



## City of Tacoma Human Services Commission

747 Market Street Tacoma, WA 98402  
Conference Room 148  
Wednesday, March 13, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.  
Meeting Minutes

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**Members present:** Chair Jovan Dumas, Secretary Kelly McDonald, Zach Dillon, Lisa Keating, Elizabeth Pebley, Amanda Scott-Thomas, Janet Thiessen, Jason Grube, Cherrielee Matthews by phone

**Members not present:** Lauren Angelo, Rahn Clayton, Kashmir Gavronski, Dana Owens-Cheatham, Valentine Smith, and Naomi Wilson

Staff: Tiegan Tidball, Yvette Ferrell, Vicky McLaurin, and Linda Stewart  
Guest: Rebecca Stith

### 1. Welcome/Call to Order

Chair: Jovan Duma

At 7:02 pm when a quorum was met

Ethics Training-Charles Lee, Deputy City Attorney took over for Martha Lantz

[Charles.lee@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:Charles.lee@cityoftacoma.org) or 253-591-5633

Public meetings and public records are key

- TMC 1.24.030: applies to members of boards and commissions not having financial gains from the outcomes of the Commission
- TMC 1.46.010: demonstrating personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty and fairness Attempting to protect the public against decisions affected by undue influence, conflicts of interest, and any other violations
- If there is a complaint, there is a review by the Board of Ethics, possible investigation or hearing, and can include an order from the Board of Ethics and a written finding.
- Sanctions:
  - Cease and desist order
  - Invalidation of action
  - Termination or invalidation of contracts
  - Removal of member of Board, Commission, or Committee
- Maintain confidentiality at all times while serving as a Commissioner.
- Improper use of City property is prohibited. Improper use of City personnel is prohibited.
- Acceptance of compensation, gifts, flowers, rewards, or gratuity is prohibited.
- The Board of Ethics is a volunteer Board much like the Commission is.
- Beneficial influence in contract selection is prohibited.
- Certain private employment is prohibited
- Anytime there is an overlap in financial interests it is not in your personal interest
- Commission of acts of moral turpitude are not acceptable and should be disclosed

Jovan mentioned that we are always asking what we can do as Commissioners on our own in

747 Market Street, Room 836, Tacoma, Washington 98402-3793

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terms of making determinations—can outside research be used to learn more about service providers applying for funding. Charles says yes, that doing independent research would not be a violation of 1.46. However, a danger of violation would be if you do that outside research and share it with a group or in a group email, then a violation has occurred. If you send an email out, please indicate “for information only” and give instruction to the Commission to NOT reply all.

Linda mentioned that the issue of reviewing websites of applicants for grants was discouraged to Commissioners not as a violation of ethics, but to review grants from an equity-based lens.

Recusing oneself from a review process is a valuable tool to avoid the appearance of an ethics violation.

### 2. Vote for Rules on Membership Termination Procedure

Chair: Jovan Dumas

Jovan invited questions or proposals for membership termination. The last time it was discussed we proposed 3 absences and then a letter would be sent letting the Commissioner know they were no longer in good standing.

Zach mentioned that unexcused absences is the biggest concern, particularly to maintain a quorum.

Lisa discussed the value of have an understood standard of operations to move forward. And after the intense interview process, it is surprising absences occur with such frequency.

Amanda brought up increasing the expectation for attendance for leadership roles within the Commission to unexcused absences.

Linda brought up the challenging moments that absences from the funding process have created. The City staff will provide data surrounding how often we’ve not had a quorum.

Linda mentioned that Council also votes on whether to excuse or not an absence from council, and that is something we could consider

Zach moved that Commissioners get one unexcused absence and thereafter a second unexcused absence in the calendar year results in an agenda item for present Commissioners to vote upon at the next meeting. Lisa seconded. Motion was voted unanimously by all Commissioners: Jovan, Kelly, Elizabeth, Zach, Lisa, Amanda, Cherrielee, and Janet voted to approve.

### 3. CDBG/ESG Updates

Tiegan Tidball

The Commissioners’ recommendation to suspend funding to South Sound Outreach was presented to the Executive Director at South Sound Outreach, and the missing data was immediately provided to the City to allow the City. This data allowed city staff, with integrity, to rate the organization to fall into the “strong” category. Full funding will be awarded to South Sound Outreach based on the new data provided to the City, and all other



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providers will receive 100% funding.

#### 4. Prep for Elections in April

Yvette Ferrell

Elections are coming in April so interested parties are encouraged to run. There are no term limits to any role.

Chair role has a direct line to staff and gets to set the vision for the year in terms of what the Commission will be learning and addressing. It can be a hands-on role if desired. It is a greater responsibility and attendance is key. Staff is always available to provide insights.

Vice Chair's role is to fill in when the Chair is not present. Secretary's role is to capture accurate minutes. Zach would be interested in Vice Chair. Kelly will still be willing to serve as Secretary unless there are other interested candidates, and Jovan will still be willing to serve as Chair unless other candidates are interested.

#### 5. NSC Staff Roles & Responsibilities

Linda Stewart, Director

Linda brought an organization chart for the department as an overview for Commissioners to review. Yvette will be moving to Human Resources with a promotion. There are fewer than 40 employees currently. The department has been re-aligned to ensure all staff members are a fit to the Neighborhood and Community Services department as a whole.

Linda plans to attend meetings moving forward to support both Commissioners and staff.

Zach asked who is responsible for the questions on applications, and Linda's reply was that a sole staff member has not been responsible; that responsibility has rotated. Zach followed up if that is something that Commissioners are able to provide feedback for those questions, and Lisa, Elizabeth and Kelly agreed that would be valuable.

Linda wanted to remind Commissioners that there is a third party consultant coming in to review the funding process to ensure there is an diversity, equity, and inclusion lens at the core of funding recommendations.

Janet recommended that if Commissioners were to make recommendations for changes in proposal questions, perhaps it should occur every two years so as not to stymie the process.

Amanda wondered if the department models the diversity, equity, and inclusion lens in its staffing. Linda responded that this department is the most diverse in the City.

Amanda requested better communication for onboarding.

Our point people for Commissioners are Tiegan and Linda at the City. Linda has invited any Commissioner to reach out as needed, and is happy to put us on her calendar. She answers her own emails and phone calls at 253-591-5225, or at [lstewart@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:lstewart@cityoftacoma.org).



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6. Closing Comments / Adjourn

Chair: Jovan Dumas

Motion to adjourn at 7:31 by Jason, seconded by Zach. Motion was passed by all

Commissioners: Jovan, Kelly, Elizabeth, Zach, Lisa, Amanda, Cherrielee, Jason and Janet.

*Next HSC Meeting: April 10, 2019 6:00pm*

HSC Chair Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

05/08/19

City of Tacoma Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

5/8/19

\* RCW 43.52.383 - Compliance with open public meetings act