

Kitsap County Council for Human Rights MINUTES

Tuesday, April 18, 2023, 6:30-8 PM Meeting
At Eagle’s Nest at Bremerton Fairgrounds and at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86039566803> Meeting ID: 860 3956 6803. 253-215-8782

The **Mission of the Kitsap County Council for Human Rights** is twofold:

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.

	Name	Position*		Name	Position*
P	Dionne Deschenne, <i>Chair</i>	D1 – P1	E	Elizabeth Holmes	D3 – P1
P	Erin Lanum, <i>Secretary</i>	D1 – P2	P	Marlaina Simmons, <i>Vice Chair</i>	D3 – P2
P	Judy Friesem	D1 – P3	T	Cris Amburgey	D3 – P3
	Vacant	D1 – P4	E	Kirsten Dahlquist	D3 – P4
T	Christina Barone	D2 – P1	P	Gregg Nebel	At-large
P	Rochelle Karlsen	D2 – P2	P	Augustine Lujan	At-large
P	Jim Manlove	D2 – P3	P	Robert Ellis	At-large
	Vacant	D2 – P4	P	Rebecca Pirtle	County Admin.

***Note on Positions:** Commissioner for District 1 Rob Gelder; District 2 Charlotte Garrido; District 3 Katie Walters.

Attendance: P – present T – present by technology E – absent excused U – absent unexcused

1) Called to Order @ 6:30pm

2) Approved Agenda: Judy motioned; Marlaina seconded – passed unanimously

3) Group Agreements: Councilors read for new members and guests

4) Centering moment: Provided by Rochelle: “Kindness Changes Everything” poem
Who will provide at May meeting? Judy

5) Approval of Minutes from previous meeting – March 21, 2023: Marlaina motioned, Bob seconded, Erin abstained since she was absent that meeting. The motion passed.

6) New Member introductions: Jim Manlove - Kitsap County resident for 23 years, retired from corporate plant management position from chemical company for 30 years. Educated as chemical engineer. Became interested in human rights due to Human Rights responsibilities at work sites with company he worked for, and now more recently due to Sacred Ground program at his Episcopal Church.

7) Guest introductions, comments, or announcements (three minutes each): Barbara Paul lives in Poulsbo and is the Vice Chair of Kitsap County Council on Aging; Carol Larsen lives in Suquamish and is an active member of the League of Women Voters and is interested in School Board issues; and Melissa White lives in Poulsbo, works in real estate, and has applied for an open position on the KCCHR.

8) Old Business:

- o **Response to NKSD email** - Dionne read prepared response letter. Rebecca commented that Kingston Community Advisory Council (KCAC) has sent similar statements and inquiries. Gregg suggested we refer again in the statement to what we asked of NKSD/Dr. Evans in our original letter. Dionne pulled exact language from previous letter, inserted and read again. Additional needs were noted, such as requesting their timeline for investigation findings. During Event Reports the

conversation continued and guests and Council Members stated that their attempts to speak to the NKSD Board had been stymied by the very limited and difficult process for doing so. It prevents community members from being able to address the Board. Dionne will further revise the letter and send out to the Council ASAP so everyone can read what will be sent and provide last minute comments if needed. Goal is for response to be sent to Dr. Evans and the NKSD Board within the week.

- **Committee Reports-**

- **Events Committee:** Update on Forum that will be on May 24th or 31st on the topic of voting rights. Kim Able (former Mayor of Port Orchard) will moderate (from League of Women Voters) and have a panel of 3-4 people (reached out to Tara Simmons & NAACP) with different lived experience around barriers to/access to voting rights. League of Women Voters are co-hosting this event with KCCHR. Questions will be prepared and provided beforehand. The hope is we have as many Councilors there as possible. This event will be 1.5 hours.

- **Communications Committee :** Councilors were provided with written minutes from last Communications meeting. No time spent on verbal update during this meeting due to the Committee Chair's excused absence.

- **Event Reports-**

1. Written report from Youth Rally was provided.
2. Written report from Up From Slavery Initiative Second Annual Race & Equity Summit was provided.
3. Rebecca provided brief account of what transpired at the last Kingston Community Advisory Council (KCAC) meeting where Dr. Evans, the NKSD Superintendent, was present. KCAC asked specifically what the status is of the NK equity committee and the response was that it's on hiatus while they reassess what the mission of the equity committee is. Dr. Evans said that racism needs to be worked on within the greater community.
4. Augie provided account of what transpired at the last NKSD Board meeting, including an exchange between the Board and community attendees on racism within NKSD. The result of the exchanges during the meeting (and because of the apparently inhibitory nature of the NKSD Board meeting sign-up system for the public and protocol that community members must navigate in order to attend to share and be heard) was ultimately inflaming and resulted in response from Dr. Evans, who threatened to call 911 on a community member – one who thought they had signed up appropriately for a slot to speak, and upon standing to begin adding their contribution was shut down with what can often be a very dangerous threat, especially for people of color (being told 911 will be called on them). Technological barriers, language barriers, and protocol around community members contributing to the public meetings, was a glaring issue. The community members/families present, who had attended due to concern for racist incidents either involving their own children and/or because of the prevalence of racist incidents occurring within the schools, left in disbelief. It appears that the NKSD Superintendent and other Board members may be attempting to censor public participation on the topic of racism and equity during these “public” meetings, so there are significant challenges to addressing this critical issue with NKSD and poses challenges on working with them. At the least, they are failing to remove the barriers. It was also noted that the situation outlined above was all preceded by what sounded like some Suquamish Tribal members having their cultural needs misunderstood and ultimately dismissed by the Board. Erin will reach out to Suquamish community members and the Tribal Government to understand what happened in more detail, if they are willing to provide.

- **Kitsap group collaborations-** Dionne shared that the two most comprehensive meetings Councilors could be attending for collaborative purposes are the Kitsap ERACE meetings, held on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of every month, and the Kitsap SURJ

meetings held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month. Councilors present will see if they can attend. Erin suggested approaching the organizations to see if one of their representatives are willing to attend the occasional KCCHR meetings quarterly or monthly to help keep us and the Commissioners informed.

○ **Event List and upcoming events-**

1. Re-entry Simulation on Friday April 28th at Marvin Williams Center in Bremerton, a collaboration with Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, Up From Slavery Initiative, and Kitsap Strong, registration limited to 60 attendees;
 2. Juneteenth (Saturday, June 17th) Augie, Marlaina, and Erin can attend and possibly others;
 3. Kitsap Pride (Saturday, July 22nd) Bob, Rochelle, Augie, Erin, Marlaina, Cris can attend, others encouraged and we are registered, but **the more the merrier.**
- Sign-up sheet at May meeting;**
4. Bainbridge Island Pride; and
 5. ICMA Equity Summit on-line, July 20 and 21st, which is low cost and registration is required – this will include good equity information.

9) New Business: No new business. Spent remaining time further discussing NKSD issue and Councilors talked with guests. Council discussed how we might encourage NKSD to welcome input from the community and focus on the need to improve the quality of life for the kids, and request that they make it more clear how to report racist/hate incidents and ask them when their equity committee intends to have a report or offer their findings. KCCHR members discussed attending next NKSD board meeting, being held on April 27th, with perhaps one member pre-registering and reading a statement on our behalf, in support of the community, more transparency, and a more respectful and healthy process to gain understanding and improve relationships with concerned families and community members.

10) Next meeting: May 16, 2023 at 6:30 PM at the Eagle's Nest and via Zoom

11) Adjourned @ 7:52pm

Submitted by Erin Lanum, Secretary