



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
July 19, 2022, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Ada Rumford
Bridget Reeves
Alfredo Juarez
Liz Darrow
Monika Cassidy
Australia Tobon

Absent:

Holly Pai
Homero Israel Jose Garrido

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

Punjabi Interpretation: Piku Dillion

City Council Legislative Staff: Nalini Margaitis

City Council President: Hannah Stone

Deputy City Administrator: Brian Heinrich

There is an audio/ video recording of this meeting. Times in brackets [] indicate the start time on the recording for each section. See <https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials> to listen to the recording.

To submit an application to serve on a City Board or Commission, please visit the following webpage: <https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/Boards-and-Commissions-Application-Process>

Welcome [7:45]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the June 21, 2022 meeting were approved as written

Announcements and follow up on public comment from June meeting [9:13]

- A letter was received from the Riveters Collective
- Q/A with new Blaine area CBP Port Director:
<https://www.thenorthernlight.com/stories/qa-with-cbps-new-blaine-area-port-director,20558>

Public Comment and Community Reports [13:10]

- Krystal Rodriguez read aloud a letter that she sent to Mayor Fleetwood, Executive Sidhu and Deputy Director Everbeck on July 11, 2022.
- Maialisa Vanyo, Chief Deputy for the Whatcom County Public Defender's Office, shared that she has followed up with the jail to review the KWW Act, to make changes and to gain compliance with the Act. On June 28th, the Sheriff's Office published their updated policy.

Presentation – Mayor's Proposal for the Immigrant Resource Center, Brian Heinrich [23:36]

- Brian Heinrich, Deputy Administrator, provided the Board with an update on the IRC. During the 5/9/2022 City Council meeting, the Council requested that the Mayor's Office work to provide the Council with operational model(s) that would identify organizational structure as well as budget. Council requested Senior Analyst, Mark Gardner, to assist. Gardner is looking into several different models (San Antonio, Seattle), Heinrich has had conversations with various groups to gauge their understanding of the issue and interest in hosting a center like the IRC. Overall: there are three models (city-led/city-implemented model, a partnership with other government agencies (e.g. Whatcom County and the Small Cities), contract for service with an organization that can provide that service). Process: will come back before Council (fall) and IAB (Sept) to discuss options and potential recommendation.
- Lelo Juarez shared a letter that he wrote in support of an Immigrant Resource Center.
- Australia Tobon shared that there will be a tour with the Port of Entry at the end of the August and that this month (July), there will be a tour at the CBP Blaine Sector.
- Bridget Reeves asked Brian Heinrich if there have been any updates to BPD policy changes. Brian Heinrich responded that a response to Krystal Rodriguez will be forthcoming and that he will CC the IAB in the response. Heinrich will also send any updated City policies to the IAB.

Ordinance update from Council President, Hannah Stone [44:44]

- Stone shared the proposed amendments from the Board, in addition to a draft that she has been tweaking.
- Stone shared the draft that was amended by the Process Subcommittee and voted on by the Board, which included: Board establishment (KWW Act citation), narrowing scope (immigrant and migrant community issues specific to Bellingham, starting with the City and then later, building it out), appointments (the use of alternates, specification about alternates being used sparingly if someone was going to have an extended leave of absence (on a case by case basis to appoint alternate for someone

missing more than two consecutive meetings), the co-facilitators would have the discretion to deem an absence excused (or not), maintain reference to the City Charter, Mayor and City Council (membership of boards and commissions across the board are selected this way). Darrow requested that Stone share her draft with all IAB members.

- Board members and Stone discussed the items outlined in amended ordinance including creating timely appointments, the interview process, and removing membership sectors to increase diversity in race, class, and lived experience (historically marginalized and underserved immigrant community members)

Update on Port of Entry Tour, Australia Tobon [1:43:36]

- Tobon shared with the Board that the confirmed tour date for the Port of Entry field visit is Tuesday August 23rd from 9:00AM – 11:00AM and the CBP visit will be held on July 27th, 2022, CPB Headquarters visit 9:00AM – 11:00AM. COVID vaccinations are not required, kids are allowed, no IDs will be checked.

Subcommittee Reports, Liz Darrow [1:47:50]

- The Process Subcommittee has been contacting Board applicants to see if they have interest to serve on the Board
- Darrow shared that there is room on all of the subcommittees if new Board members have interest

Federal Contact Data Review, Bridget Reeves and Liz Darrow [1:51:25]

- Reeves shared that Pai sent a letter to the Council and Mayor's Office (1st of the federal contact data letters) items that identify potential violations of the KWW Act. This upcoming month, FOIA requests will be included in the letter. Reeves and Pai have been requesting WhatComm 911 audio (payment is involved). Heinrich and Stone suggested to utilize City resources so that the subcommittee does not have to front that cost.
- Darrow shared that she has been sharing the federal contact data with the UW Center for Human Rights and the ACLU. Darrow shared that, even when there is a criminal investigation underway, there are rules in place to protect people from sharing personal contact information and remain innocent until proven guilty regardless of immigration status (related to HSI investigations). Examples of HSI investigations that do not need to abide by the KWW Act include: drug trafficking, child trafficking, and other types of high profile financial fraud (not, DUI case).

Public Comment continued [2:05:34]

- MB urged City Officials to take the IRC seriously and to show up prepared when presenting to the IAB and urged that they take seriously the needs of immigrants in the community.
- Lisa shared that she would like to see options for the IRC in terms of who it would be run by: private citizens, the City, or a nonprofit

Old/New Business [2:09:17]

- Darrow shared that Reeves is tasked with responding to community input for this month (July 19-August 16).
- Once a full board is formed, Darrow suggested that new co-facilitators be appointed
- Bañuelos reminded everyone that the new code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is: **988** (available 24/7 and is free and confidential)

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM

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Recordings of this meeting with additional details of discussion is posted at:

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