



City of Seattle

Community Involvement Commission

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMISSION (CIC)

October 21, 2023

10:00am – 3:00pm

Webex Meeting & Delridge Library Meeting Room

Commissioners present: Michael Seo, Marcus White, Julia Jannon-Shields (she/her), Ahoua Koné (she/her), Cade Wiger

Commissioners not in attendance: Martha Lucas (she/her), Bill Southern (he/him)

People with pending commission appointments present: Heidi Morisset, Jessica Reeves, Nausheen Rajan, Fiona Murray, Julio Perez

City of Seattle Staff present: Alvin Edwards (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, he/him), Laura Jenkins (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, she/her), Director Jenifer Chao (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods), Iona McKenzie (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods)

(Transcriber's Note: The notes shown below are summaries of statements provided. They are not transcriptions and have been shortened and edited to include the major points raised. Full comments are retained in the files in video recording and available upon request.)

Welcome & Public Comment

No public comment.

Training/Orientation with Co-staff Liaisons

The Staff Liaisons provided an overview of the topics below for commissioners and commissioners-to-be:

- Commission Goals/Purpose/Mission
- Norms & Values
- Commission meetings
 - The importance of being on time and valuing everyone's time.
- Reiterating rolls
 - Community Involvement Commission
 - The commission's work is making recommendations, providing advice on priorities, holding the city's community involvements accountable, and developing and amending bylaws.
 - Commissioners
 - Responsibilities of commissioners include making recommendations to the City and staying informed about community issues.
 - Staff Liaisons



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- Please email both staff liaisons if you are responding to an email or writing a new email so that they can make sure to address it if one is out.
- Race and Social Justice Initiative
- Open Public Meetings Act
- Code of Ethics
- Public Records Act

Questions from the commissioners included:

- **Question 1:** What does the term begin date on the current roster, and why does it say 2022 for some people?
 - **Answer 1:** The term begin date on the current roster says 2022 for some people because appointment terms are tied to specific term dates that start and end regardless of when an individual joins. It's tied to the position, not the person, so it doesn't change when you join. If your term ends in 2024 and you wish to continue, a reappointment is made.
- **Q2:** Can commissioners engage in direct community outreach within the 4 to 6 hours per month time limit?
- **A2:** Engaging in direct community outreach can be challenging within the 4 to 6-hour-per-month time limit. Commissioners are primarily tasked with advising City departments on outreach and engagement strategies, so it depends on the specific nature of the outreach. One suggestion is to discuss whether it makes more sense for City staff to handle certain types of outreaches.
 - The example of Commissioner Bill Southern attending meetings to listen and gather feedback for the commission.
- **Q3:** Has there been any joint sub-committee collaboration between different commissions, like the Community Involvement Commission and the Film Commission?
 - **A3:** There have been discussions about joint sub-committees between different commissions in the past, but it's unclear if any have been pursued recently. It's an idea that has come up, and it might be worth exploring collaboration between commissions like the Community Involvement Commission and the Film Commission.

Team Building Activity

Commissioner Julia Jannon-Shields led the group in a team-building activity so they could learn more about each other.

Keynote Speaker – Director Jenifer Chao, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

Director Jenifer Chao and Chief Executive Administrator Iona McKenzie with the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods joined the meeting. Director Chao expressed her gratitude for being invited back and emphasized the importance of dialogue and community involvement. She discussed the value of the commission and the need for permanent resources and stability. She also talked about the department's work in community engagement, including the Community Liaisons program and strategic partnerships. She highlighted the department's focus on relationships, accessible programs, and community-led



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solutions. Director Chao encouraged innovative thinking and partnerships with the commission to ensure impactful outcomes.

Questions from commissioners and attendees included:

- Commissioner Julia Jannon-Shields was curious about the relationships between community-based organizations (CBOs) and the government. They discussed the importance of engaging with CBOs while recognizing that they did not represent the entire community. Director Chao mentioned the need for a culture shift and creating an ecosystem where everyone had a part and shared an example of a funding decision and the importance of involving multiple stakeholders. They emphasized the need for transparency and honest communication, which could lead to positive relationships and collaboration.
- Commissioner Ahoua Koné thanked Director Chao for joining the meeting and asked two questions:
 - First, she mentioned an event she attended where sustainable farming was discussed and expressed concern about the demolition of a farming project in the Central District. She asked if the Department of Neighborhood was aware of this.
 - Staff Liaison Laura Jenkins provided more background of what she knew about the situation and will follow up. Seattle Parks & Recreation plans to remove the Black Lives Matter Memorial Garden and update the turf at Cal Anderson Park. Laura Jenkins mentioned that they had been following the situation and believed the garden was still there but was uncertain if it had been officially removed. She also mentioned the location of the area and its limitations for permitting events.
 - Second, she mentioned the lengthy process of appointing new commissioners and suggested that speeding up the process would allow for more efficient focus on priorities and tasks. The commissioners agreed that delays had unintended impacts and expressed the importance of working in partnership rather than against each other.
- Additional questions included the items below (Staff Liaisons will follow up on many of these questions at future meetings):
 - Could Community Liaisons staff come to a commission meeting?
 - Is there Neighborhood Matching Fund data around who applies, how many groups get funded, etc.?
 - Could you survey the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods staff to see who knows about the commission and what they would like to see?
 - Could you share the work of the commission at an all-staff meeting?
 - How does the Participatory Budgeting Process relate to the Neighborhood Matching Fund?
 - What are neighborhood needs we can relay back to City Council (especially in relation to the budget process)?

Director Chao ended with saying: I want you all to figure out as you ground yourselves on the value of the Community Involvement Commission and how Department of Neighborhoods can add value to your



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work. And how we can complement each other and include commissions as One Seattle. It is not separate. It's about how we come together and how we complement each other. I'm going to take away from this space that this group of brilliant collective geniuses are committed to the community and the greater good of serving everyone and making sure that we thrive together.

Annual vote on Co-Chairs and vote on 9/18 meeting minutes

Due to six pending commission appointments, the currently appointed commissioners decided to vote in two interim co-chairs until pending appointments are voted on by the City Council. At that point, all 13 people on the commission would be eligible to both be nominated for and vote for the co-chair positions.

Of the five commissioners present, five voted to appoint Commissioner Julia Jannon-Shields as a co-chair and three voted to appoint Commissioner Marcus White as a co-chair. So, Commissioners Jannon-Shields and Commissioner White are the interim Community Involvement Co-Chairs.

Staff Liaisons will double check with the City Attorney's Office to see if this aligns with the commission's bylaws.

The commission voted to approve the September 18, 2023, Community Involvement Commission minutes.

Year in Review & Assessment of where we are

Staff Liaisons provided this document to commissioners and went through some of the highlights: <https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/CIC/2022-2023CICReview.pdf>. The text is mostly copied and pasted from past meeting minutes between August 2022 and September 2023.

Commissioners asked if an assessment/review document like this can be created on a quarterly basis to keep past conversations fresh in their minds. Many commissioners commented that they had forgotten some of the topics discussed during that time. The staff liaisons committed to creating a quarterly "in review" document to share with commissioners and post on the commission's website.

Future of CIC (Goals & Objectives) & Relationship with Department of Neighborhoods

Co-chair Marcus White asked the commissioners what they would like to see for the future of the Community Involvement Commission.

The commissioners provided their input on the future goals and priorities of the Community Involvement Commission. Some of their suggestions include strengthening relationships with City of Seattle government and community members, increasing community engagement and feedback, retaining current commissioners, and recruiting new ones, and exploring the role of subcommittees in addressing these priorities. They also mentioned improving information transparency and accessibility (like meeting at locations in different neighborhoods) and creating an annual report with policy



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recommendations. The commissioners expressed a commitment to active engagement and making a meaningful impact in their work.

Summary & Next Steps

With the retreat conversation in mind, the commission will discuss subcommittees for 2024 at the November commission meeting.

The commission also discussed potentially keeping the meeting date (3rd Monday of the month) but moving the time of their meetings. Staff liaisons will share out a poll to see what works best for the most commissioners. The November meeting will take place at the commission's regular time (4:30-6:30pm) but future months may change. If a change occurs, it will be announced to the public in advance.

The meeting was adjourned.