

**ASHLAND SOCIAL EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
March 5, 2026**

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

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4.34 p.m.

Present were committee members John Tyler, Sean Smith, Catherine Greenspan, Allison Mendel, and Emily Simon.

Also present was staff liaison Kerrick Gooden.

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

Smith 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.

Tyler read the labor acknowledgment.

II. Approval of Minutes from 2.5.2026 Meeting

1. Approval of minutes from 2.5.2026 meeting

Tyler moved to approve the minutes. Smith seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion passed.

III. Public Forum

none

IV. Unfinished Business

1. Regional ICE activity - should SERJAC issue recommendation to Council? (Tyler - 5 min.)

Gooden shared DuQuenne's council liaison update as requested because she could not attend in person: State legislators are debating **HB 4138** to restrict police and other law enforcement from wearing face covers while interacting with the public and require officers to show their name, badge number, and agency. Several community members attended Ashland City Council on March 3rd to ask what Ashland is doing. DuQuenne offered to support a request for SERJAC to present to the City Council regarding the issue if/when it is ready.

Tyler presented his research into suggested updates for the Immigration Resources page on the City's website. The committee discussed the Ashland.News article by Mayor Graham and considered the Portland Immigration Rights Coalition (PIRK) website as a good example of a resource. Greenspan offered to consolidate recommendations as discussed and will provide to working group ahead of Simon's meeting with Graham about the issue.

- A. Current resources from City of Ashland website:
<https://ashlandoregon.gov/1168/Immigration-Resources>

2. Committee recruitment and liaison assignments (15 min.)

The committee discussed the draft SERJAC recruitment letter brought by the working group. Suggested edits included adding the age requirement. Gooden advised to make sure it has Council's blessing as it is coming from SERJAC rather than an individual. The committee asked Gooden to send it to SERJAC's Council Liaisons and City Manager for direction/consideration.

The committee discussed liaison assignments: Tyler will move to the Transportation Advisory Committee instead of attending CEPAC.

V. Liaison Updates and Reports

1. Update from current liaison assignments:
Greenspan – Planning Commission
Tyler – Climate and Energy Policy Advisory Committee
Simon – Public Arts Advisory Committee
Mendel – Housing and Human Services Advisory Committee (5 min.)
Smith -- Parks
Mendel -- CoCoConvo (10 min.)

Greenspan reported on having attended that last Planning Commission meeting. Discussion included concern over the definition of affordable units related to a proposed development on Nursery Street. Concerns included small / impractical units being described as affordable due to size alone. This may be of ongoing interest to SERJAC related to social equity.

Tyler reported on having attended the last CEPAC meeting where discussion included home energy evaluations and rebates for electrification.

Simon reported that PAAC discussed the Playwright's Walk plaques and how suggested additions are reviewed with consideration to the rest of the public art collection. PAAC membership has changed. Discussion also included the status of the Butler- Perozzi fountain restoration and the need for repair to the 'bouncing ball' sculpture. Art on the Elk's building is scheduled to go up in July. The Playwright's Walk plaque that includes a quote from Lorraine Hansberry at railroad park will be featured in the playbill of OSF's A Raisin in the Sun.

Mendel reported that HHSAC reviewed social service grant applications and did a terrific job from a social equity and racial justice perspective. Mendel also reported that the CoCoConvo (regular meeting of committee/commission chairs) included discussion about the Butler-Perozzi fountain restoration project and the Transportation System Plan being 10 years out of date (potential interest from SERJAC related to ongoing ADA considerations). Micah BlackLight's sculpture 'Ancestors Future: Crystallizing Our Call' may be ready for installation in September. Other discussion included the 2200 Ashland St. Ad Hoc's report to Council and considerations regarding the history and future of City Hall.

2. Update on Land Justice: Tribal Voices on Land Back panel held 2.19.26 (Gooden - 5 min.)
[Here is a link to the recording of the panel discussion.](#)

Gooden gave a brief synopsis of the panel discussion, and shared the recording link.

3. Ashland Sunrise Project - Getting Into Action (Tyler 5 min.)
[Here is a link to the Ashland Sunrise Project](#)

Tyler shared that the Ashland Sunrise Project will be asking residents to reflect on various locations in Ashland with the question of belonging in mind.

VI. New Business

VII. Ongoing or Future Items for Consideration

1. ELEA Working Group (Simon and Smith)

Nothing to report at this time.

2. Belonging Survey - Results, analysis, etc. (Smith - 30 minutes)

Smith provided an update on his progress in reviewing the Belonging Survey results. He ran an initial analysis with a focus on the open-ended questions, as the other questions are easier to interpret. His eight-page summary included initial reflections that the respondents were mostly female over 55, there was an apparent polarization regarding the issue of homelessness, and a desire for more diverse representation in local government. The committee discussed that results should focus on recommendations and would need to get back to Council.

3. Equitable Housing Plan Working Group

Nothing to report.

VIII. Announcements and Events

The committee discussed and decided to move the next meeting from April 2 to April 9, 2026 at Pioneer Hall.

1. **Choosing Courage**

Wednesday, April 8, 2026 @ 6:30-8:00pm

SOU Recital Hall

450 S. Mountain Ave.

[Here is more information from Ashland Together](#)

IX. Adjournment to April 2, 2026 Meeting

SERJAC's next regular meeting will be on April 9, 2026 from 4:30-6:00PM at Pioneer Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 5.58pm.