

**City of Bend**  
**Human Rights and Equity Commission**  
**March 27, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

Equity and Inclusion Director, Andrés Portela conducted and called the Bend Human Rights and Equity Commission, March 27, 2024, regular hybrid meeting to order at 4:30 PM, in Council Chambers at City Hall, 710 NW Wall Street.

**1. Roll Call:** Commissioners. Four in person, three virtually, three excused absences.

- 1.1. Chair Manoj Alipuria, He/Him, *(Absence Excused)*
- 1.2. Cameron Fischer, She/Her, *(Virtual)*
- 1.3. Carly Colgan, She/Her *(In Person)*
- 1.4. Carolyn Peacock-Biggs, She/Her, *(In Person)*
- 1.5. Christopher Foltz, He/Him, *(In Person)*
- 1.6. Jackie Currie, She, They, *(Absence Excused)*
- 1.7. Jasmine Wilder, She/Her, *(Virtual)*
- 1.8. Jeff Kitchens, He/Him, *(Virtual)*
- 1.9. Linda Long, She/Her, *(Absence Excused)*
- 1.10. Nancy Stevens, She/Her, *(In Person)*

**City Staff:**

- Andrés Portela, He/Him, Equity & Inclusion Director, HREC Liaison. *(In Person)*
- Ian Leitheiser, He/Him, Assistant City Attorney. *(In Person)*
- Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella, Accessibility & Equity Manager, COBAAC Staff Liaison. *(In Person)*
- Megan Perkins, She/Her, Mayor Pro Tem, HREC Council Liaison. *(Absent)*
- Lisa Larsen, She/Her, Administrative Support Specialist, Accessibility and Equity. *(In Person)*

**Public:**

- John Heylin *(Chambers)*
- D. Heylin *(Chambers)*
- Six attended virtually.

**2. Land Acknowledgment:**

Commissioner Kitchens read the City of Bend Land Acknowledgment in English.

**3. Minutes Approval:** Approve February 28, 2024, Meeting Minutes.

**Motion:** Commissioner Peacock-Biggs motioned to approve the HREC February 28, 2023, Draft Minutes as read, with no corrections. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion. The motion to approve the February 28, 2024, unanimously passed by all voting members who attended today's meeting, in person (4) and virtually (3).

**4. Public Comment:** Two in person, six virtual attendees

- John Heylin, in person: John has attended other HREC meetings. John wants his kids to see there are people in Bend fighting for equal rights. John expressed his appreciation for HREC's work.

- D. Heylin, in person: Lives in Bend, equal rights are great for everyone.
- Four of the five virtual attendees were able to express their frustration:
  - The court ruled in *ISON v. Madison Local School District Board of Education* that an Ohio school board’s policy prohibiting “personally directed,” “abusive” and “antagonistic” comments violated free speech rights under the First Amendment. With a reminder of free speech.
  - Shared: The Supreme court declared DEI is against the law. And does not believe in DEI.
  - We need to focus on and look at the rights we constitutionally have. Different states have passed anti-free speech laws. Most recently California and Florida and fear we are next. Mentioning that HREC must agree, considering the position that specifically allows the public to speak.
  - Does not want anyone treated differently or harmed for their race, color, or faith. No one deserves to have their rights violated or their ability to live in peace infringed. And asks that HREC pass a resolution condemning the rise in anti-white hate. They have the right to address their grievances regardless, like it or not and the city’s job to hear these statements.

The above statements are the more acceptable parts of the virtual attendees’ public comments.

At this point there were only five online attendees. The allotted time for public comment ran out, Zoom-bombing ensued. We took a 10-minute break and commenced with the remaining meeting agenda. Assistant City Attorney Leitheiser had a discussion with the commissioners about what just occurred.

**5. Future Forecast:** Andrés Portela, He/Him, Equity & Inclusion Director. Workplan update:

**Framing for the conversation:**

- Council Goals
  - Accessible and Effective Government
- Equity Department
  - Workforce, Community, Strategic Initiatives, and Policy & System Changes.
- HREC
  - Collaborative Governance, Resources for Hate & Discrimination, and Equity Framework.

**Fiscal Year 2023 – 2025 Council Goals:**

- Strategy: Advance the City’s Commitment to Equity – Action:
  - Develop and pilot an equity framework.
  - Develop and implement a supplier diversity (community benefits) Program.
  - Develop a process to connect community members who have experienced acts of discrimination with resources and assistance.
  - Develop and implement a language access policy and program.

**Strategy: Advance the City’s Commitment to Equity.**

- Develop and pilot an **Equity** framework. (HREC goal)
- Develop and implement A Supplier Diversity (community benefits) Program.

- Develop a process to connect community members who have experienced acts of discrimination with resources and assistance (HREC goal).
- Develop and implement a language access policy program. (Presentation to HREC to come.)

#### Equity Department:

- The City of Bend Equity Department is committed to advancing equity in our community, recognizing the historical and contemporary inequities that have impacted different individuals and communities. Informed by our City of Bend working definition of Equity, which acknowledges and addresses unique advantages or barriers faced by individuals and groups, our approach is rooted in acknowledging and addressing historical and current systems of oppression.
- Focus Areas:
  - Community Empowerment
  - Workforce Transformation
  - Strategic Initiatives
  - Policy Systems Change

#### Equity Department: Who are we?

- Andrés. Portela III, He/Him, Equity & Inclusion Director / HREC Staff Liaison.
  - **Ask Me About:** Directing, planning, leading, and promoting citywide DEIA; Human Rights and Equity Commission (HREC)
  - **Phone:** 541-323-8563
  - **Email:** [aportela@bendoregon.gov](mailto:aportela@bendoregon.gov)
- Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella, Accessibility and Equity Manager / COBAAC Staff Liaison.
  - **Ask Me About:** Accessibility initiatives, City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee
  - **Phone:** 541-693-2141
  - **Email:** [ckehoe@bendoregon.gov](mailto:ckehoe@bendoregon.gov)
- Lindsay Wengloski, She/They, Equity Management Analyst
  - **Ask Me About:** Strategic equity efforts, language access, and data governance, etc.), DEIA Advisory Committee.
  - **Phone:** 541-323-7177
  - **Email:** [lwengloski@bendoregon.gov](mailto:lwengloski@bendoregon.gov)
- Lisa Larsen, She/Her, Administrative Support Specialist
  - **Ask Me About:** Accessible documents and webpages, specialized support for HREC & COBAAC.
  - **Phone:** 541-388-5556
  - **Email:** [llarsen@bendoregon.gov](mailto:llarsen@bendoregon.gov)

#### Department Outcomes:

- **Equitable Outcomes:** Increased equity and access to resources, opportunities, and services for all residents, particularly marginalized and underrepresented communities.
  - Defining Underrepresented Communities and Marginalized.
- **Enhanced Collaboration and Partnerships:** Stronger partnerships with community organizations, advocacy groups, and stakeholders, leading to collaborative efforts to address systemic inequities.

- **Data-informed decision-making:** Improved data collection, analysis, and utilization to inform policy development, program implementation, and resource allocation.
- **Cultural Transformation:** Cultivating a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility within the city workforce and throughout the community, fostering a more inclusive and welcoming environment.

**Update Our Workplan:**

- Co-create a reporting tool for community members to safely record acts of discrimination, bias or hate that occur within the City of Bend. In addition, victims of discriminatory conduct will be provided with resources, community support and other options for enforcement.
- Develop an equity framework to be utilized by all city departments in all stages of policy development and decision- making processes.
- Advise City Council on DEIA-related decisions they face. Collaborative Governance.

**2023 Recommendations and Decisions:**

- Stipends Conversation
- Transportation Utility Fee Conversation
- Camping Code Conversation
- Welcoming Week Event Hosted by HREC
- Shared the definition of Equity for the City of Bend
- Resources for discrimination collection – Subcommittee Led
- Council Policy on Discretionary Funding / Sponsorship of Community Programs, Services and Events. Policy No. CP007
- There are more wins!

**Co-create a reporting tool for community members to safely record acts of discrimination, bias or hate that occur within the City of Bend. In addition, victims of discriminatory conduct will be provided with resources, community support and other options for enforcement.**

- Problem:
  - Experiences throughout the City of Bend where hate and discrimination were present; however, it did not get to the point of crime.
  - We delineated bias crime vs. bias incident.
- Solution:
  - Establish a process for community members to have an avenue to share acts of discrimination and offer resources, navigation, and appropriate triaging.
- Limitations:
  - Public Record
  - Reaggravation of Harm (pushing from one authority to another)

**Suggested Solution: Leadership with HREC is important:**

- A multijurisdictional approach to hate and discrimination that sits within a nonprofit.
- The City of Bend Equity Department with an HREC liaison.

- If you want to start or continue working on these resources, we can go offline about the next steps.
- Beginning: March
- Timeline:
  - Month 1-2: Engage stakeholders and formalize coalition structure.
  - Month 3-4: Draft and adopt a joint resolution; establish a formal reporting process.
  - Month 5-8: Develop and disseminate resources; conduct community education and outreach activities.
  - Month 9-12: Finalize regional safety plan; implement monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

**Key Components:**

- Formation of Coalition:
  - Engage representatives from adjacent jurisdictions to participate in the coalition.
  - Establish regular meetings to discuss strategies, share resources, and coordinate efforts.
- Joint Resolution:
  - Draft a joint resolution denouncing hate speech and discrimination and affirming commitment to promoting diversity and inclusivity.
  - Seek approval and adoption of the resolution by participating jurisdictions.
- Formal Process for Reporting and Addressing Incidents:
  - Develop a standardized process for reporting incidents of hate speech and discrimination.
  - Establish protocols for handling and responding to reports in a timely and sensitive manner.
  - Ensure confidentiality and protection of victims' information.
- Resource Development and Sharing: (Relying on HREC work)
  - Compile and disseminate resources on hate speech and discrimination prevention, victim support services, and community education materials.
  - Facilitate the sharing of best practices and successful intervention strategies among coalition members.

**Develop an equity framework to be utilized by all city departments in all stages of policy development and decision- making processes.**

- Identify:
  - measure, examine, implement, and monitor.
- City Staff:
  - Scope & scale, HREC: Discussion around scorecard & Implement: Council review, Iterate.

**Next Few Agendas:**

- Analysis of Impediments Conversation
- HREC Code Updates
- Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing

- Equity Framework (recommendations go to council)
- Stipend Code update (recommendations go to council)
- Council Goals update
- Language Access Plan (recommendations go to council)
- Human Rights Campaign LGBTQ score
- Community Based Organizations:
  - Fair Housing Presentation for Fair Housing Month (April)
  - APIC (May)
  - The Fathers Group Juneteenth Celebration (June)
  - Neighbor Impact – Reinventing Our Communities (July)
  - Envision Bend (August)

## 6. Elections:

### **Chair Elections, 1 year term. March 2024 to March 2025.**

- **Responsibilities:**
  - Preside at all official meetings of HREC.
  - Consult with the city staff liaison in drafting the meeting agenda.
  - Ensure meetings are conducted in an orderly, focused, efficient, and fair manner.
  - Lead HREC meetings and facilitate commission decision making, encouraging all members to participate and voice their ideas.
  - Along with City Staff liaison:
    - Acts as the primary spokesperson for the HREC for presenting to City Council, Boards, Commissions, media, outside agencies, or may delegate to another HREC member.
    - Prepare documents and correspondences, or delegate, and approve before distributing.
  - Delegate tasks to other HREC members as appropriate.

### **Volunteering as Chair, Jeff Kitchens:**

- After a year as a member of our commission, I have had the pleasure of working with a great team who see what our city and community can become; inclusive and welcoming. It has not been without its challenges. No team trying to make impactful change can do so without some level of hardship. I believe that we have a great opportunity and incredible local support to make a solid difference and see additional accomplishments related to the goals laid out in our 2023-2024 plan:
  - Reporting Discrimination.
  - Equity Framework Development.
  - Council Goal Setting Process Engagement.
  - Advising City Council on Actions.
- If selected as your Chair or Vice-Chair, I happily commit to working with all of you, Andrés and other city staff, our city council, and all partners and stakeholders to meet these and future goals. I bring over a decade of experience in advisory council and similar organizational leadership, as well as experience in diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility work. Thank you for your consideration.

### **Volunteering as Chair, Christopher Foltz:**

- My name is Christopher Foltz, and it is with enthusiasm that I announce my candidacy for the Chair position of our esteemed Human Rights and Equity Commission.

In the brief time since joining the commission three months ago, I have been inspired by our collective mission and the impactful work we've embarked on. My academic background, with a BS in Social Sciences, has equipped me with a comprehensive understanding of equality issues, fostering a strong foundation in research and analytical skills crucial for addressing the challenges we face in our community.

My vision as Chair is to leverage both my research acumen and technical expertise to further our commission's goals. I am eager to bring a fresh perspective and a dynamic approach to our endeavors, building on the incredible work we have already achieved. Together, I believe we can enhance our impact and make significant strides towards a more equitable society.

### **Vice-Chair Elections, 1 year Term. March 2024 to March 2025.**

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Work with Chair and City staff to set HREC meeting agendas.
- Facilitate commission decision-making, encouraging all members to participate and voice their ideas.
- Along with the City staff liaison and Chair, serve as spokesperson for the HREC for presenting to City Council, Boards, Commissions, media, outside agencies, etc., or may delegate this to another HREC member if appropriate.
- Along with the City staff liaison, prepare documents and correspondence, or delegate these tasks and approve the documents before distributing.
- Delegate tasks to other HREC members as appropriate during regular HREC meetings if necessary.
- In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall assume responsibility for the business of the HREC.
- Both the Chair and Vice-Chair shall work together with City staff liaison to facilitate meetings and execute the needs of the full commission.
- The terms of office shall be one year, from the time of election until the first meeting occurring in the following calendar year.
- No Respondents currently.

Commissioner Kitchens encourages his fellow commissioners to consider the opportunity to take on a leadership role when they have the capacity.

### **7. Standing Item: Community Events and Updates.**

Commissioners shared:

- Central Oregon Disability Support Network (CODSN) did a disability awareness training in Corvallis with engineering students and with HDR Engineering firm, they design curb ramps. HDR Engineering firm also contracts with the City of Bend. HDR Engineering has talked to City Council about access.

CODSN is holding a **CODSN is holding a Breaking Barriers Event** at the fairground in Redmond, on April 24, 2024. There will be vendor tables and volunteers welcomed.

- Bestselling author, **Robin Wall Kimmerer will be at Bend High School on May 16, 2024, from 7:00 to 9:00p.m.** (Reserve your ticket)

**8. Equity Department Updates:** Andres Portela He/Him, Equity & Inclusion Director.

- **APIC Harmony - Tower Theatre** May 18<sup>th</sup>, at 5:00 p.m. Reserve your free ticket, but accepting donations. (Asian & Pacific Islanders Talent Showcase.)

**9. Agenda Setting & Bike Rack:**

No suggestions from commissioners.

**10. HREC City Councilor Liaison Update:** Megan Perkins She/Her, Mayor Pro Tem.

Council Liaison Perkins expressed apologies for her absence.

**11. Adjourn:** With no further HREC business, Equity and Inclusion Director Portela adjourned the March 27, 2024, Human Rights and Equity Commission hybrid meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen, She/Her  
Administrative Support Specialist, Accessibility and Equity



**Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities**

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc., please contact the Equity and Inclusion Director / HREC Liaison at: **[aportela@bendoregon.gov](mailto:aportela@bendoregon.gov)** call 541-323-8563. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.

**Para solicitar copias en español de los documentos en esta página web o en un formato alternativo como Braille, letra grande, formatos electrónicos, etc.:** Por favor contacte al Director de Equidad e Inclusión, Andrés Portela **[aportela@bendoregon.gov](mailto:aportela@bendoregon.gov)** o llame al 541-323-8563. Los usuarios de retransmisión marquen el 7-1-1.