



Regular Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2025, 5:30 pm – 7:24 pm.

Community members made explicit comments once the Zoom link was active and the meeting began. Community members were asked to hold comments till public comment and community members were muted on Zoom.

I. CALL TO ORDER: (5 min)

II. ROLL CALL:

DISTRICT 1

Jim Glover (Chair) ~ present

Carol Larsen ~ present

Byrd Lochtie ~ present

DISTRICT 2

Larry Miller ~ present

Peter Pennekamp ~ excused

DISTRICT 3

Guy Aronoff ~ present

Jamie Jensen ~ present

Ellen Murphy (secretary)~ present

DISTRICT 4

Richard Botzler ~ present

DISTRICT 5

Lisa Sundberg ~ absent

Present: eight (8) members were present for a quorum during the roll call.

Chair Glover read the Wiyot land acknowledgment statement as follows:

"As we gather today, we acknowledge that Eureka, California, is the ancestral territory of the Wiyot people. We also honor all Indigenous people, territories, and Sovereign

governments that share governance within Humboldt County, California. We gather with respect and gratitude to these Indigenous People. We thank and honor the Indigenous Caretakers of this land who continue to cherish and protect it. Their elders have instructed the young to consider the seven generations ahead as they continue to protect the rights of the land and all people who live on it. We encourage all to align and follow the lead of local Indigenous communities as they steward the land and protect its natural resources."

A moment of silence was held.

A reminder of our function: to aid in the eradication of discrimination in housing, employment, education, public accommodation, race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, civic interest, or other factors. Ours is an advisory commission whose primary purpose is to recommend actions to the Board of Supervisors that may address issues related to human rights in our County.

III. Agenda Adjustments: (1 min)

The agenda of March 20 was accepted.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes: (1 min)

The minutes for February were not completed at the time of the meeting

V. Treasurer's Report: (1 min)

Larsen reported a balance of \$5,614.92.

Discussion regarding the best method for managing expenses and Youth Commission access to funds.

- Credit Card: Offers fraud protection and spending alerts.
- Prepaid Card: Controlled, limited-use card for specific events.
- Checking Account: The traditional method favored transparency, dual sign-off, and grant compliance.

The recommendation was to stay with a checkbook system managed by the Treasurer for accountability and best practices, particularly in line with the McLean grant refund procedure

VI. Guest Speaker(s):

None.

VII. Commission Communications

a) Chair notes

Chair Glover reported that there would be a Sanctuary City Committee Town Hall on Saturday, March 22, from 2 PM to 5 PM at the D Street Community Center in Arcata, and commissioners were invited to attend if available. He reminded commissioners of the 700 forms submission deadline (April 1). He followed up on a flag being displayed at the District Attorney's office; drapes have been drawn to prevent visibility. Finally, mention potential updates to the Commission's message line.

b) Emails, Regular Mail

c) Commissioner announcements

Commissioner Larsen shared her experience traveling to Washington, D.C., advocating for Indian Healthcare and responding to an executive order regarding DEI.

All commissioners are encouraged to recruit new commissioners; currently, five vacancies exist, particularly in Southern Humboldt. Applications are available on the commission website.

d) Correctional Facilities Liaison Report (5 min)

Commissioner Miller reported that changes in the inmate communication process were discussed; inmates must now request visits through a message line. Meetings/visits would be scheduled for Saturdays or Tuesdays. Discussion on improving phone access for inmates using tablets. He also raised concerns regarding jail conditions, including leaks in the visiting room.

VIII. Public Comment: (15 min)- comment read by Chair Glover

"The Public is invited to speak regarding matters not on the agenda. Comments are limited to three minutes (two minutes if there are numerous commenters). Pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act, the Commission may not act on an item not appearing on the agenda. The Chair will present comments received by email. In the event of hateful, threatening, or unnecessarily negative comments, the Chair will admonish one or all commenters that they may be muted if they persist in such actions. The purpose of the Commission is to heal wounds and create solutions, not be a platform for those who may have another agenda. If a public member speaks and requests assistance on a non-agenda subject, the Commission may not act or propose any solutions. Still, the citizen(s) may be given a resource card for contact information relevant to their issue, and the citizen(s) may be given a complaint intake form to add to a future agenda of the next regular HRC meeting. Finally, an individual commissioner may speak to the citizen(s) apart from the meeting and recommend steps they might take."

Members of the public will each be allowed to speak on agenda items once during discussion, at the end of commissioner comments, and before any action or vote by the Commission. In the event of hateful, threatening, or unnecessarily negative comments, the Chair will mute and admonish one or all commenters that they may be further muted if they persist in such actions. Time to speak will be closely monitored (3 minutes per person).

e) Message Line Report

March 1-15- Miller- 3 Jail calls one was released before he could contact him.

March 16-31- Jensen - Calls received were mostly legal inquiries; referrals were provided to Northern California Legal Services, and a call from the female inmate and a referral was communicated.

April 1-15- Glover

April 16-30- Botzler

May 1-15- Murphy

May 16-31- Larsen

IX. Standing Committee Reports: (1 min)

SANCTUARY ORDINANCE

Committee Members: [Aronoff, Glover]

Discussion / Possible Action

Discussion of Sanctuary Statement?

Updates previously shared regarding upcoming town hall.

RAPID RESPONSE-

Purpose: Improve responses to volatile community issues. CURRENT ISSUE: Integrate the use of Neutral Observers into the Rapid Response protocol we currently have in place. Committee Members: (Miller, Glover, Jensen)

A lengthy discussion was held about this Committee's goals, purpose, and objectives. It remains an ongoing topic.

(no activity)

X. Ad hoc Committee Reports: (25 min)

YOUTH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION- Committee ending date 7-31-25

Purpose: To explore and possibly establish high school-level and college-level participation in the subject of human rights throughout the County.

CURRENT ISSUE: Exploring the options and mechanics of such a project.

Committee Members: [Jensen, Lochtie, Murphy]

Report given by Rowan Easton, a 17-year-old senior at Academy of Redwoods. He reported receiving a check, which will be used for website development and other costs. He also reported that work continues on drafting and finalizing bylaws defining structure, executive Committee, and operational approach. He also reported that they had developed a logo and hoped to link Youth HRC social media with main HRC platforms. A discussion was held regarding the Youth Commission's financial strategy. It was agreed that the Youth Commission would have a \$100 petty cash fund approved to

start, and members would maintain receipt tracking and provide regular reports. Discussion included an option for a separate youth account under treasurer oversight, enabling electronic transfers.

CULTURAL AWARENESS-ending date 12-31-2025

Purpose: Tracking of cultural awareness and activities in the County

CURRENT ISSUE: Open

Committee Members: [Larsen, Miller, Lochtie]

Discussion / Possible Action

This Committee's purpose will be evaluated to help determine how the Commission will better serve our community, particularly communities whose primary language is Spanish. The Commission seeks to take a more active and influential role.

The term extended through 2025 due to ongoing national policy relevance. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, April 2, at 9:00 AM via Zoom. An Interest in tabling at Cal Poly Humboldt's *Big Time* event on Saturday, April 5 or 6:

TECHNOLOGY-COMMUNICATIONS-ending 2-31-2025

Purpose: To revitalize the Commission's presence in the community through the use of electronic/digital media. CURRENT

ISSUE: FaceBook Committee Members:(Glover, Arnoff)

Discussion/Possible Action.

Commissioner Arnoff reported that the HRC now had over 1,000 followers on social media. Posts being shared from community and commission events. Commissioners were encouraged to submit content for sharing.

FREE SPEECH VS. HATE SPEECH ending date 12-31-2025

Purpose: Develop/plan a public event contrasting hate speech and free speech.

CURRENT ISSUE: Deteriorating level of civil discourse over essential community issues. Committee Members [Botzler, Lochtie, Miller, Larsen] Discussion/Possible Action.

Commissioner Botzler reported that the date of the next forum would be April 26, 8:30 AM–4:00 PM at the Wharfinger Building. The event's focus would be civil discourse and effective communication across differences. The forum facilitator would be Mary Gelinis, who is donating her \$4,000 fee. Participants invited are representatives from local government, schools, and law enforcement. The registration fee is \$30 for 32 attendees; 8 facilitators participate free. The funding comes from the McLean Foundation and Humboldt Area Foundation and participant fees. Each attendee will receive a copy of Mary's book.

HOMELESSNESS / BEHAVIORAL HEALTH-ending date:12-31-2025

Purpose: To monitor actions and issues to improve residents' housing/shelter options and living situations. CURRENT ISSUE: Open Committee Members: [Aronoff, Larsen, Glover] Discussion/Possible Action:

The committee term was extended through 2025.

Commissioner Aronoff raised concern over the ineffective use of funding and the ongoing homelessness crisis. Suggestions included organizing a forum with local officials (like the Free Speech Committee model). I will also draft a letter to the Board of Supervisors referencing the County Housing Element to emphasize recommendations like emergency shelters, safe parking, and small housing units. Begin the draft letter by May 1, post-state budget revision.

NEUTRAL OBSERVERS-Committee ending date:12-31-2025

Purpose: Have neutral observers willing and ready to use in responding to volatile community issues

CURRENT ISSUE: Develop a program of knowledgeable, trained Neutral Observers who can be available to help defuse volatile situations.

Committee Members: (Miller, Glover, Jensen, Pennekamp)

XI. Unfinished Business:

BOS letter urging adoption of the concept of a tribal liaison for the County. It was decided that the Commission go to the Tribal Chairman Association first to discuss this issue with them.

XII. NEW BUSINESS:

The Commission discussed challenges with meeting cancellations due to the Planning Commission schedule. The cost of courthouse security was calculated at \$60.06 per meeting.

Commissioner Miller moved that the commission plan to pay security fees as necessary to ensure a meeting takes place on the first Thursday of each month. The motion was not second and not passed.

Commissioner Lochtie moved that the Commission will meet on the first Thursday of every month, regardless of the Planning Commission schedule. Commissioner Aronoff seconded the motion.

The vote was unanimous, and the motion passed.

Commissioner Jensen raised the issue of relocating meetings due to accessibility and safety concerns from marginalized communities. The Jefferson Community Center was discussed as an alternative venue. Costs are \$35/hour (classroom) and \$75/hour

(auditorium); there is potential for reduced or waived fees. The venue offers Zoom capability, heating, and accessible parking. The commissioners agreed on exploring supplemental outreach such as periodic visits by small HRC groups to underserved communities, listening sessions rather than formal meetings, and the potential to create a request-based visit system.

Commissioners recognized the ongoing representation gap and the importance of Brown Act reform to improve remote participation for rural commissioners.

Commissioner Lochtie moved that the HRC lobby the County to allocate existing budgeted security funds to support first-Thursday meetings, regardless of Planning Commission cancellations. Commissioner Aronoff seconded the motion.

The next steps include drafting a letter to the Board of Supervisors requesting security funding as a line item.

The vote was unanimous, and the motion passed.

Commissioner Jensen said the HRC should implement a multi-language phone tree for English and Spanish. Commissioner Lochtie seconded the motion.

The discussion concerned potential translation and interpretation costs to be covered by commission funds as needed. Interpreters and bilingual students (e.g., from HSU/Cal Poly Humboldt) will be explored as resources. An ongoing budget line item to support interpreter services propose

XIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- Presentation by a social work student on racism in schools
- The location of meetings will remain a recurring topic.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Glover called for adjournment at 7:24

Minutes prepared by Commissioner Murphy