

Meeting Minutes

Human Relations Commission

Regular Meeting

February 12, 2025 | 6:00 p.m.
Chandler City Council Chambers
88 E. Chicago St., Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Maxwell at 6:01 p.m.

Roll Call

Commission Attendance

Chair Erica Maxwell
Commissioner John Anguiano
Commissioner Tony Pham
Commissioner Jevan Bremby
Commissioner Kent Lane
Commissioner Pamela Morris
Commissioner Betty Ramirez

Staff Attendance

Niki Tapia, DEI Officer
Tadd Wille, Assistant City Manager
Commander Daniel Shellum, Chandler Police
CC Cantabrana, Management Assistant

Commissioners Absent

Vice Chair Kriti Agarwal
Commissioner Garry Ong
Commissioner Tyler Conaway
Commissioner Shannon Begay

Scheduled and Unscheduled Public Appearances

None

Consent Agenda Motion and Vote

Commissioner Morris moved to approve the December 4, 2024 , Human Relations Commission meeting minutes; Seconded by Commissioner Ramirez.

Motions carried unanimously (7-0).

Discussion

Meet the HRC Members – Part 1

Chair Maxwell, Commissioner Ramirez, and Commissioner Anguiano provided a brief presentation to the commission. They shared insights on their tenure with the HRC, their personal interests, and their involvement in the community. Each commissioner highlighted their contributions and engagement in various initiatives that support the commission's mission.

City and Community Update

Assistant City Manager Tadd Wille expressed gratitude for the work of the HRC and its impact on the community. Having been in Chandler for three years after serving in San Antonio, Texas and Tacoma, Washington, Wille shared his appreciation for the city's diversity and how it strengthens the community. He emphasized that Chandler's leadership values diversity and the role of the HRC in building inclusion. Wille encouraged commissioners to continue bringing forward new ideas and initiatives, asking them to consider which communities have yet to be reached and how to engage them further. Wille also committed to attending HRC meetings more frequently.

Commissioners engaged in a discussion about Chandler's DEI efforts and broader challenges. Wille reassured members that Chandler's City Council continues to support DEI initiatives and that the city has historically taken a "quiet but right" approach to promoting diversity. Wille acknowledged that DEI efforts nationwide are facing increased scrutiny, with the terminology being politicized. Some cities are shifting focus to DEI values without explicitly using the term. Wille highlighted Chandler's recent effort to provide transparency by launching a webpage through the Mayor and Council's site outlining federal Executive Orders and their local impact.

Concerns were raised regarding potential funding cuts for DEI initiatives at the state and federal levels. Wille clarified that Chandler's DEI efforts are funded through local general funds rather than federal grants, making them insulated from potential federal budget cuts. However, he noted that discussions would take place if such policies were introduced.

Commissioners also discussed the importance of remaining informed and engaged, particularly with upcoming elections, as policies affecting DEI efforts can shift depending on political leadership. Tadd reiterated that his perspective comes from the City Manager's office and encouraged commissioners to continue their important work in strengthening community connections.

HRC Year-End Report

Scheduled for discussion in an upcoming meeting.

DEI Division Update

Niki Tapia provided an update on upcoming events organized by the DEI Division and community partners. Key events include the South Chandler Self-Help's Black History Month event, Chandler Men of Action's Banquet, I-Rise Foundation Soccer Tournament, a Legacy Partners & Community Leaders Breakfast, In a Different Key Movie Screening, and the Women's Empowerment Luncheon. Commissioners are encouraged to visit the Chandler Diversity webpage for a full list of events and details.

HRC Year-End Report

Chair Erica Maxwell recommended moving this agenda discussion to the next meeting and proposes each commissioner to have their feedback on attended events and goals of the Human Relations Commission for the next agenda. Lastly, Niki Tapia shared that three HRC members will be concluding their service in April, and a farewell celebration will be shared at the next meeting. New members will join the commission in May.

Chandler Police Department Update

Commander Daniel Shellum reiterated that the Chandler Police Department's stance on immigration remains unchanged—its primary responsibility is to serve the community and ensure public safety, not to enforce immigration laws. While the department cooperates with agencies like HSI (Homeland Security Investigations) and ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) to maintain public safety during operations, they do not engage in immigration enforcement. Chandler Police has been active in the community to make sure this message is known by residents, and has been engaging with faith leaders, nonprofit leaders, schools, and more.

Shellum also provided an update on Proposition 314, which passed but remains stalled in the Texas Court of Appeals. Even after a decision, implementation of the proposition could take time to go forth.

Commissioners acknowledged the importance of Chandler Police's community engagement efforts. Shellum emphasized the value of building relationships with trusted community leaders who can help communicate that Chandler Police is here to serve. On Sunday, February 16, Chandler Police, city leadership, and DEI staff will meet with the Haitian community to address concerns related to immigration. Commissioners reaffirmed Chandler's commitment to DEI and encouraged continued referrals to available resources.

Member Comments/Announcements

None

Calendar

The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at 6 p.m., in the Chandler City Council Chambers, 88 E. Chicago St., Chandler, AZ

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

CC Cantabrana, Recording Secretary

Erica Maxwell, Chair