

**MINUTES
COUNTY OF SONOMA
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS – REGULAR MEETING**

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

5:30PM

Hybrid

Commissioners Present:

First District: Howard Sapper (Officer-at-Large)

Second District: Yensi Jacobo*, Andrew Lemarquand,

Third District: Katrina Phillips (Chair), Liz Cruz Reyes, Isabel Lopez*

Fourth District: Trevor Merrell

Fifth District: Lyndsey Burcina, Nichole Warwick

Staff: Meira Bowcut

Commissioners Absent:

First District: Elizabeth Escalante (Vice Chair), Sarah Kerlow

Second District: Sadie Ferguson

***Commissioner Jacobo arrived at approximately 5:51pm.**

***Commissioner Lopez arrived at approximately 5:51pm.**

Meeting held virtually and in person.

I. CALL TO ORDER – MISSION STATEMENT – ROLL CALL – PHILLIPS

Meeting called to order by Officer-At-Large Sapper at 5:34 PM and he read the mission statement. Roll call was taken by staff.

II. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 24, 2023 MINUTES – PHILLIPS

Motion to approve the October 24, 2023 minutes.

No Public Comment.

Motion: Commissioner Warwick

Ayes: 5

Noes: 0

Second: Commissioner Lemarquand

Absent:5

Abstained: 1

Commissioners Escalante, Kerlow, and Ferguson were absent. Commissioners Jacobo and Lopez arrived late. Chair Phillips abstained as Chair. Motion passed.

III. OPENINGS & APPOINTMENTS – PHILLIPS

1. Officer-At-Large Sapper announced openings, two (2) in the Fourth District and one (1) in the Fifth District.
2. This is Commissioner Burcina and Vice Chair Escalante last meeting so there will be openings in the First District and Fifth District.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS- PHILLIPS

- Alexandra McGee

V. OFFICER REPORTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Officers and Staff to discuss administrative-related matters including, but not limited to, field trip ideas and speaker coordination.

1. Officer-At-Large Sapper reminded everyone that December 26th meeting is cancelled.
2. Holiday party will be coordinated via email by staff.
3. Officer-At-Large Sapper invited everyone to look at the vacancies and see if there's people in those community that can become a commissioner.

VI. AD HOC COMMITTEE AND PROJECT COMMITTEE UPDATES

Commissioners to provide reports and/or updates from the work being done by their ad hoc committee(s) and/or project committee(s).

1. Visibility Project- met to revamp the survey by expanding different section and the survey will be shared in an HR newsletter for all County employees.
2. Just Migration Reform- They are working are getting better communication with the Board of Supervisors.
3. Youth Commission on Human Rights- The Youth Commission volunteered at LandPaths and went to Andy Lopez Park on November 11th. They went to El Mitote Food Park, and they talked about the development and history of the park.
4. Collective Care Response Team- They haven't met and Chair Phillips has started on her report.

VII. REGULAR CALENDAR

1. Chair Phillips provided an update on Sonoma County Jail situation. Chair Phillips spoke to John Alden, and they will be meeting to brainstorm different ideas to get them outside without creating a war. Chair Phillips suggested doing classes such as theater classes, dance classes, and different classes to give them time outside of their cells like they do in Los Angeles prisons. No action was taken on this item.

Public Comment:

- Jim Duffy

2. Chair Phillips led the discussion to donate \$500 to Sonoma County Act of Kindness to financially support the unhoused during the holiday season. The Commission decided to donate to Sonoma County Act of Kindness instead of doing socks drive or volunteer. Motion to donate \$500 to Sonoma County Act of Kindness.

No Public Comment.

Motion: Commissioner Burcina

Ayes: 7

Noes: 0

Second: Commissioner Warwick

Absent: 4

Abstained: 1

Commissioners Escalante, Kerlow, and Ferguson were absent. Commissioners Lopez arrived late. Chair Phillips abstained as Chair. Motion passed.

3. Last meeting, the Commission asked Commissioner Lemarquand to do more research on whether Richard Allen Penry was setup, or it was a systematic issue. He provided more information that implies that Richard Allen Penry's situation was systematic. Traumatic brain injury affects a lot of veterans. It presents a 59% increased risk of being arrested and interacting with the criminal justice system. The situation was in responds to PTSD for serving. This is an argument that can be added to the letter. The Officers discussed this matter, and they believe it's a conflict of interest because it had ties to the Commissioner prior to joining the Commission. No action was taken on this item.
4. Officer-At-Large Sapper introduced the approval of the resolution honoring Janice Blalock for her dedication and commitment to the women and girls of Sonoma County as ex-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women. No discussion. Motion to approve the resolution.

No Public Comment.

Motion: Commissioner Burcina

Ayes: 8

Noes: 0

Second: Commissioner Cruz Reyes

Absent:3

Abstained: 1

Commissioners Escalante, Kerlow, and Ferguson were absent. Chair Phillips abstained as Chair. Motion passed.

5. Commissioner Warwick provided an update on the letter to West County School District to complete a title 9 and title 6 investigation. The school district met in closed session and did not agenzized this for public comment. They made the decision to not advance this to a title 6 or title 9 investigation. They conducted their own investigation and wrote a report on the findings. Commissioner led the discussion on next steps to this situation. The Commission created a Restorative Process Ad Hoc to meet with the youth regarding this situation and see how the Commission can help them to change the systemic issues. The ad hoc includes Chair Phillips, Commissioners Lopez, Merrell, and Warwick. No action was taken.

VIII. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT COMMISSION MEETING – PHILLIPS

1. Training on Conflict of Interest and S700 forms
2. Veterans Issues

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.