



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

Human Rights Commission

Regular Meeting | January 27, 2025 | 3:30 – 4:30 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | 10 North Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Casey Bakhsh, Drew France, Larissa McNeil, Anthony Meadows, Katie Eller Murray, Amanda Peregrina, Parisa Pilehvar, Josiah Robinson, Tamecca Robers, Andrea Walker, Dave Walker

Commissioners Absent: Dezeray Edwards, Joshua Starks

I. **Call to Order and Introductions**

- a. Chairwoman Andrea Walker called the meeting to order at 3:33 pm.

II. **Lifetime of Compassion Award Ceremony Honoring Mike Brose**

- a. Chairwoman Walker noted that Compassionate Tulsa was established in 2015 by a unanimous City Council vote, recognizing Tulsa as a compassionate city.
- b. Dr. Al Carozzi, 2024 Chair of Compassionate Tulsa, presented the Lifetime of Compassionate Service Award to Michael Brose.

III. **Approve Meeting Minutes**

- a. Chairwoman Walker made a motion to approve the October meeting minutes, Commissioner Eller Murray seconded.
 - i. Aye: 11, Nay: 0
 - ii. Motion carried, October meeting minutes approved.
- b. Chairwoman Walker made a motion to approve the November meeting minutes, Commissioner Rogers seconded.
 - i. Aye: 11, Nay: 0
 - ii. Motion carried, October meeting minutes approved.

IV. **Commissioner Oath of Office**

- a. Lexi passed around a document for commissioners to sign the oath of office. All commissioners present signed.

V. **Presentation on Literacy and Civic Engagement from Commissioner Pilehvar**

- a. Commissioner Pilehvar passed out a handout (Appendix 1) and introduced Amber Masters, VP of Innovation and Partnerships at Teach for America Oklahoma (TFA) to co-present.
- b. TFA is part of the Third Grade Reading Coalition focused on increasing literacy for boys of color.
- c. Shared literacy data on literacy:
 - i. 88% of families think their child is reading on grade level, however
 - ii. 26% of 3rd graders in Tulsa were reading on grade level in 2023



CITY EXPERIENCE
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- d. What implications does the state of literacy have for the work to support human rights in Tulsa?
 - i. Krystal Reyes: Link between literacy and civic engagement, ability to engage in democracy
 - ii. Commissioner Bakhsh: See literacy issues come up in housing (ie: a tenant not knowing how to advocate with their landlord)
 - iii. Literacy rates have implications for future civic engagement: informed decisions, express opinions, critical thinking. Literacy has historically been weaponized as a barrier to access civic engagement and voting.
- e. There is broad support to impact literacy in Tulsa. Oklahoma has strong state policies to support literacy; however, need stronger implementation. Currently, 11 of 18 recommended policies are being implemented even though Oklahoma has 17 in place. Building community awareness and community taking action is integral.
- f. Amber Masters urged commissioners to take an active role in student learning and integrate literacy into existing programs.
- g. As Tulsa tackles pressing matters like absenteeism, student belonging, and safety, stay mindful of their connection to learning and literacy.
- h. The literacy gap is solvable, need us all to be part of the solution.
- i. Commissioner Q&A:
 - i. Commissioner Eller Murray: Which state policies are missing of the ones currently in place and being implemented?
 - 1. Commissioner Pilehvar: The policy that is missing is an assessment for teachers to know the Science of Reading. The teacher certification exam needs to add this. Referenced one of the resources that has more info on this. An example of a policy that needs to be implemented is having coaches supporting teachers, despite 77 Oklahoma counties there are a single-digit number of coaches in the state.
 - ii. Chairwoman Walker: Appreciate very specific action items, clear connection to civic engagement.

VI. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Walker reflected on recent accomplishments of the commission and acknowledged we're in a volatile environment for human rights.
- b. Referenced the Department of Justice's Tulsa Race Massacre Report. The report points to systemic racism as a reason the massacre happened. As we continue to reflect and heal from the massacre, we in Tulsa know that systemic racism exists.
- c. The commission hasn't debriefed voter turnout from the November 5th election. One source said 64% of registered voters in Oklahoma voted. Tulsa County was 63%. Room to work, and individuals are taking a stand against systemic bias.
- d. Never been a more important time to serve on Tulsa's Human Rights Commission. Focus on civic engagement is timely and critical for our community. Need to create actionable steps from what the commission has learned related to civic engagement. Thanks everyone for their commitment.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- e. Reviewed 2024 goals:
 - i. Solidify working structure of HRC.
 - 1. Developed operational plan voted to adopt and operational plan.
 - 2. Measured commissioners' perception of effectiveness in April 2024. Administered survey again during this meeting.
 - ii. Enhance civic engagement.
- f. Chairwoman Walker shared that the commission needs to establish a nominating committee to facilitate the Chair and Vice chair nomination process.
 - i. Commissioner France volunteered to lead the nominating committee, and Commissioners Eller Murray and Rogers volunteered to serve on the committee.

VII. Committee Reports

- a. Fair Housing Committee
 - i. Commissioner Bakhsh noted the first committee meeting of the year will be in February.
 - ii. Possibility to focus on veterans housing in early 2025, then shift to undocumented community fair housing later in the year.
 - 1. If your commission is interested in working on this, reach out to Commissioner Bakhsh. Interested in organizing education summits.
 - 2. Vice Chair Robinson elevated that at the Quarter 1 Title V Commissions Chair and Vice Chair meeting, the Hispanic/Latinx Affairs Commission Vice Chair noted this is an interest.
- b. Compassionate Tulsa Committee
 - i. Compassionate Tulsa will have a new chair in 2025.
- c. 2SLGBTQIA+ Committee
 - i. Vice Chair Robinson: Know Your Rights Event on January 30, 6 – 7:30 pm at Centennial Center in Veteran's Park. Will provide information to 2SLGBTQIA+ community on family and housing law, gender and name changes, and legal advocacy.

VIII. Liaison Reports

- a. Disabilities Advocate – no report
- b. Veteran Advocate – no report

IX. Title V Commission Reports

- a. Asian Affairs Commission
 - i. Commissioner Pilehvar: Parasite screening at Circle Cinema was the previous day to kick off Lunar New Year. The first city sponsored Lunar New Year Festival will be on February 1 at 101 Archer from 6 – 9 pm. First community-wide event for AAC.
- b. Greater Tulsa Area African American Affairs Commission
 - i. Commissioner McNeil: Barndon Oldham with Invest North presented at the January GTAAAC meeting. Invest North is a GKFF initiative started in 2022, that is working to revitalize two specific north Tulsa neighborhoods.
 - ii. Education Committee focusing on chronic absenteeism and literacy in 2025. Forming a cross-commission meeting series for the education



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

committees of different Title V Commissioners to collaborate. Had first Black Educator Excellence Awards in October. Also working on op-eds.

iii. Culture Committee is planning an inaugural spoken word contest during Juneteenth.

c. Greater Tulsa Area Hispanic/Latinx Affairs Commission

i. Commissioner Peregrina: HLAC did not meet in January.

ii. Working to inform the community on their rights, several school districts are trying to make families feel safe sending students to school.

iii. Chairwoman Walker extended HRC's support, Vice Chair Robinson asked what HRC can do to support now.

1. Commissioner Peregrina: HLAC needs to meet to determine actions. We don't want to be targets. The first priority is keeping the community safe and secure.

d. Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission – no report

e. Tulsa Women's Commission – no report

X. **Old Business** – no old business

XI. **New Business**

a. Commissioner Bakhsh asked if there can be more clarity in the agenda about what the committee/liaison/commission reports will be.

i. Commissioner France agreed that the reports could be more efficient, noted that folks need to reach out to Lexi and the chairs to get them information before the agenda goes live.

ii. Commissioner Bakhsh offered to create a streamlined template.

iii. Lexi noted that she files the agendas 3 – 5 business days in advance, so sending information 1 – 2 weeks in advance is helpful.

XII. **Announcements / Public Comments**

a. African American Resource Center at Tulsa Library: African Americans and Labor Exhibition opening on Tuesday, February 4 at 6pm at Rudisill Library.

XIII. **Adjournment**

a. Meeting adjourned at 4:43 pm.

Turning the Page For Tulsa

Civic Engagement and Collective Action Toward Our Community's Right To Read



Teach For America

finds, develops, and supports leaders to transform education and expand opportunity for all children. It's our aim to create the conditions for all children to learn, lead, and thrive.

420+

Corps members, Ignite fellows, and alumni in Greater Tulsa



61%

of alumni continue working in education



140

CM & Alumni serving as classroom teachers

14

alumni serving as school and district leaders

Teach For America's Role



- Talent Engine:** Recruit, develop, retain talent at all levels of the system from educator to school leader
- Insight Generator:** Foster insights that increase best practices, influence systems change, and lead to stronger collective action
- Convener:** Create conditions for connection among educators, organizations, and policy makers to generate alignment centered on students

OUR 2030 GOAL
By 2030, twice as many children in Greater Tulsa will read on grade level in third grade, indicating they are on a path to economic mobility and co-creating a future filled with possibility.

Our Work Across Oklahoma

Ignite Fellowship

Aspiring leaders offer high-dosage, 1:1 and small group tutoring to accelerate learning and wellness for students in our community

Corps Program

New and early-career teachers who commit at least two years to making a difference for students as a classroom leader

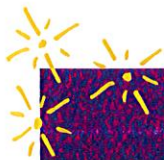
Alumni Impact

Our alumni programming inspires and supports alumni within and outside of schools to lead effectively toward educational equity



Partnering Toward 3rd Grade Reading Outcomes:





Ways To Take Action:

Community Literacy Resource Bank

★ = For Families

✚ = For Educators



Watch The Right To Read

Watch the stories of an NAACP activist, a teacher, and two families fighting to provide our kids with the most foundational indicator of life-long success: the ability to read.



Explore how reading works

from Reading Rockets' Reading 101 Module
This self-paced course clearly outlines how children learn to read and what this means for providing instruction and supports that work



Listen to Sold A Story

A podcast series examining how disproven ideas about reading made their way into the country's most popular reading curricula



Explore OK State Policies

Explore Early Literacy Matters' report of what literacy policies Oklahoma has in place and to what extent they are being implemented



Volunteer As A Tutor

Sign-up to become a Reading Partner
Spend just 1 hour per week as an in-person tutor for a Tulsa student. Training and flexible scheduling are available for volunteers.



Know your child's milestones

Unsure what your child should know at different developmental stages? Be sure to scroll to the bottom to explore the milestones you can start looking for as early as your child starts listening to stories!



Watch Reading Buddies

A children's literacy-based show
This adorable television series is based on the science of reading and streams conveniently from YouTube and the PBS Kids app.



Build a home reading routine

from Read With Kylie
2024 Louisiana State Teacher of the Year (and TFA alumna) Kylie Altier compiled this website with low-prep reading routines for parents.



Download Nessy

A reading app for school-aged students
Nessy is a comprehensive app that supports readers with structured literacy lessons and games covering both word recognition and comprehension.



Support reading early

LENA's Talking Tips for building brains
Did you know: Talking, reading, and singing to children in their first few years of life impacts a child's language skills later in life.



Sharpen your instruction

with Reading Universe resources
This website gives educators practical guidance on teaching reading and writing using research-based practices. Find skill explainers, model lessons, and printable tools.



Access translated guidance

These resources--provided by TPS-- have been compiled in seven languages for families of students with characteristics of dyslexia, but could be helpful for any family looking for ways to support reading at home.

