

March 21, 2024

Subject: Racial Equity Commission January 24, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Staff Lead: Alex C. Walker, Executive Fellow, Strategic Growth Council

Recommended Action

Approval of the January 24, 2024, Racial Equity Commission Meeting Minutes.

Racial Equity Commission January 24, ~~2022~~2024 - Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item #1: Welcome

- Review purpose of the meeting, agenda, and public comment process

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Augustin Arreola, External Affairs Manager, Governor’s Office of Planning and Research

A. CALL TO ORDER: Executive Director Dr. Estes called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

B. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM: Quorum Met; 10/11 Commissioners Present

Commissioners Present:

1. Candis Bowles
2. Virginia Hedrick
3. John Kim
4. Gabriel Maldonado
5. Traco Matthews
6. Jolie Onodera
7. Yolanda R. Richardson
8. Angelica Salas
9. Dr. Luke Wood
10. Simboa Wright

Commissioners Absent:

1. Dr. Manuel Pastor

C. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

D. REVIEW OF THE AGENDA

E. PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

Commission Discussion:

No commission discussion on this agenda item.

Public Comment:

No public comment on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #2: Introduction Of Distinguished Guests

- Introduce and recognize distinguished guests

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

1. Dr. Joaquin Arambula, Assemblymember, District 31
2. Dr. Richard Pan, Former Senator, District 6
3. Office of Dave Min, Senator, District 37

Commission Discussion:

No commission discussion on this agenda item.

Public Comment:

No public comment on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #3: Opening Remarks

- Governor's Office to share special remarks to the Commission

Sam Assefa, Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research

Ann Patterson, Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom

Assefa: Today is a monumental day for the state with the establishment and first meeting of the Racial Equity Commission. This Commission is a testament to California's uniqueness and leadership in this space. Looks forward to supporting Commission's efforts and moving California toward achieving racial equity. Thanked Executive Director Estes and staff for their work and congratulated the Commissioners for their service. Introduced Cabinet Secretary Ann Patterson.

Patterson: Honored to be here today. The Newsom Administration has accomplished historic, concrete changes improving the lives of all Californians. Unprecedented investments and improved access such as in healthcare, mental health, and childcare. These programs and investments reflect the strong focus of uplifting disadvantaged Californians, helping them realize their full potential. Establishing the Racial Equity Commission reflects values of the state and administration. Governor Newsom extends his thanks and appreciation for the Commission's service to California. Thanked Executive Director Estes and staff for their commitment to California.

Commission Discussion:

No commission discussion on this agenda item.

Public Comment:

No public comment on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #4: ACTION: Chair and Vice-Chair Election

- Elect Commission Chair and Council Vice Chair

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Commission Discussion:

Estes: In December 2023, two Commissioners expressed interest and volunteered for the Chair and Vice Chair positions. Presented the slate of Dr. Luke Wood, as Chair, and Simboa Wright, as Vice Chair.

Matthews: Supportive of the volunteer slate presented by Executive Director Estes, nominated Dr. Luke Wood as Chair.

Salas: Seconded Matthews' nomination of Dr. Luke Wood.

Richardson: Nominated Simboa Wright as Vice Chair.

Kim: Seconded Richardson's nomination of Simboa Wright.

No further nominations received.

Estes: Entertained a motion to approve the slate by acclamation.

Public Comment:

No comments received on this agenda item.

Motioned by Hedrick and seconded by Maldonado.

Motion passes (8-0-3*). *Marks abstention or absence from vote.

Agenda Item #5: ACTION: Approval of Bylaws

- Ratify Commission Bylaws

Dr. Luke Wood, Chair, Racial Equity Commission

Matt Read, Legal Counsel, Strategic Growth Council

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Commission Discussion:

Kim: Question about committees, notes current draft of bylaws organizes ad hoc committees with a cap of two Commissioners, curious if we should differentiate ad hoc committees and standing committees, and if the two Commissioner cap would hold for standing committees.

Estes: Up to Commission if they want to change ad hoc committees to standing committees, noted the two Commissioner limit is a requirement of the Bagley Keene Act.

Read: Common practice for public bodies to have a two-member cap on ad hoc committees and exploratory work, as more than two active members engaging in work triggers the Bagley-Keene Act. Commission may establish standing committees that are subject to Bagley Keene.-

Kim: Expressed Commission can explore defining standing committees in the future.

Wood: Commissioner Kim, do you want to recommend language?

Kim: Expressed interest in Commission amending the bylaws in the future to include standing committees in the future.

Maldonado: Under the current Budget section of the bylaws draft, notes framework is missing for what should not be accepted. May want to create more specificity on what can and cannot be accepted by the Commissioners.

Estes: Will review Commission's recommendations of adding language for standing committees and language regarding fundraising and development. Will present staff recommended language for Commission's consideration at the next commission hearing.

Public Comment:

No public comment on this agenda item.

Motion by Matthews and seconded by Onodera.

Motion passes (10-0-1*). *Marks abstention or absence from vote.

Agenda Item #6: Bagley-Keene Act – Overview

- Overview of Bagley Keene Act

Matt Read, Legal Counsel, Strategic Growth Council

Commission Discussion:

Matthews: On the ten-day notice requirement, is it business days or calendar days?

Read: Typically calendar days, including weekends; however, functionally could be more than ten days.

Bowles: How does this impact email communications among Commissioners?

Read: Yes, there have been instances where emails constitute a serial meeting. Advises that you not "reply all" if you receive an email regarding Commission work, and that Commissioners utilize BCC function, looping in staff. What applies in-person, applies digitally (email, text, etc....)

Wood: Confirming that emails and texts are publicly disclosable?

Read: Yes, they are public records subject to the Public Records Act. Additional training on this topic is available and we can provide it to the Commission.

Salas: Can you speak to subject matter of commission meeting, limits, and purpose?

Read: Opportunity for more detailed advice to commission, charging statute is broad. When meeting for social events, etc, there is a need to be conscious of not speaking on the subject matter of the commission, to be mindful where there is work for the commission, and be mindful of the scope of the governing statutes. Encourages Commissioners to speak to counsel and understand how it impacts their work.

Maldonado: What is appropriate conduct in respect to social gatherings among the commissioners?

Read: There are social gathering exceptions in statute based on subject matter.

Richardson: How will Bagley Keene impact other trainings for Commissioners?

Read: Training is better done in smaller groups. Bagley Keene Act applies to gatherings of a majority; therefore, as a proactive step, it is better to be mindful of spaces where more members interact, such as texting, chats, emails, trainings, etc...

Public Comment:

No public comment on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #7: Executive Director's Report

- Executive Director to present their report to the Commission

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Public Comment:

C. Sequoia Erasmus, LaTanya Ri'Chard, Brandon Greene, Francisco Velasquez, and Suzanne Kim.

Commission Discussion:

No commission discussion on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #8: Racial Equity Efforts in Government Discussion

- Overview of racial equity efforts and existing measures

Dr. Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Commission Discussion:

Salas: Expressed gratitude to advocates and organizations who made this meeting possible. Recommend Commission expand search items to include immigration status and language access.

Kim: When will be able to discuss research efforts?

Estes: There are a couple paths forward, such as the opportunity to establish an ad hoc committee with staff, direct staff to explore options, including developing a streamline survey. Can present updates at the next Commission meeting.

Kim: Requested an agenda item to discuss this further at the next meeting.

Matthews: Expressed thanks to Executive Director Estes' work. Encouraging to see support for work ahead. Communicated importance of looking how to measure success, noting the real value of lived experiences across different sectors. Capturing lived experiences should be included in work going forward.

Estes: Lived experience important. Governor Newsom's Executive Order granted breadth and opportunity to include lived experience as part of the Commission's work. Will do so in way that coincides with public meeting requirements.

Maldonado: Requested an agenda item in the future to provide training on key terms, definitions, and specifics of the Commission's formation.

Onodera: Expressed appreciation to Executive Director Estes and thanked staff for their work. Thanked all members of the public for their comments.

Wright: Thanked all organizations who step up to plate to ensure all Californians have a voice, an equal voice. Emphasized importance of the work and expressed thanks to staff.

Public Comment:

Maria Barakat, Julia Caplan, Stephanie Flores, Khydeejia Alam, Sadalia King, Oussama Mokeddem, April Joan, Amar Cid, Faith Lee, Elena Santamaria, Serena Ortega, and Eva Terrazas.

Special Remarks:

Alex Lee, Assemblymember, District 24

Agenda Item #9: Public Comment

Public Comment:

Natalie Ah Soon, Adrienne Shilton, Vince Leus, and Lorri Jenkins.

Agenda Item #10: Adjournment

Wood: Thanked Commission's Executive Director and Staff for organization of this meeting and thanked the coalition for their support in making this effort come to fruition. Thanked the public for joining and shared that the next meeting of the Racial Equity Commission will be March 21, 2024, in Delano, California. Entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motioned by Maldonado and seconded by Salas.

Motion passed (10-0-1*). *Marks abstention or absence from vote.

Meeting adjourned at 12:23 PM.