

Kitsap County Council for Human Rights – 2021 Annual Retreat (via Zoom)

MINUTES

Saturday, January 9, 2021 from 2-5 PM

Councilor Attendance:

P - present T - present by technology E - absent excused U - absent unexcused

?	Name	Position*	?	Name	Position*
	Vacant	D1 - P1	P	Heather Moritz	D3 - P1
	Vacant	D1 - P2	E	Annie Sayo, Secretary	D3 - P2
P	Dionne Deschenne, Chair	D1 - P3	P	Mollie Moisan	D3 - P3
P	Jim Cash	D1 - P4	E	Zana Gearllach	D3 - P4
P	Vacant	D2 - P1		Vacant	At-large
P	Janae Jenkins	D2 - P2	P	Marcie Mathis	At-large
P	Carrie La Jeunesse	D2 - P3	P	Susie Beil, Vice Chair	At-large
	Vacant	D2 - P4	P	Rebecca Pirtle	County admin

*Note on Positions: Commissioner for District 1 is Rob Gelder; District 2 is Charlotte Garrido; and District 3 is Ed Wolfe.

Meeting called to order at 2:05

Review agenda – Accepted with no revisions. Jim motioned, Carrie seconded the motion. Vote unanimous.

Land Acknowledgement – Suquamish Tribe – read by Carrie

Check in, get to know each other better. Each attendee answered a series of questions:

- Where were you born?
- Where were you raised?
- How long have you lived in Kitsap?
- If you are a transplant, what brought you here?
- What are 1 to 3 human rights issues that are weighing heavily on your mind as of late?

Human Rights Issues that were noted by members included:

1. *Immigration rights*
2. *Homelessness*
3. *LGBTQ+ rights, equality and inclusion*
4. *Treatment of disenfranchised groups (immigrants, poor, incarcerated, etc)*
5. *Black Lives Matter advocates, treatment of*
6. *Farm workers’ rights*
7. *Religious freedom*
8. *Social determinants of health*
9. *Digital rates and access to information and resources without cost*
10. *Affordable housing*
11. *Infant and children’s rights, including in bioethics arena*
12. *Treatment of those formerly justice involved or with substance abuse history*

Discussion on value of diverse contribution, voices, and collaboration – Dionne read the statement below and addressed the need for as diverse a group as possible, and for active engagement of all voices.

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, ‘Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?’ Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It’s not just in some of us; it’s in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”
— Marianne Williamson, **A Return to Love: Reflections on the Principles of "A Course in Miracles"**

Question posed: How do we increase diversity and engagement within our Council?

Discussions at conference are great. Group agreement has been helpful. Invite feedback from others at meetings, if not at meeting then via chat.

Liaisons between council and other orgs – ERACE (1st and 3rd Fridays) – ought to continue. KAIRE is another. City of BI Ethics Committee is currently hearing on an accusation of racism. City has formed a Racial Equity Committee. BOCC, whom we advise, is involved and this may be a reconciliation issue in near future. Only two agencies in the entire County have ethics committees or boards.

How do we increase our liaising? With whom should we have a regular presence? Dionne will get information for attending BOCC meetings out to full Council. We need to identify the other organizations and groups we ought to be working with and then have a member present at each. Will discuss further at a regular meeting.

Member intrigued by the question and by multiplicity of voices. In our meetings, perhaps we need to acknowledge it’s going to take a lot of time and get buy-in and proceed with full consent the meeting is going to focus on the issue at hand OR send to a separate group. We need to make a point of order and decide how we wish to handle it, as a group.

Some voices are missing. We need to bring those in, ideally by seating a representative council member, but when that is not possible then perhaps through groups we are liaising with. Need to at least recognize what is missing and realize we are operating without that needed representation. Also, genuinely listen to one another.

Member expressed they are grateful for the idea of tabling an issue, using point of order to avoid spending too much time on one thing. It will also help if we take time to really build solid agendas and give time for full review and revision of them.

We have several seats to fill. Brenda Calderon has resigned her position. We have three applicants at present. Vacant seats include: Two in District 1; two in District 2; one At-Large.

Mollie advised the group that she will be moving in March, so will be resigning around then. She lives in District 3.

In light of Black Lives Matter movement and need for our Council to advocate on this and other race-related human rights issues, do we have any potential members who are POC? That would go a long way toward bringing much needed voices to the Council. We do have a Black man who has applied and Rebecca will be following up with him this week, now that we have a seat open that he could occupy in light of the district that he resides within and our recent resignation. We should continue to endeavor to recruit people of color, though, to increase the diversity of the Council.

Agreements for the day – how we will interact and support one another

- Prevent cell phone interference with the meeting. If you can turn it off or silent it, that's great. If you need to keep it on, do so, of course. Just try to mitigate impact on the meeting.
- One speaker at a time, please. This helps make sure everyone can hear and be heard.
- Share the air. Be mindful of time. Both listen and speak with intention to understand.
- Allow for organic conversation. Generative dialogue is part of our collective process too.
- Allow for quiet too. Moments of silence can help us to reflect and gain understanding.
- Model and support self-care. Advocate for your, and others, authentic participation. Ask for clarification (words, concepts, etc.) as needed. Move around, take a break, get a drink, etc.
- Respect our collective and the individuals in it. There are multiple perspectives, world views, and truths present among us. Also, we have a shared accountability to our KCCHR Mission.
- Learn from history and be open to possibilities. Acknowledge past trends of KCCHR. Also, be open to new ideas, skills, and energy coming to KCCHR. Allow for group development.
- Ability to call on others for input if silent for a long period – all consented for the purposes of this meeting

Reminder of founding documents and 2020 Work Plan and review of mission

Mission Statement on Agenda was not current. The revised Mission was shared as follows:

Mission of the Council for Human Rights

1. *To advise county government and Kitsap County community on issues related to discrimination, violence and harassment based on race or national origin, religion, age, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, or economic status, and*
2. *To promote equitable treatment of all people and reduce prejudice through education, resource referrals, and advocacy.*

Council members reviewed the available documents and identified education, resource referrals, and advocacy as the avenues available for the council to utilize in our work promote and preserve human rights within the County.

What do we want to retain or continue working on from 2020 Work Plan?

(See attached draft of 2021 Work Plan)

The group reviewed the 2020 Work Plan line by line and the bulk of it was retained. Only the KCCHR Reunion was removed. Minor revisions were made in other areas.

Suggestion was made that committees have set monthly meetings (days and times) to improve work consistency in coming year.

Suggestion was made that we gather information on councilors' skill sets, areas of interest, and availability and determine how to best use members' potential contributions in coming year. We will review committees and members in the regular monthly meeting this month or next to get that going.

It was noted that we have a need for better introduction/onboarding process for new members and ongoing support to improve retention. Susie and Dionne expressed their willingness to meet with new members and welcome and orient them in addition to the work that Rebecca does with new members. Dionne asked that members communicate any questions, concerns or needs, so that she can work to address those or find resources to support members' needs.

What do we want to add to our 2021 Work Plan?

(See attached draft of *2021 Work Plan*)

Several items were identified for addition to the 2021 Work Plan.

- Improvement of new member onboarding and support to ensure better retention
- KCCHR involvement in Kitsap County Race Equity Task Force formation
- Creation and production of digital and print resources for education and outreach uses
- Updating of the existing KCCHR Timeline, which currently ends with 2015
- Creation of Community Survey to be used on a recurring basis to gather information about the human rights violations being experienced within our County (may be used to inform annual conference, human right report, and resource materials that are created)
- Host forums/listening sessions to focus on an issue. Ideas included:
 - COVID pandemic – disproportionate effect on people of color and the poor
 - Conference planning to identify most needed and desired topics
 - Social Justice Meet & Greet
 - Will review minutes from 2020 meetings to identify others already identified

Conclusion

The group agreed that Dionne would draft *Annual Retreat Minutes* and the *2021 Work Plan* based on the discussion had in the meeting and will distribute these to all members for review prior to the January 19, 2021 meeting, at which revisions will be made as needed to allow the Work Plan to be adopted by the Council.

Adjourned at 4:57 PM

Minutes submitted by Dionne Deschenne, Chair, Kitsap County Council for Human Rights