

**ASHLAND SOCIAL EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
March 6, 2025**

I. Call to order and Welcome (5 minutes)

Mendel called meeting to order at 4:35PM

Members present: Tyler, Sage, Mendel

Members present by Zoom: Simon

Council Liaison present: DuQuenne

Staff present: Staff Liaison Gooden and City Manager Cotta

Guest: Preskenis

1. Land Acknowledgment - We acknowledge and honor the aboriginal people on whose ancestral homelands we work -the Iikrakutsum Band of the Shasta Nation, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities who make their home here today. We denounce the egregious acts of the colonizers and government and recognize the horrific impacts that still exist today. We honor the first stewards in the Rogue Valley and the lands we love and depend on: Tribes with ancestral lands in and surrounding the geography of the Ashland Watershed include the original past, present and future indigenous inhabitants of the Shasta, Takelma and Athabaskan people. We also recognize and acknowledge the Shasta village of K'wakhakha - "Where the Crow Lights" - that is now the Ashland City Plaza

Tyler read the land acknowledgment

2. Labor Acknowledgment -We also pause to recognize and acknowledge the labor upon which our country, state, and institutions are built. We remember that our country is built on the labor of enslaved people who were kidnapped and brought to the U.S. from the African continent and recognize the continued contribution of their survivors. We also acknowledge all immigrant labor, including voluntary, involuntary, trafficked, forced, and undocumented peoples who contributed to the building of the country and continue to serve within our labor force. We acknowledge all unpaid care-giving labor. To the people who contributed this immeasurable work and their descendants, we acknowledge their indelible mark on the space in which we gather today. It is our collective responsibility to critically examine these histories, to repair harm, and to honor, protect, and sustain their contribution to our society

Sage read the labor acknowledgment

3. Holidays, Events, and Monthly Observances:
Cesar Chavez Day will be observed on Monday, March 31, 2025 - a day to honor the life of Cesar Chavez, a Mexican American labor leader, activist, and farm worker.
March is Women's History Month

Mendel read the holiday observances.

4. Approval of Minutes from the 2.6.2025 Meeting

Motion made to approve minutes from 2.6.2025 meeting

Motion: Tyler Second: Sage

All ayes. Motion passed

II. City Manager Update (15 min)

1. Committee Handbook

City Manager Cotta presented the new committee handbook and related policies.

Discussion included:

- Public meeting law (PML)- Gooden will send out an invitation to a free PML webinar offered by the League of Oregon Cities.
- Role of the committee as an advisory body to the Council - provides recommendations to the Council

- Clarified updates to term limits in AMC 2.10
- Review of related policies and
- Staff liaison will collect sign-off sheets from committee members regarding receipt of handbook and policies.

The committee invited Cotta to come in April to present regarding the City's Human Resources training progress - the City Council will have a Study session on budget considerations for this in June that the committee can attend. The committee discussed developing a committee logo - would need to be reviewed by the City's Communication Officer before use.

III. Public Forum

Preskenis introduced herself as an applicant to the committee and serves as chair to the Public Arts Advisory Committee (PAAC) - committee members reciprocated the introduction.

IV. Liaison Business (20 minutes)

1. Report from liaison assignments

Simon updated regarding PAAC. Discussed SERJAC may make motion for a plaque to be installed at railroad park regarding memorializing Railroad Park: Plaque would include Lorraine Hansberry's quote: "One cannot live with sighted eyes and feeling heart and not know or react to the miseries which afflict this world." with sculpture by Jack Langford and designed by Micah Blacklight ... March 20 is the final date to make a motion so it can come before Portland Arts Commission for approval of plaques, as funding is available now. Preskenis spoke as PAAC chair on the selection of the quote and artists.

Motion made to support the Public Arts Advisory Committee's request and efforts to install at Railroad Park a permanent plaque in bronze designed by Micah Blacklight and made by Jack Langford with the quote from Lorraine Hansberry: "One cannot live with sighted eyes and feeling heart and not know or react to the miseries which afflict this world."

Motion: Simon Second: Tyler

Roll Call Vote: Simon, Tyler, Sage, Mendel - Yes.

Motion Passed

Tyler reported from CEPAC regarding its efforts to promote electrification and study low-income opportunities to swap out inefficient heat pumps. Ashland Together is working with Chamber of Commerce on a project: Shopping While Black - will report at next meeting if the committee wants to be involved with that.

Sage- HHSAC's resource fair had a great turnout at it's community resource fair. Discussion about SERJAC's attendance and what materials were presented for tabling, etc., and what it means to advise the Council and/or other committees. The historic Pioneer Hall will open and be available for reservations in May, Community center in Fall.

DuQuenne updated the committee regarding the overnight severe weather shelter - the City will update the fire sprinklers and install showers, storage, and laundry as asked for by the unhoused community after the current contract with Rogue Retreat to run the shelter is completed at the end of March.

2. Report from HHSAC's Community Resource Fair

Discussed earlier in meeting.

3. CoCoConvo report

Mendel read CoCoConvo notes from Greenspan who attended on her behalf.

V. Ideas for tabling / networking

1. DOJ flyer for tabling / networking

Information regarding the DOJ's reporting bias crime hotline was made available in Spanish and English at the HHSAC's resource fair - and is available for future outreach efforts.

VI. Issues to consider

1. Items pushed from previous meetings:

1. T-Shirt vandalism of memorial in Railroad Park;
2. D*** Indian Memorail Road;
3. City-wide DEIA Climate Survey
4. Consideration of Retail Council of New York State's Customers' Bill of Rights

Sage brought a draft proclamation for consideration and discussion regarding this topic, D** Indian Memorial Road.

Discussion pushed until next meeting due to time constraints.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:05PM