



Commission on Equity Approved Minutes

Monday, June 1, 2026

Council Chambers and Online

1. Call to Order

Chair Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. Roll Call

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Thelma Jackson, Chair; Makieda Hart, Vice Chair; Commissioners Clifton Brown, Annie Clay, Raul Garza, Jon Herring (remote), and Kim Sauer

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Michelle Ewig, Lacey Youth Council Representative

STAFF PRESENT: Shannon Kelley-Fong, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Hand, Equity and Inclusion Program Manager; and Brandy Legomina, Deputy City Clerk

3. Land Acknowledgement

Chair Jackson presented the abbreviated Land Acknowledgement.

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

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Approval of April 27, 2026, meeting minutes

Commissioner Clay moved to approve the agenda, previous meeting minutes, and consent items. Vice Chair Hart seconded. The motion carried.

5. Public Comment

No public comment was received.

6. Inspirational Item

- A. Commissioner Kim Sauer

Commissioner Sauer summarized Nation of Strangers by Ece Temelkuran, describing it as a series of letters to strangers about what it is physically, morally, and spiritually like to lose one's home. The book calls for creating a new sense of

belonging and community based on honesty, faith, humanity, mutual recognition, respect, and togetherness among strangers.

7. Business Items

A. **Thurston Forward: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Summit 2026 Recap**

Veronica Hand, Equity and Inclusion Program Manager

Hand shared a recap of the 2026 Thurston Forward Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Summit, a two-day event held on May 1–2, 2026. The first day focused on local Indigenous tribes and shared experiences, while the second day featured the youth community and a mental health workshop. Following the recap, the Commission discussed the event and provided feedback.

B. **2026 Washington Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Empowerment Conference**

Veronica Hand, Equity and Inclusion Program Manager

Hand provided an update on the 2026 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Empowerment Conference, hosted by the Washington State Office of Financial Management. The conference is scheduled to take place virtually via Zoom on June 3, 4, 10, and 11, 2026.

C. **Community Forum Planning**

Shannon Kelley-Fong, Assistant City Manager

Veronica Hand, Equity and Inclusion Program Manager

Kelley-Fong and Hand provided planning updates for upcoming community forums that will potentially partner with the Asian Pacific Island Coalition of South Puget Sound (APIC) and the Hispanic Roundtable. The Commission discussed the events including the Economy of Belonging micro-business initiative, which is focused on supporting micro-businesses and businesses in underserved communities.

D. **Draft 2026 Commission on Equity Work Plan**

Shannon Kelley-Fong, Assistant City Manager

Kelley-Fong presented the draft 2026 Commission on Equity Work Plan for review and discussion. The presentation included an overview of the Commission's efforts since 2022, status updates on 2025 Work Plan activities, and a summary of upcoming programs, policies for review, and events.

Commissioner Clay moved to recommend the draft 2026 Commission on Equity Work Plan to the City Council for adoption. Commissioner Brown seconded. The motion carried.

8. Commissioner Reports

Vice Chair Hart reported on an Economy of Belonging Micro-business event, held on May 21, 2026, at Soul Cafe, and the Washington State: INSPIRE Women's Business Conference 2026, held on May 28, 2026, at the South Sound Community College Lacey Campus.

Commissioner Clay expressed concerns about federal immigration arrests in or near Lacey and discussed the Thurston Immigration Solidarity League speaking with the Commission and providing a Know Your Rights presentation. Discussion ensued.

Kelley-Fong reminded Commissioners that State Law (RCW 42.17A.555) prohibits the use of public facilities to promote or oppose any ballot measure. This includes comments during public meetings.

Chair Jackson provided updates and a handout on upcoming Juneteenth events.

9. Director Report

A. Thurston County Homebuying Expo Recap

Veronica Hand, Equity and Inclusion Program Manager

Hand provided an update on the April 18, 2026, Thurston County Homebuying Expo and noted that the event has become a model for similar homeownership education events being held across Washington State. The Washington Homeownership Resource Center has since expanded these efforts to several communities and is developing additional partnerships with the Nisqually Indian Tribe and Squaxin Island Tribe for future events.

Hand also shared that the City of Lacey, in partnership with the Department of Financial Institutions, the Thurston County Realtors Association, and the Washington Homeownership Resource Center, and other non-profit organizations will host a homeownership webinar on July 8, 2026.

Hand was recognized by Herring for receiving the Thurston County Realtors Association with the Partner of the Year Award for her contributions to homeownership outreach and education.

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

Shannon Kelley-Fong, Assistant City Manager

Veronica Hand, Equity and Inclusion Program Manager

Kelley-Fong reported that the upcoming Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Regional Meeting will be held on September 14, 2026.

C. Lacey Night Market

Shannon Kelley-Fong, Assistant City Manager

Kelley-Fong provided an update on Commissioner attendance and participation at the Lacey Night Market events scheduled throughout the summer.

10. Adjourn

Chair Jackson adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Approved June 22, 2026.