

**ASHLAND SOCIAL EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
June 4, 2026**

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

These are DRAFT minutes until approved by the committee

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:43 p.m.

Present were committee members: John Tyler, Allison Mendel, Sean Smith (on Zoom), Catherine Greenspan (on Zoom), and Emily Simon (on Zoom).

Also present were council liaison Jeff Dahle (on Zoom), and staff liaison Kerrick Gooden.

Also present were guests Brandon Polanco (pending formal appointment), Trina Stout (with Rogue Valley Migra Watch), and Erika Martin (with Unite Oregon).

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 5.7.2026 Meeting

1. Approval of minutes from the meeting on 5.7.2026

Tyler moved to approve the minutes. Greenspan seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion passed.

III. Public Forum

No speakers for public forum.

IV. Unfinished Business

1. Regional ICE activity - discussion: should SERJAC issue a recommendation to Council regarding a proclamation similar to [Coos Bay's Press Release from March 2, 2026](#). (Discussion 20 minutes)

The committee reviewed its discussion from the last meeting about efforts in Coos Bay opposing the development on an ICE facility there, and the committee's decision to draft a similar proclamation (to Coos Bay's Press Release from March 2, 2026) as a recommendation to the Ashland City Council for adoption. The working group discussed its first draft with Mayor Graham who provided constructive feedback. The committee discussed the urgency of this recommendation due to recent reports of increased local ICE activity.

After discussion and amendment, the following motion was adopted:

Simon moved to authorize Simon and Greenspan to move forward as a working group to incorporate feedback into the committee's draft proclamation, and to schedule an emergency meeting by electronic attendance next Thursday, June 11, 2026 to review and decide on issuing a recommendation to the Ashland City Council for adoption. Tyler seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion passed.

2. Link to recently updated [Immigration Resources Page](#) on the City of Ashland website
Guests spoke that local monitoring of ICE activity has increased and that such reporting has been proactive, swift and effective. The committee asked what it could do in support. Guests replied that Rogue Valley Migra Watch is always looking for volunteers to support its ongoing rapid response: the next training is June 15, 2026 from 6:00-8:30 p.m with details forthcoming at Rogue Valley Migra Watch on Facebook or Instagram.

Guests commented that the City's Immigration Resource page was helpful, but suggested updating inaccurate contact information:

The Northwest Seasonal Workers Association website should be listed as: <https://nswamedford.org/> with a phone number of 541-773-6811; the correct phone number for UNETE should be listed as 541-245-1625; and the correct phone number for Coalicion Fortaleza should be 541-236-5605.

It was also suggested that UNETE, Rogue Valley Migra Watch, and Coalicion Fortaleza may all be willing to collaborate on the committee's proclamation or any other efforts. The committee discussed the importance of attending the training by Migra Watch, and an announcement was made that the next Northwest Seasonal Workers event will be a Luau on July 18th, 2026 at 6:00pm with invitation and more information extended in-person as requested.

3. Belonging Survey - Results, analysis, etc. (Smith - 20 min.)
No update.

V. Liaison Updates and Reports

1. Update from current liaison assignments:
Greenspan – Planning Commission
Tyler – Transportation Advisory Committee
Simon – Public Arts Advisory Committee
Mendel – Housing and Human Services Advisory Committee (no update)
Smith -- Parks
Smith -- CoCoConvo (5 min.)

Mendel - requested committee members let the staff liaison know if they have something to report ahead of agenda creation to support accurate agenda planning. This will be critical when moving to quarterly meetings (to be discussed in the next agenda item).

Greenspan - Planning Commission - nothing of consequence to report.

Tyler - TAC - Unable to attend - did not receive a link to attend the electronic meeting and so reached out to Gooden for follow-up. TAC support responded that they will ensure future invitations are sent.

Simon - PAAC - Did not attend the meeting - PAAC has been working on Playwrights Walk Plaques, among other things - no concerns.

Mendel - HHSAC - Was unable to attend - no concerns.

Smith - Parks - nothing of consequence to report.

Smith - CoCoConvo - Smith shared (at CoCoConvo) about SERJAC efforts to collaborate with other committees. Other discussion included the potential for advisory committee booths at the 4th of July parade event, a report that Micah BlackLight's sculpture (Ancestor's Future: Crystallizing Our Call) was fully funded, a plan for installation of the second Guanajuato Heart is coming, and Garfield Park and Night Lawn issues were discussed.

The committee discussed its history related to marching in the July 4th parade: originally this was something the SERJAC participated in, but then the committee decided not to march. The committee discussed the idea of marching with the July 4 parade and/or having a booth to encourage advisory committee participation this year. Discussion included the difference of marching, tabling, and what to focus on if meetings are being reduced to quarterly.

VI. New Business

1. Committee Organization (Discussion: 5-15 min. - Co-Chairs and Gooden)

Co-Charis Mendel and Smith spoke of their recent meeting with City Manager Cotta regrading a phased change for SERJAC (along with PAAC and HPAC) to quarterly meetings, beginning after its July meeting, due to staff and resource strain. After its July meeting, the schedule will be quarterly meetings in January, April, July, and October with committee workplans being discussed at the last City Council Study Session of the year.

Concern was expressed about not feeling valued, what other committees are moving to quarterly, and if this change will diminish SERJAC's effectiveness. The committee discussed and was in agreement that quarterly meetings were inadequate. Discussions included how to communicate the will of the committee to continue as-is, and consideration was given to speak during the public forum at the next regular business meeting of the City Council.

VII. Ongoing or Future Items for Consideration

1. ELEA Working Group

No update.

2. Equitable Housing Plan Working Group (pending formation with HHSAC)

No update.

VIII. Announcements and Events

The committee discussed difficulties with the scheduled meeting in July due to the holiday. Consensus was reached to move SERJAC's next regular meeting to the Lithia Room at 51 Winburn Way on July 9th, 2026 during its regular time of 4:30-6:00 p.m.

1. BASE Juneteenth 2026

Saturday, June 20, 2026

11:00am - 8:00pm FREE

Pear Blossom Park

312 E. 4th Street

Medford, Oregon

More information at: <https://baseoregon.org/event/juneteenth-2026/>

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.