

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,
April 11, 2016



3:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS

**Jack Newby, Vice Chair
Jilska 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 Mission Statement: Palm Springs is an inclusive world-class city dedicated to providing excellent and responsive public services to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

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., April 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. **GUEST SPEAKERS:** This month's topic is Equal Access in Education/Government
Palm Springs Chief of Staff/City Clerk James Thompson will discuss how the City of Palm Springs recruits for boards and commissions as well as the meeting notice process and policies for boards and commissions and City Council meetings.
8. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 14, 2016 MEETING**
9. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / AND OR VOTE:**
 - 9.A Election of a Chair to serve until the July 11th meeting
 - 9.B Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast May 20. Need list of names of Commissioners who will be attending by April 29 -- Commissioner Severin
 - 9.C Human Rights Commission/Palm Springs Library Event confirmed for Tuesday, Oct. 12, from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. Title of the program and details (movie/speaker) needed by Aug. 9. Possible request for funding -- Commissioner Severin
 - 9.D Commission's annual report – Vice Chair Newby
 - 9.E Task Force Reports:
 - Homelessness Committee – Commissioner Severin
 - Ethics and Transparency Task Force – Vice Chair Newby
 - Logo Committee – Commissioners Rankins and Severin
 - Possible request for funding
 - 9.F Attendance at the Desert Highland Gateway Estates meetings
 - 9.G Public comment at the City Council meetings
 - 9.H Medical Marijuana Dispensaries in Palm Springs – Commissioner Chandrasena
 - 9.J Subcommittee developing a panel presentation regarding race relations -- Commissioners Rankins and Hunt
 - 9.I Review the Commission's participation in the Organized Neighborhoods of Palm Springs' 9th Annual Picnic & Community Expo, Saturday, March 19
 - 9.K Commission's tentative calendar:

MAY 2016:	Ableism Guest Speaker(s): TBA Coordinated by: Commissioner Chandrasena
JUNE 2016:	LGBT Issues Guest Speaker(s): TBA Coordinated by: Commissioner Sutton-Weiss
JULY 2016:	To be determined
10. **STUDENT COMMENTS:**
11. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**
12. **STAFF COMMENTS:**

13. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE MAY 9, 2016 HRC MEETING:

14. ADJOURNMENT

Enclosures:

1. Minutes from the March 14, 2016 HRC meetings

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 March 14, 2016 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	7	1	0
Eduardo Carriazo	X	7	1	0
Jilska Chandrasena	X	7	1	0
Denise Chappell	X	7	1	0
Janel Hunt	X	7	1	0
Jack Newby	X	8	0	0
Wes Rankins	X	8	0	0
Suzanne Severin	X	8	0	0
Deborah Sutton-Weiss	X	6	2	0
Angelina Pinkney, Student Rep	0	4		
Kelli Martin, Student rep.	0	0		

The above roll call record is based on all meeting Minutes from July 13, 2015 thru March 14, 2016

1. Chair Wilson Barton called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. Commissioner Chandrasena led the flag salute.
3. Commissioner Carriazo recited the Mission Statement.
4. Commissioners Present: Wilson Barton, Newby, Carriazo, Chandrasena, Chappell, Hunt, Rankins, Severin, Sutton-Weiss
Student Representatives Absent: Angelina Pinkney and Kelli Martin
5. POSTING OF THE AGENDA: The agenda was posted in accordance with the Brown Act on or before 4:00 p.m., on Thursday, March 10, 2016.

NOTE: Chair Wilson Barton said the last three or four days have been a sad reflection on public discourse in our country. She asked that all present bring respect and kindness to today's meeting.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Three (3) minutes per speaker
 - Alan Worthy spoke about his experiences with Palm Springs police and other incidents.
7. GUEST SPEAKERS: Commissioner Rankins introduced PSPD Chief Bryan Reyes and PSPD Captain Walter Combs. Commissioner Rankins noted his involvement in the Police Department's LGBTQ Outreach Committee where he has witnessed the Chief and Captain willing to engage with diverse community groups. Commissioner Rankins was grateful that a dialogue on race relations in Palm Springs will begin at the HRC meeting today but expressed his disappointment that the press release did not reflect the topic of race relations and his feeling that it was a disservice to the guest speakers, the Commission as well as the members of the community most impacted by what is to be discussed and who might otherwise have attended. Commissioner Rankins then turned the discussion over to Chief Reyes and Captain Combs who had prepared responses to questions asked, in advance, by the HRC Commissioners.
 - Chief Reyes responded to a question about the PSPD focus on the "North Side" in terms of drugs and violence when other areas of the City have sections that are not so desirable. He indicated that historically the "North End" has had a negative reputation, but that currently the crime

statistics for that sector of the City are quite low. He cited cooperation between the Desert Highland Gateway Estates neighborhood and the PSPD as a reason for the reduction in crime. He noted the importance of PSPD Officers attending the monthly neighborhood meetings as a positive factor in what is now an ongoing dialogue that focuses on quality of life issues.

- Chief Reyes next addressed the question of how can Palm Springs avoid the kind of police / community conflict that is happening across the nation. He stated that he does not envision those kinds of explosive disturbances happening in the City in large part due to the organized neighborhood structure and its regular interface with neighborhood policing officers. He further cited the Citizens Police Academy (begun in 1993 and hosted by the PSPD); the Police Advisory Board made up of community members to have direct input to his office on matters relating to community outreach; and the LGBTQ Outreach Committee as factors that keep the community and the police involved and engaged with one another.
- Captain Combs responded to a question about the history of race relations in the City and what is the current climate. Noting the volatile nature of some community/police interactions nationwide, he indicated that the PSPD recognizes that the community dictates what the police force does – that it is incumbent on the PSPD to be out in the community explaining what the mission of the force is and to be accessible. He said PSPD is not an occupying force but a community partner.
- Captain Combs responded to the question on a scale of 1-5 how do you rate the PSPD's relationship with the African American community in Palm Springs. He said he would like to say it is a 5 but realizes that that would mean that there is no room for improvement and he and the Chief are always talking about how to improve the PSPD relationship with the community. He continued to discuss things like racial profiling and indicated that the PSPD monitors citizen complaints. The aspiration of the PSPD is that they be approachable and that citizens will step forward and tell the PD about concerns that they have.
- Chief Reyes responded to the question about a culture of "not ratting" that prevents the police from fully doing their job. The Chief acknowledged that every police force has its confidential informants. He stated that the PSPD's ability to use confidential informants has been impeded by Prop 47 (11/14) that has reduced former felony charges to misdemeanors upon each arrest and that those who would normally inform are afraid to step forward knowing that those charged may be out on the street within hours or a day. Thus informants fear retaliation. So when it comes to drug related offenses, the Chief said they are not seeing as much cooperation as there was in the past.
- Chief Reyes responded to a question regarding how difficult it is to find statistics on hate crimes for the City. He noted that the PSPD reports all of its data on crimes to www.crimereports.com. That company determines which category a crime report falls into. The Chief recommended that any citizen contact Captain Combs for specific statistics on hate crimes within the City. Historically the number of hate crimes is low in Palm Springs, but Captain Combs can conduct research on the specific types of hate crimes going back months and even years.
- Chief Reyes answered a question regarding the status of the PSPD wearing body cameras. He indicated that body-worn cameras are probably inevitable. Currently, the PSPD is actively researching and testing cameras (7 types in the past year). There are many factors involved, but the PSPD is actively putting a proposal for presentation to the City Manager and City Council for the use of body-worn cameras and the cost of initiating and maintaining that program without slowing down the productivity of PSPD Officers.
- Captain Combs responded to a question about whether the PSPD sponsors any community events in the Desert Highland Gateway Estates neighborhood. The PSPD has not sponsored events there, but they have attended several events such as the Clinton Day of Action and church events have been attended by PSPD and Explorers. The PSPD has also formed an alliance with Desert Highland Community Wellness in obtaining a grant. The Captain noted that the PSPD makes an effort to have a positive presence in every neighborhood in an effort to shape the future for the young people in the community.

NOTE: Chair Wilson Barton complimented PSPD for their efforts in relationship building in Desert Highland Estates. Commissioner Hunt, noting that she is a product of the Desert Highland Estates neighborhood, requested that the PSPD do more in the way of positive public relations on how the community has changed for the better in order to mitigate the negative reputation that the neighborhood continues to have. She inquired about PSPD protocol when responding to a call in that neighborhood. Chair Wilson Barton noted that at the last

meeting she attended in Desert Highland Estates there was community concern about the response time to an EMT call and that the police arrived first, prior to the ambulance resulting in the residents feeling marginalized. Commissioner Hunt reiterated her concerns about improved public relations especially with impressionable youth who may be developing a negative attitude based upon what they see going on in other cities with regard to police brutality. Chief Reyes noted the increased presence of the PSPD on social media sites as one of their public relations efforts. The Chief acknowledged that more can/will be done in the way of outreach in the schools to deal with fears and concerns that kids may have. He further addressed the response time issue by stating that the PSPD logs all incidents by address and there are times when police will respond prior to medical services if the address has a prior history of guns or violence. Chair Wilson Barton suggested that, although PSPD Officers attend the Desert Highland Estates neighborhood meetings, it would be important to have top PSPD management attend those meetings. Commissioner Sutton-Weiss expressed her appreciation for the recent LGBTQ town hall meeting at Chill Bar noting that the Chief and Captain handled difficult questions/concerns in a positive manner. Commissioner Rankins applauded the opening of positive dialogue between the PSPD and all communities within the City. Captain Combs noted that the HRC might be able to assist with PSPD recruiting efforts and will send a recruitment flier for distribution by the HRC.

8. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 11 AND FEBRUARY 8, 2016 MEETINGS: The minutes were approved 9-0 following a motion by Vice Chair Newby and second by Commissioner Hunt.

NOTE: At this time Chair Wilson Barton addressed the lengthy agenda and asked that Commissioners exercise time management in going through items for discussion and/or vote.

9. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / AND OR VOTE:

9.A Report from the subcommittee developing a panel presentation regarding race relations – Commissioners Carriazo, Rankins and Hunt: Commissioner Carriazo stated that he has been pursuing the Desert Sun's Sarah Day Owen on their committee on race relations. He said she was to have submitted a proposal, but has not. As this is Commissioner Carriazo's last meeting, Commissioners Rankins and Hunt can decide if they wish to continue to seek panelists from the Desert Sun group or go a different route.

9.B Ideas for a veterans' event to be held at the American Legion in May – Commission Severin: Commissioner Severin indicated that she has been discussing two potential ideas with the Legion. They are open to having a program in May or waiting until the next HRC calendar year. The first idea is to bring in speakers to address the topic of veterans homelessness and the other idea is to have a more social event with music and food. Vice Chair Newby spoke in favor of making sure the event is in line with the HRC's mission. He suggested waiting and discussing this when the Commission outlines its priorities for the next year. Commissioner Severin indicated that the HRC could hold a regular meeting at the Legion as an option. Chair Wilson Barton noted the number of issues that overlap and recommended that the American Legion event be tabled until the HRC's September planning meeting.

9.C Possibility of screening human rights themed movies – Commissioner Severin: Commissioner Severin noted that the HRC had received an email from Collective Eye Films regarding its human rights film distribution services. She indicated that she has been in contact with Julie Warren, Public Relations Director at the PS Public Library who is enthusiastic about partnering with the HRC on a one-time basis or for a series of events with films and speakers. Chair Wilson Barton recommended that this item be carried forward to the April HRC meeting with the idea of holding a first event in October. Commissioner Chappell wondered if it might be possible to locate a human rights film to screen at the American Legion in conjunction with a regular HRC meeting. Commissioner Severin clarified that the American Legion doesn't have screening facilities but the Library does. Chair Wilson Barton recommended that the HRC hold its regular business meeting in October and also sponsor a film event that same month. All Commissioners agreed that a film and/or speaker on the topic of homelessness would be a good idea. Commissioner Severin was tasked with locating a film, a date and any costs for an October event at the Library for presentation at the April meeting. Commissioner Hunt also noted that the Museum of Tolerance is always looking to sponsor and work with other organizations.

9.D Possibility of establishing an award named for George Zander and the criteria for the award – Commissioner Rankins: Commissioner Rankins and Commissioner Severin noted that in lieu of

establishing a formal award there would be an opportunity for the HRC to memorialize Mr. Zander at the March 21st celebration of his life and work.

9.E Commission's annual report: Chair Wilson Barton indicated that the skeleton of the report has been prepared but as this is her last meeting the final report will be in the hands of Vice Chair Newby who will follow-up at the April meeting.

9.F Review/re-strategize the Commission's outreach efforts: Chair Wilson Barton stated the importance of continued HRC presence at the Desert Highland Gateway Estates monthly meetings (2nd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.). Commissioner Rankins volunteered to attend the April 12 meeting. Chair Wilson Barton asked Lee Bonno to continue to have Desert Highland Gateway Estates on the HRC agenda so that meeting attendance can be planned and the relationship building will be ongoing. The Chair also mentioned the importance of having someone from the HRC be available to work on the Community Development Block Grant Funding program. Dale Cook from the City will come and speak with the HRC prior to the CDBG meetings.

9.G Commission's proposed budget: Chair Wilson Barton asked Lee Bonno to address the budget. Ms. Bonno directed the Commissioners to the proposed budget located within their meeting packets. She asked that, in addition to the \$2,000 annual allotment, how much more funding would the HRC like to request and in what categories as the figures need to be submitted to the City. Chair Wilson Barton in consultation with Ms. Bonno recommends requesting funding in the amount of \$2,500 and further requesting, separately, funding for the Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast and funding for the HRC rebranding/promotion. Commissioner Severin expressed the importance of the Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast cost being part of the budget as it highlights this event as an HRC priority. Vice Chair Newby concurred and felt that the costs of rebranding would easily be covered by what exists in the HRC's budget to date that has a balance of \$1,722.44. Commissioner Hunt recommended, based on the HRC's regular annual expenditures it would be prudent to request an allotment of \$2,500 for the City's 2016-2017 budget. A motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to request an increase the HRC allotment to \$2,500 (the additional \$500 to be for marketing and advertising). The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Newby and passed unanimously 9-0.

9.H Participation in the Organized Neighborhoods of Palm Springs' 9th Annual Picnic & Community Expo, Saturday, March 19 in Ruth Hardy Park: Chair Wilson Barton asked for volunteers to staff the booth at the Picnic. Commissioners Severin, Hunt and Rankins will arrange set up.

9.I Vote on the expenditure of \$1,000 for a table sponsorship at the Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast May 20 – Commissioner Severin: A motion was made by Vice Chair Newby and seconded by Commissioner Sutton-Weiss. The motion was carried 9-0.

9.J Task Force Reports:

- Homelessness Committee – Commissioner Severin reported that the Task Force continues to meet monthly on the second Thursday at 4 p.m. Meetings have been moved to the Police Training Center. The City is very interested in having a hub/building where all services for the homeless could be coordinated. Commissioner Severin toured Roy's Desert Resource Center and shared with the rest of the Commissioners a list of needed toiletry items.
- Logo Committee – Commissioners Rankins, Severin and Carriazo: Commissioner Severin referenced the sheet of possible new logos distributed at the beginning of the meeting. Charge of the committee was to determine designs that were current, recognizable and relevant to the HRC mission. She presented two concepts with an explanation of each – #1 is a yucca with an equal symbol with color choices of blue and green. Commissioner Rankins explained that #2 is a palm tree (yin-yang) with color choices of blue, green and magenta. Commissioner Severin acknowledged the assistance of the Hollenbeck Group. Prior to a formal motion, Chair Wilson Barton asked for a straw vote. Design #2 received unanimous support. The vote on color (having eliminated blue as a choice because that color is used by the national HRC) was 7 for green and 2 for magenta. Vice Chair Newby did request that the City of Palm Springs designation appear on the palm tree design the way it appears on the yucca design. Just prior to a motion being made for accepting the

palm tree design in green, Commissioner Chappell pointed out that the color green is used by medical marijuana dispensaries and might not be the best choice for the HRC. A motion was made by Vice Chair Newby to accept the palm tree design in blue with a circular City of Palm Springs designation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Severin and passed 9-0.

- 9.K Community Service Awards Review: Chair Wilson Barton acknowledged that she forgot to request the color guard. Although not able to attend, Commissioner Sutton-Weiss said that she had received very favorable feedback from attendees. Commissioner Severin noted that it was great to have Mayor Moon and Councilmember Kors there to present the awards along with Councilmember Roberts.
- 9.L Public Comment at the City Council Meetings: Commissioners Hunt and Rankins attended the most recent Council meeting with Commissioner Rankins reading a public comment statement from the HRC in support of the name change of Crossley Road to Lawrence Crossley Road. The Council did not vote on the item.
- 9.M Commissioner resignations: Chair Wilson Barton expressed her gratitude and appreciation to Commissioner Carriazo who is resigning from the HRC as of this meeting. Commissioner Carriazo thanked the HRC for the opportunity to serve and noted how he was personally changed for the better by the experience. Vice Chair Newby presented a certificate of appreciation to Commissioner Carriazo.
- 9.N Commission's tentative calendar:

APRIL 2016: Equal Access in Education/Government

Coordinated by: Commissioner Hunt and Vice Chair Newby
Vice Chair Newby indicated that he has arranged for Chief of Staff/City Clerk James Thompson to speak to the HRC about how the City does its recruitment. Commissioner Hunt is arranging for Mike Barney of the Riverside County Office of Education.

NOTE: Commission Sutton-Weiss left the meeting at 4:48pm. Commissioners discussed their calendar and made revisions which are reflected below.

MAY 2016: Ableism
Guest Speaker(s): TBA
Coordinated by: Commissioner Chandrasena

JUNE 2016: LGBT Issues
Guest Speaker(s): TBA
Coordinated by: Commissioner Sutton-Weiss

JULY 2016: Topic to be discussed at the April HRC Meeting
Guest Speaker(s): TBA

10. STUDENT COMMENTS – There were none.

11. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

- Commissioner Chandrasena expressed concern about the number of Medical Marijuana Dispensaries in the City. She would like to have a subcommittee to research how the City decides to license these operations. This item will be placed on the HRC's agenda and Chair Wilson Barton recommended that Commissioner Chandrasena invite speakers to come before the HRC to discuss this issue.

- Vice Chair Newby presented a certificate of appreciation to Chair Wilson Barton whose resignation becomes effective at this meeting. He thanked her on behalf of the HRC for her service, leadership and the passion she brought to her role as Chair.

12. STAFF COMMENTS: Lee Bonno referred to the City's new mission statement: "*Palm Springs is an inclusive world-class city dedicated to providing excellent and responsive public services to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.*" She noted that she will send out the dates of Cathedral City's LGBT week to Commissioners should they wish to attend. Noted that the Chief Reyes and Captain Combs would be happy to return at a future date to address other topics of interest to the Commission.

NOTE: Chair Wilson Barton addressed the HRC noted her goals in coming onto the Commission and expressed her pride in how the HRC has evolved. She is proud to be leaving with a sense of accomplishment. Commissioner Rankins expressed his appreciation to Chair Wilson Barton.

13. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE MARCH 14, 2016 HRC MEETING:

- Human Rights Films/PS Library/October 2016 event – Commissioner Severin
- Annual Report
- Race Relations Panel – Commissioners Rankins and Hunt
- Medical Marijuana Dispensaries – Commissioner Chandrasena

14. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Terry Towne
Volunteer, Office of Neighborhood & Community Relations

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