



Human Services Commission Approved Minutes

Thursday, February 5, 2026

Council Chambers and Online

1. Call to Order

Chair Stephens called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Brandon Stephens, Chair; Angelina Goldwell, Vice Chair; Commissioners Nancy Dihle, Tiffany Walker, and Lester Dickson; and Jennifer Zheng, Youth Council Representative

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Dalia Martinez

STAFF PRESENT: Shannon Kelley-Fong, Assistant City Manager; Michelle Chavez, Human Services Coordinator; Veronica Hand, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Program Manager; Sadie Siglin, Management Analyst; and Paul J. White, Deputy City Clerk

3. Land Acknowledgement

Chair Stephens presented the abbreviated Land Acknowledgment.

4. Approval of Agenda, Previous Meeting Minutes, and Consent Items

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Approval of January 8, 2026, meeting minutes

Chair Stephens moved to approve the agenda of February 5 and minutes of January 8, 2026. Commissioner Goldwell seconded. The motion carried.

5. Public Comment

No one signed up to speak, remotely or in person, and no written comment was received.

6. Regional Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Meeting

- A. **Thurston County Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed (ALICE) Household Report**

Chris Wells, Thurston County United Way Executive Director

Wells presented the 2025 ALICE Household Report, which measures households that earn more than the federal poverty level but not enough to meet basic expenses in the counties where they live. Wells outlined the factors used to determine basic household costs and provided comparative data. The challenges of housing, child care costs, and inflation were noted.

B. Washington Department of Financial Institutions Overview and Financial Wellness Workshops

Veronica Hand, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Program Manager
Nathan Spiecker, Financial Education & Outreach Coordinator, DFI
Erin Klika, DEI Director, Washington State Department of Financial Institutions

Klika and Spiecker provided an introduction to the work of the Washington State Department of Financial Institutions, which regulates financial institutions and works to protect consumers. They summarized various department resources and initiatives, such as financial education, fraud prevention, and affordable housing resources.

C. Thurston Forward DEIB Summit Update

Veronica Hand, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Program Manager
Carol Goss, Membership and DEI, Thurston County League of Women Voters
Denise Miño, Organizational Development Consultant

Miño, Goss, and Hand provided an update on Thurston Forward's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion summit and summarized the background of organizing equity advocacy in Thurston County. They recounted the 2025 summit and gave an overview of the planning for the 2026 summit, scheduled for May 1 and 2.

D. Jurisdictional Updates and Regional Discussion

Representatives of the Cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater described the work of their groups that focus on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging. Activities affecting youth, comprehensive planning, human services and community block grant funding, cultural initiatives, and related strategic planning were summarized. Participants divided into small groups to discuss common goals and challenges, health impacts of racism, environmental equity, resource sharing, collaboration opportunities, tangible next steps, and bridging ideological divisions.

7. Adjourn

Chair Stephens adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Minutes approved March 5, 2026