

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

www.palmspringsca.gov

MEETING AGENDA

**LOCATION: PALM SPRINGS CITY HALL – Large Conference Room
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way**

Monday,
Jan. 11, 2016



3:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS

Dee Dee Wilson Barton, Chair
Jack Newby, Vice Chair
Eduardo Carriazo
Jilaska Chandrasena
Denise Chappell

Janel Hunt
Wes Rankins
Suzanne Severin
Deborah Sutton-Weiss

Student Representatives

Angelina Pinkney, Palm Springs High School
Kelli Martin, Raymond Cree Middle School

Staff Liaison:

Lee Bonno
Director of Neighborhood & Community Relations

City of Palm Springs Vision Statement: Palm Springs aspires to be a unique world-class desert community, where residents and visitors enjoy our high quality of life and a relaxing experience. We desire to balance our cultural and historical resources with responsible, sustainable economic growth and enhance our natural desert beauty. We are committed to providing responsive, friendly, and efficient customer service in an environment that fosters unity among all our citizens.

Pursuant to G.C. Section 54957.5 the designated office for inspection of public records in connection with the meeting is the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California.

It is the intention of the City of Palm Springs to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all respects. If, as an attendee or a participant at this meeting or in meetings on a regular basis, you will need special assistance beyond what is normally provided, the City will attempt to accommodate you in every reasonable manner. Please contact the Office of Neighborhood and Community Relations, (760) 323-8255, TDD (760) 864-9527, at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to inform us of your particular needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible.

(Please **TURN-OFF** all cell phone ringers during this meeting - thank you!)

1. CALL TO ORDER:
2. FLAG SALUTE:
3. MISSION STATEMENT: "The Mission of the Palm Springs Human Rights Commission is to promote and protect the diversity of our community and to improve human relations through education and community awareness."

4. ROLL CALL:
5. POSTING OF THE AGENDA: This Agenda was available for public access at the City Hall exterior bulletin board (west side of Council Chamber), the City Clerk's office, and Planning Services counter on or before 4:00 p.m., Thursday, January 7, 2016. A courtesy web site posting of the Agenda may be found at the City's web site www.palmsprings-ca.gov. Pursuant to the Government Code Section 54957.5, the designated office for inspection of public records in connection with the public meeting of the Human Rights Commission is the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, at 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California.
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Three (3) minutes per speaker
7. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 14, 2015 MEETING
8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / AND OR VOTE:
 - 9.A Community Service Awards Presentation Feb. 8, 2016
 - 9.B Possibility of naming a Community Service Award for George Zander – Commissioner Rankins
 - 9.C Review/re-strategize the Commission's outreach efforts
 - 9.D Commission's annual report
 - 9.E Commission's proposed budget
 - 9.F Participating in the Black History Parade, Saturday, Feb. 27
 - 9.G Participation in the Organized Neighborhoods of Palm Springs' 9th Annual Picnic & Community Expo, Saturday, March 19 in Ruth Hardy Park
 - 9.H. Continued discussion about rent control in Palm Springs – Commissioner Rankins
 - 9.I Community Outreach Update
 - 9.J Task Force Reports:
 - Homelessness Committee – Commissioner Severin
 - Logo Committee – Commissioners Rankins, Severin and Carriazo
 - 9.K Public comment at the City Council meetings
 - 9.L Commission's tentative calendar:

FEBRUARY 2016: Community Service Awards

MARCH 2016: Race Relations
Guest Speaker(s): Desert Sun Race Relations Survey Group
Coordinated by: Commissioner Carriazo

APRIL 2016: Equal Access in Education/Government
Guest Speaker(s): TBA
Coordinated by: Commissioner Hunt and Vice Chair Newby

MAY 2016: Women's Issues/Child Hunger
Guest Speaker(s): TBA
Coordinated by: Chair Wilson Barton and Student Rep. Angelina Pinkney
Commissioner Hunt to address Child Hunger

A veterans offsite event at the American Legion
Coordinated by Commissioner Severin

JUNE 2016: LGBT Issues
Guest Speaker(s): TBA

Coordinated by: Commissioner Sutton-Weiss

JULY 2016:

Ableism
Guest Speaker(s): TBA
Coordinated by: Commissioner Chandrasena

10. STUDENT COMMENTS:
11. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:
12. STAFF COMMENTS:
13. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE FEBRUARY 8, 2016 HRC MEETING:
14. ADJOURNMENT

Enclosures:

1. Minutes from the Dec. 7, 2015 HRC meeting
2. Proposed budget
3. Highlights from the Homeless Task Force Meeting of Nov. 12, 2015

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETINGS at 3:00 p.m. THE SECOND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH IN THE LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM IN CITY HALL, 3200 E. TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
of the
City of Palm Springs

Minutes from the December 14, 2015 Regular Meeting

<u>COMMISSIONERS</u>	<u>Present at this Meeting</u>	<u>Present FY Year-to-Date</u>	<u>FY 2015-16 Excused Absences</u>	<u>FY 2015-16 Unexcused Absences</u>
Dee Dee Wilson Barton	X	4	1	0
Eduardo Carriazo	X	4	1	0
Jilska Chandrasena	X	4	1	0
Denise Chappell	X	4	1	0
Janel Hunt	X	5	0	0
Jack Newby	X	5	0	0
Wes Rankins	X	5	0	0
Suzanne Severin	X	5	0	0
Deborah Sutton-Weiss	X	5	0	0
Angelina Pinkney, Student Rep	X	2		
Kelli Martin, Student rep.	0	0		

The above roll call record is based on all meeting Minutes from July 13, 2015 thru Dec. 14, 2015

1. Chair Wilson Barton called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. Commissioner Sutton-Weiss led the flag salute.
3. Commissioner Rankins recited the Mission Statement.
4. Commissioners Present: Wilson Barton, Newby, Carriazo, Chandrasena, Chappell, Hunt, Rankins, Severin, and Sutton-Weiss
Commissioners Absent: None
Student Representatives: Angelina Pinkney was present, but Kelli Martin was absent.
5. POSTING OF THE AGENDA: The agenda was posted in accordance with the Brown Act on or before Thursday, December 10, 2015.

Chair Wilson Barton noted the City's establishment of the HRC 23 years ago to address and acknowledge the importance of human rights in Palm Springs and she asked for a moment of reflection in light of the terrorist attack in San Bernardino and the firebombing of a local mosque. Commissioner Sutton-Weiss also asked that all present take a moment to remember George Zander, a local advocate for human rights and equality, who recently passed away.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS:
 - Doug Campbell expressed concerns about the lack of effective rent control in Palm Springs. He explained that he is retired and living on disability. He noted that his rent at the San Jacinto Racquet Club Apartments has increased 8% over the past two years and he is now facing a rent increase of \$200 per month on the apartment he has rented for 15 years. He further explained that in the time he has lived at this location, the landlord has made no improvements. He believes the landlord is raising rents in an effort to get people to move out so that renovations can be made and he/she can charge more. Mr. Campbell believes that this practice is unfair.
 - Jackie Price also lives in the San Jacinto Racquet Club Apartments and believes that the landlord is attempting to circumvent the rent control laws. She described what she considers to be a building safety and health issue problem on the premises. She further characterized "mom and pop" shop rents in Palm Springs as way too high. Ms. Price also asked why Palm Springs is not connected to local wind and solar farms.

7. GUEST SPEAKERS:

- Commissioner Rankins introduced Dale Cook, Community Development Administrator for the City of Palm Springs, who will address affordable rental opportunities in Palm Springs and tenants facing rent increases and Monica Lopez, Program Manager of the Fair Housing Council of Riverside County who will address the fair housing legalities on rental agreements, renewals and rent increases. Mr. Cook noted the timeliness of the Commission's invitation in light of The Desert Sun's recent article about fair and affordable housing in the Coachella Valley. He noted that Palm Springs does have a large number of affordable units but, in referencing the public comment speakers, there is also a greater need for affordable housing. Mr. Cook spoke about the impact of the budget crisis in the State of California and subsequent abolishment of the State's Redevelopment Agencies that had allowed for funds to be set aside for affordable housing. Mr. Cook noted that the affordable housing developments that the City of Palm Springs has participated with federal low-income tax credits do have a number of restrictions that the typical housing market does not have. He said the private market place may not have the same restrictions or leasing requirements that the affordable units have. Mr. Cook shared documents (that can be found on the City's website) that show where affordable housing is located in Palm Springs noting that there are often long waiting lists, particularly for the senior housing developments. He also referred to documentation from the National Low Income Housing Coalition that indicated a minimum wage earner (\$9 per hour) would have to work 92 hours per week to afford a modest one-bedroom apartment at the fair market rate. Mr. Cook stated that there had been three pieces of legislation brought forth, but that Governor Brown had vetoed two of them because of current state finances. The remaining initiative is still moving forward. It would create a real estate tax transfer fee that would go into a Housing Trust, creating opportunities for communities to match with Federal grants, he said. Mr. Cook believes that consumer awareness is an important step in making renters aware of their rights. He then turned the presentation over to Ms. Lopez. She briefly described her 18-year background in the fair housing industry. Ms. Lopez noted that the mission of the Fair Housing Council (a not-for-profit organization) is to provide counseling and services that will promote equal housing opportunities for all individuals. Ms. Lopez provided a flyer that described the "Top Ten Issues Relating to Rental Housing." The Fair Housing Council hosts a conference for local elected official to address these top 10 issues that limit access to fair and equal housing in Riverside County. She cited the fact that rent increases often come with the renewal of a rental agreement/lease and that gentrification has only added to the problem. She noted, as did Mr. Cook, that Palm Springs does have a number of affordable housing units, but as individuals retire and become elderly, there is a need for more units. She announced that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has issued its final ruling on the Assessment to Fair Housing that's going to be taking the place of the Impediments to Fair Housing choice. This will allow all the groups and organizations, including the HRC, to work with Fair Housing and the City to assess the needs of the community to come up with solutions and plans to remediate housing issues and shortfalls. Ms. Lopez noted that rental screenings are restrictive – they have income requirements and are looking for people with good credit, no bankruptcies, no evictions and no criminal records. Ms. Lopez said they also find that persons with disabilities and families who have children are often times denied housing or are displaced because of new owners taking over. Just increasing the rent is displacing those individuals, she said. She further described the practice of having renters assume the cost of deferred maintenance, waste removal, water and the upkeep of common areas. Ms. Lopez noted that although the waiting list for Section 8 housing is open, the list is long. Similarly, those qualifying for housing vouchers often have a situation where the voucher will not cover the cost of a rental.

Chair Wilson Barton asked if Ms. Lopez knew of any plans that will provide funding assistance for roofing/flooding and other issues that might be associated with the predictions of El Nino storms. Ms. Lopez responded that she didn't know of any funding or programs in the works now. Commissioner Rankins expressed concern about the rental market beginning to exclude the working individuals who make too much money to qualify for subsidies and too little to live in the City. He asked what the HRC can do to help. Vice Chair Newby asked about the Rent Control Commission and Mr. Cook replied that it might behoove the HRC to look at the existing structure of that Commission and see if there is a need to modify or expand it. Mr. Cook also noted that

NIMBY-ism is a definite challenge to the affordable housing market. Vice Chair Newby asked about density bonuses for developers if they have certain number of low-income units. Mr. Cook replied that bonus densities are applicable. Ms. Lopez noted that building costs are so high that it's difficult for developers to factor in affordable housing. She said they are going to be asking cities, that if they have parcels of land, to donate them to a non-profit that will develop affordable housing on the property. Commissioner Severin asked what should be the first step someone should take if they are experiencing a housing situation. Ms. Lopez said they should contact the Fair Housing Council of Riverside County. There is an office in Palm Springs at 655 N. Palm Canyon Way and calls can be made to (760) 864-1541.

8. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE November 9, 2015 MEETING: The minutes from the Nov. 9, 2015 HRC meeting were unanimously approved 9-0 following a motion by Commissioner Sutton-Weiss and second by Vice Chair Newby.

9. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / AND OR VOTE:

9.A Approval of Community Service Award Recipients and expenditure of funds for plaques. The awards will be presented on Monday, February 8th. Commissioners Sutton-Weiss, Rankins and Carriazo served on the committee that received the nominations. Commissioner Rankins noted that there were nine nominees, but one individual was not qualified. The eight finalists are:

- Mark Walthour for his work in Desert Highland/Gateway Estates and the Clinton Day of Action and Community Block Grant Program
- American Legion Post 519, a volunteer veterans service organization which provides community center services and also sponsors a local Boy Scout troop
- Dimitri Halkidis, founder of Boo2bullying Inc, for his work in the community to educate students and faculty
- Hank Plante, Emmy award winning journalist serving on the Editorial Board of the Desert Sun, for his support and reporting on human rights
- Thomi Clinton for her educational and awareness activities throughout the community on issues specific to those who are transgender
- Olive Crest for its 40 years of working with families and at-risk youth in the prevention of child abuse
- Safe House of the Desert for providing emergency shelter, intervention and outreach to youth in crisis. It also educates the community on human trafficking and offers help to the victims of human trafficking
- Incight for its work in assisting people with disabilities in the areas of education and employment training and adaptive athletics.

Commissioner Sutton-Weiss moved that the Commission approve the list of nominees as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chandrasena. There was discussion that helped flesh out the profiles of each recommended recipient. The motion was approved 8-0 with Commissioner Hunt abstaining.

Chair Wilson Barton assigned the Commissioners to notify the recipients and write a one paragraph introduction to be used when the awards are presented:

Commissioner Sutton-Weiss	Thomi Clinton
Commissioner Severin	American Legion Post 519
Commissioner Chandrasena	Incight
Commissioner Rankins	Safe House of the Desert
Vice Chair Newby	Hank Plante
Chair Wilson Barton	Mark Walthour,
Commissioner Carriazzo	Dimitri Halkidis
Commissioner Hunt	Olive Crest

Chair Wilson Barton will mail a letter to each recipient once they have been contacted by the Commissioners. It was suggested that a post-humus moment should be made for George Zander at the awards presentation.

There was a brief discussion about encouraging recipients to attend and invite their families, friends and co-workers to attend the hour long ceremony that takes place in the Council Chamber at City Hall. The

event begins at 3 p.m. Lee Bonno confirmed that she will work with the City's Communications Director regarding a news release and media contact for the event.

NOTE: At 4:02 p.m. Commissioner Hunt excused herself from the meeting for a previous commitment.

Vice Chair Newby made a motion to allocate up to \$200 for the cost of plaques for the Community Service Award recipients the motion received a second from Chair Wilson Barton. The motion carried 8-0 (Commissioner Hunt was not in attendance for the vote).

9.B Commission's proposed budget: Chair Wilson Barton noted that when City Manager David Ready attended the Commission meeting he asked the Commission what it needed. She and Vice Chair Newby put together a draft budget that was distributed (attached). Chair Wilson Barton noted the increase in the line item for the Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast. She indicated that more media coverage of the Commission's activities as well as promoting openings on the City's Boards and Commissions would be an advantage and suggested taking out advertisements in the local media to accomplish that end. The draft budget includes a new expenditure -- \$1,500 for Advertising for Openings/Awards.

NOTE: Commissioner Sutton-Weiss excused herself at 4:07 p.m.

Commissioner Chappell suggested that the HRC make public service announcements/appearances on the local TV news outlets. Chair Wilson Barton reminded the group that all Commissioners are working people and may not have the time/opportunity to visit a local media outlet. Commissioner Severin asked for time to brainstorm ideas about the Commission's budget. Ms. Bonno noted that the HRC Budget for 2015-2016 had already been approved – and Chair Wilson Barton reiterated that she would like the Commission to draft a proposal asking for additional funds for 2015-2016. Vice Chair Newby added that based upon his experience in advertising \$1,500 would buy seven 3x5 ads in The Desert Sun. Although the City Clerk's Office advertises to seek candidates to fill openings on the various Boards and Commissions, Vice Chair Newby said the HRC wants to talk about how recruitment takes place and is that the best way to reach the diverse community that Palm Springs has. Commissioner Rankins expressed his concern that the HRC is attempting to do the City's job. He urged the Commission to spend its funding wisely and work with City staff that does advertising. Commissioner Severin said funds will be needed after the Commission has a new logo for such things as letterhead and business cards as well as handout materials. She proposed \$2,000 be spent on promotion. Commissioner Chappell noted the need for more information to be disseminated about the work of the HRC. Vice Chair Newby would like to meet with David Ready to see if the existing budget can be increased this year and use Commissioner Severin's idea of renaming the proposed line item from "Advertising for Openings/Awards" to "Advertising and Promotion." Chair Wilson Barton said she will arrange a meeting with David Ready to speak about the Commission's budget.

9.C Recap of the Commission's participation in the Veterans Day Parade and in the Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil: Not discussed

9.D Community Outreach Update: No reports

9.E Task Force Reports:

- Homelessness Committee – Commissioner Severin distributed a recap (attached) and said that the next meeting of the Homelessness Committee would be at 4 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 17 in the Large Conference Room at City Hall. She added that the City is looking for funding sources for a variety of programs and that an agreement is in process between the City and the County of Riverside.
- Logo Committee – Commissioners Rankins, Severin and Carriazo. Commissioner Severin noted that the feedback provided by other Commissioners on the logo sketches presented at the November meeting was heard. She indicated that the Logo Committee had engaged with a local PR firm that is willing help them put some ideas together. The only thing the PR firm would like in return is an acknowledgement if the Commission chooses one of its recommended designs. Lee Bonno noted that the expectations of PR firm should be made very clear in

advance. Chair Wilson Barton expressed concerns about what the 'quid pro quo' might be. Her concern was supported by Ms. Bonno who noted that if an acknowledgement was advertised, other similar firms may want to know why they didn't have the opportunity to work with the Commission on a logo design. Chair Wilson Barton, in the interest of time, asked that the discussion be continued at a future meeting.

NOTE: Chair Wilson Barton asked Angelina Pinkney if she had report to deliver at this time. Agenda Item 10 STUDENT COMMENTS was moved up. Ms. Pinkney reported that Palm Springs High School held a Suicide Prevention Week in November that also included anti-bullying presentations. Ms. Pinkney also noted that during the week of December 7-11 there was an "Arrive Alive" demonstration that highlighted the dangers of drinking and driving and texting and driving. The PSHS is also conducting a toy drive for the holidays. They also conducted a blood drive and the blood donated went to replenish blood supplies used for victims of the San Bernardino terrorist attack.

9.F Public comment at the City Council meetings – Chair Wilson Barton will make the public comment in January about the Community Service Awards, inviting people to attend the presentations Feb. 8. Lee Bonno will advise the Chair on which meeting to attend.

9.G Update on complaints of discrimination: Commissioner Severin noted that the gender discrimination case (#2015-10-14) was resolved between the parties without mediation. Commissioner Severin provided feedback to the company in terms of what happened, what the impact was and some resources the company can use to educate its staff online. Both parties in the case were satisfied with the resolution, she said.

9.H Commission's tentative calendar:

JANUARY 2016: Review/Re-strategize HRC Outreach Efforts

Annual Report

Coordinated by: Chair Wilson Barton

FEBRUARY 2016: Community Service Awards

MARCH 2016: Race Relations

Guest Speaker(s): Desert Sun Race Relations Survey Group

Coordinated by: Commissioner Carriazo

APRIL 2016: Equal Access in Education/Government

Guest Speaker(s): TBA

Coordinated by: Commissioner Hunt and Vice Chair Newby

MAY 2016: Women's Issues/Child Hunger

Guest Speaker(s): TBA

Coordinated by: Chair Wilson Barton and Student Rep. Angelina Pinkney

***Note: This meeting may be held off site at the American Legion**

Coordinated by: Commissioner Severin

JUNE 2016: LGBT Issues

Guest Speaker(s): TBA

Coordinated by: Commissioner Sutton-Weiss

JULY 2016: Ableism

Guest Speaker(s): TBA

Coordinated by: Commissioner Chandrasena

10. Noted that STUDENT COMMENTS was moved up on the Agenda.

11. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

- Commissioner Rankins noted two items he would like placed on the agenda for the January meeting. They are to continue from today's discussion in regards to what the City has in place in terms of rent control and the Rent Control Commission. The other item is to discuss possibly naming one of the Community Service Awards for George Zander. Lee Bonno will assist Commissioner Rankins in identifying a speaker from the Rent Control Commission to possibly speak at the January meeting.

12. STAFF COMMENTS: None

13. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE JANUARY 11, 2015 HRC MEETING.

- Review/Re-Strategize HRC Outreach Efforts
- Annual Report
- Budget
- Logo Design
- Rent Control
- Possibility of naming a Community Service Award after George Zander

14. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Terry Towne
Volunteer, Office of Neighborhood & Community Relations
For

Lee A. Bonno
Staff Human Rights Commission Liaison
Director of Neighborhood & Community Relations

HRC Meeting December 14, 2015 – Highlights from Homelessness Task Force Meeting Nov 12, 2014

1-Agreement in process between Riverside County and Palm Springs to work on this issue, showing seriousness and commitment.

2-Funding sources being reviewed (eg RDA housing fund of 900k going back to general fund for Council to vote on uses; services funds up to \$250k/yr in future years toward prevention,...).

3-Addiction/Mental Subcommittee Report - Medical mobile clinics for services and outreach are available from Riverside County to partner with organizations (eg Well in the Desert, Roys,..) and go to designated areas (eg parks). Have doctors, nurses, street outreach teams, provide meds (not narcotics),... Working to get a schedule in place for Palm Springs.

4-Housing Subcommittee Report – provided ideas on possible housing facilities and estimated budget needed.

5-Youth Subcommittee Report – discussed several categories of homeless youth and challenges/needs when providing services. Safety is paramount. Key is housing first followed by consistent full time social services. Important to coordinate with PSUSD.

Next meeting: Thursday December 17, 4:00pm in Large Conference Room, Palm Springs City Hall.

Each Subcommittee asked to present a report, recommendations and needs.

Jobs Subcommittee Committee Report will share that the Workforce Development Center in Indio has services/programs and resources to begin immediately helping the homeless that are interested and ready find jobs. How to get started, a case worker gets assigned, and more details... A mobile van with computer lab can be scheduled to come to Palm Springs. We want to leverage what is already available, and identify gaps/needs.

Palm Springs Human Rights Commission
***Draft* Budget - 2015 -16 Fiscal Year**

Annual Planning Meeting Refreshments	\$107.40
Commissioner Name Plates	\$50.00
Plaques for Annual Awards	\$150.00
Volunteer Insurance	\$175.00
Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast	\$1,000.00
Printing and Brochures	\$150.00
Advertising for Openings/Awards	\$1,500.00
Total:	\$3,132.40