

**ASHLAND SOCIAL EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**MINUTES**  
**May 1, 2025**

4:30 - 6:00PM in the Siskiyou Room at 51 Winburn Way

**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

Meeting called to order at 4:32pm

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

Council liaison present: Gina DuQuenne

Staff liaison present: Kerrick Gooden

Guest: Sean Smith

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 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.

Mendel read the labor acknowledgment.

**II. Approval of Minutes from 4.3.2025 Meeting**

1. Minutes from the 4.3.2025 meeting (see agenda packet)

**The motion was made to approve the minutes from 4.3.2025**

Motion: Tyler. Second:Sage. Vote: all ayes. **Motion passed.**

**III. Public Forum**

None

**IV. Liaison Updates**

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

Greenspan- attended the last Planning Commission meeting which discussed concerns regarding a trail access easement related to a potential development.

Tyler- attended the last Climate and Energy committee meeting which discussed expansion of the low-income utility assistance program, consideration of a local gas tax, how to encourage public transition from gas to electric, and Ashland's Climate Friendly Areas (CFA) adoption.

Sage- will attend the Historic Preservation meeting next week.

Preskenis- attended the last Transportation meeting which included a planning and development overview, discussion about near-miss and SeeClickFix reporting, and a presentation about electric bike safety with a focus on safe use by youth.

Simon- has been working with the Public Arts committee on the new memorial will be discussed as the next item.

Mendel- attended the last Health and Human Services meeting, which discussed how LaClinca is working on health services for the unhoused and how to bring such services to Ashland. The committee discussed the City Council's decision to change the Community Block Development (CBDG) funds distribution from the committee's recommendation.

DuQuenne- spoke with Mayor Graham regarding the feedback SERJAC received from the legal department about the short questionnaire developed at the last meeting. DuQuenne and Graham will discuss with Cotta and report back. Mendel spoke of meeting with Cotta about the questionnaire.

Gooden met with Kenwani Kravitz, Native Nation's Liaison for SOU, and spoke of her offer to present to the committee regarding sovereign nations.

2. Update from the Public Arts Advisory Committee regarding the Say Their Names Memorial project at Railroad Park

Preskenis and Simon presented about the Public Arts Advisory Committee's new memorial project. It was clarified this is not intended to replace, but rather to commemorate the memorial that was vandalized as well as its message. The committee discussed how to support the Sunday, June 22 dedication and gathering and how to form a working group between the two committees (PAAC and SERJAC) for planning this event.

**The motion was made to create a subcommittee to cooperate with the Public Arts Advisory Community to organize and promote the June 22 plaque unveiling.**

**The motion was made by Simon and seconded by Preskenis. All in favor. Motion passes**

3. Attendance standards for liaison assignments

Committee discussed briefly and will continue at the next regular meeting.

## **V. Events and Holidays**

1. May Events

Gooden read the May events from the Agenda Packet.

## **VI. Subcommittee Update - Citywide DEIA Climate Survey**

To be discussed at next meeting.

## **VII. Issues to Consider - any additional items from members**

Simon will chair June's meeting due to Mendel's planned absence and spoke about attending the June 17 City Council meeting to hear the City Manager's update to Council regarding the City's Diversity Equity and Inclusion report.

Sage spoke that the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is have a walk for mental health on May 17. The Justice for Hakiym Simpson initiative was discussed.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm