

ASHLAND SOCIAL EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
April 3, 2025

I. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 4:32PM

Members present: John Tyler, Emily Simon, Cassie Preskenis, Catherine Greenspan, Allison Mendel, Victoria Sage, Neeta Singh

Council Liaison present: Gina DuQuenne

Staff present: Sabrina Cotta and Kerrick Gooden

Guests: Echo Fields (Chair of Housing and Human Services Advisory Committee)

1. Land Acknowledgment - We acknowledge and honor the aboriginal people on whose ancestral homelands we work -the Ikirakutsum 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 acknowledgement.

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.

Simon read the labor acknowledgement.

II. Approval of Minutes from 3.6.2025 Meeting

1. Minutes from 3.6.2025 meeting (see agenda packet)

Motion made to accept minutes

Motion: Tyler; second:Simon; vote all ayes; **motion passed**

III. City Manager Update

1. Update on DEI Assessment next steps (see agenda packet)

Cotta updated the committee regarding progress on recommendations resulting from the DEI assessment. (presentation in agenda packet)

IV. Events and Holidays

1. April Events (see agenda packet)

April events reviewed from agenda packet. Ashland Independent Film Festival is April 24-27th and will show 4 major films each day.

2. Public contact and networking opportunities

Earth Day at Science Works is Friday April 25 from 3:30-7PM with vendors and food trucks. Committee discussed this tabling opportunity and discussed/developed a potential 'DEI climate survey' for use:

- 1) I feel welcome and comfortable in Ashland (1 not at all - 5 completely)

- 2) Ashland is welcoming, comfortable, and safe for all people (1not at all - 5 completely)
- 3) City Government is effective at creating a welcome, comfortable and safe environment for all people. (1 not at all - 5 completely)

Mendel will handle a translation for a Spanish version of these questions and get them to Gooden. Gooden will format and run it by Legal and City Manager for permission to use and print.

V. Public Forum

VI. Liaison Updates

1. Current liaison assignments:
Greenspan – Planning Commission
Tyler – Climate and Energy Policy Advisory Committee
Sage – Historic Preservation Advisory Committee
Singh / Preskenis – Transportation Advisory Committee
Simon – Public Arts Advisory Committee
Mendel – Housing and Human Services Advisory Committee

Committee discussed how to support other committees in this role.

Greenspan gave an update from the last Planning Commission meeting.

Tyler gave an update from the last CEPAC meeting.

Sage gave an update from the last Historic Preservation meeting.

Singh suggested engaging SOU's International Student Committee.

Simon gave an update regarding PAAC's initiative with the railroad park memorial - expecting an answer by April 15 from the Lorraine Hansberry Estate for permission to use quote for this project.

Mendel gave an update from last HHSAC meeting - discussion of OHRA's shower and difficulty finding a second location, fair housing was discussed, the 2200 Ashland St. Ad Hoc committee is in the formation process and an RFP for 2200 Ashland St. improvements is out.

VII. Subcommittee Update - Citywide DEIA Climate Survey

(This was discussed earlier.)

VIII. Issues to Consider

1. Items pushed from previous meetings: Consideration of Retail Council of New York State's Customers' Bill of Rights.

Tyler is working with the Ashland Chamber of Commerce about some difficulty that people of color are having with Ashland stores.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mendel announced she would be unavailable for the June meeting - someone will need to Chair that meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:03pm.