



City of Seattle

Community Involvement Commission

Community Involvement Commission (CIC) April 2024 Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2024

5:00 – 7:00 pm

Webex Meeting & Seattle City Hall Room 370

Commissioners present: Ahoua Koné, Heidi Morisset, Fiona Murray, Julio Perez, Nausheen Rajan, Jessica Reeves, Michael Seo, Cade Wiger

Commissioners not in attendance: Martha Lucas, Bill Southern, Marcus White

City of Seattle Staff present:

Alvin Edwards and Lydia Faitalia (Department of Neighborhoods); Rachel Banner (Seattle Parks & Recreation)

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.

Community Comments and Vote on March Meeting Minutes

The commission voted to approve the March 18, 2024 Community Involvement Commission meeting minutes with one correction: **Commissioner Murray nominated Heidi Morisset for Co-Chair. MOTION: Approved with correction above.**

Executive Session - discussion on commissioner interpersonal conflict

MOTION: Commissioner Perez motioned for Heidi Morisset to chair today's meeting during executive session. Second by Commissioner Murray. No discussion.

Commissioner Koné and other present members of the Recruitment and Retention special group recapped the interpersonal conflict and reviewed letter with the other commissioners. Commissioners agreed to find a method to request feedback from commissioners about their experiences. Would like to do an anonymous survey (Google Docs, MS Teams, or other).

Action item: Work with the Recruitment and Retention special group to determine which survey platform to use, and the questions that will be asked to ensure we solicit feedback anonymously.

Co-chair Vote

There were three nominations for co-chair presented: Jessica Reeves, Cade Wiger, and Heidi Morisset. Alvin clarified there could be up to four co-chairs. The three nominees spoke briefly about their interest in being appointed as co-chair. Commissioners were asked if there was anyone else wishing to be nominated.

MOTION: Commissioner Kone moved to vote as a block for the three candidates nominated above. Commissioner Seo seconded. No discussion.

VOTE: All in favor, no abstentions. **MOTION PASSED.** Congratulations to Jessica Reeves, Cade Wiger, and Heidi Morisset as new CIC Co-Chairs.

Action Item: This wasn't discussed on the record; the roles of the co-chairs will need to be reviewed, and a date set to meet to discuss agendas.

Revisit Roberts Rules of Order

The two training options for Roberts Rules were explained:

1. Option 1: City Boards and Commissions are hosting a training and Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON) has submitted their interests in CIC commissioners taking the training.
2. Option 2: DON Boards & Commissions will host a training for commissioners.

Action item: Alvin asked for a show of hands of those interested in an in-person training vs. virtual. All were in favor of an in-person training.

Lydia will provide commissioners with a printout of the Roberts Rules cheat sheet.

Five-minute Break

Park CommUNITY Fund Outreach

Rachel Banner, one of two program managers (Shaquan Smith wasn't able to attend) provided an overview of the Parks CommUNITY Fund process and showed their [webpage](#) on screen. Currently, Parks is in the idea collection phase, but there is still additional engagement to do. They look forward to hearing from the CIC for the remainder of this phase that runs through the end of April. The Fund is new, although reimagined from previous iterations of community funds. Although there were prior efforts to focus on equity, those who were able to access the funds tended to be from wealthier communities.

There is a Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners to oversee Seattle Parks and this board wanted to envision what a more equitable fund process would look like. Part of that effort was hiring two staff dedicated to managing the Fund. Over the past year and a half, Rachel and her colleague have had conversations throughout the city with community members and organizations, and internal departments at Parks. They wanted to learn peoples' perspectives on Parks equity and community-led projects and how communities can access funding for projects. The Fund is moving to the project selection phase next.

The Fund is prioritizing *Frontline* Communities – they are defined as those most affected by racism, oppression, and colonization, and tend to experience high displacement risk, a disproportionate exposure to environmental harm, a history of disinvestment, and lack of access to green space. The Seattle Park District has allocated \$14.8 million dollars to the Park CommUNITY Fund for investment in Seattle communities between 2023 and 2028. The initial round will allocate \$5.2 million as a pilot cycle, and determination of how those funds will be allocated past the pilot phase will be made after their internal evaluation.

Idea Collection – mid March through April

Project Development – May through July

Final Selection – August through October

Alvin asked how the advisory process works. He was at a meeting with the Rainier Beach Action Coalition, where he learned they are already working with the CommUNITY Fund (Hutchinson Park). Rachel responded their coalition can assist in the project development phase, but not when it comes to the actual project review process. Projects are reviewed by at least two persons to avoid bias.

Julio asked if the Fund was for new projects or restoration work. Rachel responded the projects must be on Parks' property and be a capital project, either improved or new, not for ongoing maintenance.

Mike asked about the demographic information being collected, and if they are receiving interest from frontline communities. He also mentioned different city governments having a participatory budget initiative and the thought of having a centralized community outreach event. Rachel said they have coordinated with anticipatory budgeting staff as well as other grant programs to align where possible; however, having the same application and a single process is not happening. What is possible is taking those ideas for future consideration; communities would not have to resubmit them. She gave an example in the food equity fund, who had submitted two projects that were on Parks property. In response to Mike's inquiry about frontline communities, Rachel said they haven't done an analysis on the demographic forms they've collected, but anecdotally she would say yes. The events they've been attending have been targeted to those frontline communities and organizations.

Rachel thanked the commission and said they are seeking community members to become involved in the development process, which begins in May. Staff will provide commissioners with Rachel's contact information.

Action item: The CommUNITY Fund wishes to hear commissioners' thoughts on their engagement strategies, and idea collection related to project development or the selection phases.

Staff Liaison Updates

- No response was received to the exit survey from Julia; Alvin had followed up a few times. Julia's email to commissioners will be considered as her rationale for leaving.
- Staff Liaison Transition Update. *What does equity mean to you?*
Commissioner Koné asked Lydia to elaborate on what she meant by doing things equitably. Lydia responded that her commitment to working alongside our commission equitably took the form of ensuring everyone knew about how the CIC came into existence within the Department of Neighborhoods, how was this voted upon, and ensuring everyone had those resources to allow all to thrive in their roles as commissioners. Staff were asked if there was more information on the timeline for the transition. Lydia responded there is a new civic engagement and leadership development program within DON which falls under the community partnership division. The CIC falls under Lydia's division, Civic Engagement & Leadership Development (CELD). Lydia has been meeting with DON Director Chao regarding some good changes coming, which may result in the growth of the CELD team. Other considerations are new councilmembers with new priorities. The plan is for staffing to remain with Lydia, Alvin, and Laura until further announcements are made in the next few weeks. Lydia reminded commissioners that Rita (DON staff) will be reaching out to all to set up 1:1 meetings with Lydia.
- Draft updates to Onboarding Document. Laura began making edits using tracked changes and added commissioner duties to the document. Alvin showed the document on screen. A commissioner asked if persons awaiting appointment could receive the onboarding document as well and asked if this was something that needed to be voted upon. Alvin suggested a vote to have this on record. Lydia asked if everyone was aware of how the DON functioned with respect to the CIC
- Due to time constraints, commissioners were only able to review this document; copies were emailed to all.
- **Action item:** Commissioners will individually review the Onboarding document and bring any suggested changes to the **May 20th** meeting.

Update on District 7 Meeting with Councilmember Kettle

Julio presented five takeaways from this meeting:

1. Want to hear from the neighborhood organizations.
2. Regularly pass information from City Hall to neighborhood organizations and vice versa.
3. Encourage cross coordination within organizations.
4. Meet quarterly to focus on one area (for instance, parks, public safety, or transportation).
5. All groups who make up this counsel should be public facing and have regular public meetings.

Action item: The next District 7 meeting will be open to the public and is scheduled for **June 21st**. Julio will follow up with the CIC and share the meeting link once he has confirmation of the time. He will also share the meeting notes and may upload them to SharePoint. Julio needs access to SharePoint.

Community Comments & Closing

Diane Ramsey reported it appears city departments aren't communicating with commissions or doing so as early as they should. City departments are producing plans but not engaging community councils, senior centers, and people with disabilities who are being impacted. The community doesn't learn about changes until they are implemented (Example: Lake Washington Boulevard closure).

Action item: Urge the city council and departments to involve CIC early, ensure the neighborhoods and the senior centers are included, and expand outreach beyond the organizations normally consulted.