief of Police. As soon as the Commission decides that they would like to meet.

Item 10: Chair Report

Chair Tootie Thomas

Chair Thomas thanked the Commissioners for their hard work and engagement in the process of making our city, a city where everyon feels respected, safe and treated fairly.

SAR Report – No report

Item 11: Adjournment

Chair Thomas call for a motion to close the meeting.

Motion to Adjourn –So motioned – All Commissioners vote in the affirmative

Item 12: Next Meeting of the HRC October 15, 2024