

MINUTES
JUNEAU HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA
OCTOBER 16, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: The meeting was called to order at 5:01 pm.

- a. Present: Paige English, Haifa Foroughi, Alison Gottschilich, Lance Mitchell,
- b. Absent: Mary Wegner, John Drips and Camille Mauch
- c. Support: N/A

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Haifa moved and Lance seconded to approve the Agenda as amended moving item #2 (a) Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, to item #1. Approved by unanimous consent.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Minutes of the October 1, 2024 Meeting: Haifa moved and Lance seconded to approve the Minutes. Approval occurred by unanimous consent.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NON-AGENDA ITEMS: No public were present.

***Guest presenter Natasha Jackson, Tlingit & Haida Community Advocate on agenda item #1**

V. AGENDA

1. Celebrating Alaska Native Heritage Month/Honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, addressed by presenter Natasha Jackson, Tlingit & Haida Community Advocate and team Lance/Paige heading this initiative. Introductions and welcoming to Natasha Jackson. Following is information shared at the meeting:

Paige: *submitted a public information request through the Alaska Department of Public safety for updated information on MMIW -it will take 6-8 weeks to reply-

***Called the urban Indian Health institute for more information and the statistics they have because they have published statistics on missing women that don't align with police record but I'm waiting to hear back from them**

***Statistics are hard to find but what I did find was that in the latest report published in 2021 by the department of public safety, there were 280 cases for alaskan women who were believed to have disappeared under suspicious circumstances**

***The urban Indian health Institute identified 506 cases nationwide of native women disappearing or being killed, many of which aren't on law-enforcement record**

***The FBI database indicates there are more than 1500 unsolved cases of missing and murdered indigenous women**

***Alaska alone has the highest number of cases and is the state with the highest rates of violence against women there's extremely limited information and no reliable count of how many**

native women actually go missing and are killed each year because women are often mislabeled as Hispanic or Asian and thousands have been left off the federal person database or just not logged.

*According to the national crime information center in 2016, 5712 reports of missing native Alaskan women were made. However, only 116 of those cases were ever logged into the national missing and unidentified person system.

There is clearly limited information shared among agencies and statistics specific to this issue recorded. Some ideas to increase community awareness were holding a twoon-hall or round table in the Valley Library.

Guest: Natasha Jackson, Tlingit & Haida Community Advocate expressed that “human traffic, sexual assault etc., are very complex issues. Human trafficking, substance abuse, historical trauma..... all are cycles influencing this larger issue. Yes, there is little reporting and data collection and recording to access accurate data and statistics. There are also success stories on the efforts and resources allocated to solve cases and community awareness and education on this problem. Indian Tribes of Alaska and Public safety work together with other organizations. Systems are overwhelmed but State and the Feds are trying to fill existing gaps in the system. A new position is opening in Ketchikan. The work started in 2019 - relatively new- still it is amazing the amount of work being done. MMIP (sp) and human trafficking, FBI, Homeland security are coming together around this issue. A community such as this can do a lot. Juneau is the Native hub in southeast so resources and efforts need to be centered here. Advocacy, education, public awareness.... Work is being done but AK territory is so huge that is a big challenge.

Central Council is organizing a listening session in February to hear more community concerns, people affected personally, support people with trauma, take time to process. This trauma was confused with historical trauma and therefore got lost in big “trauma” umbrella. We do a lot of stabilization to support people processing trauma. This listening event will provide support in this area. It takes six months to plan and implement such event. Talking about mental health, sexual assault, -not a lot people know they have “abuse rights”- . Partnership will helps us. Bring the state, local and national voices and help -we cannot do it alone- its a huge work trying to change the culture around this. I will connect with communications office and let you know what events are being planned and send you the info. Tribal courts are coming together to talk about issues affecting AK Natives.

*Tribal courts need to be recognized. Many communities do not have established Tribal Courts,
*There is great complexities surrounding issues, resources, multi-level agencies etc.,
strengthening partnership is critical in moving forward.” (info shared by Ms. Jackson)

Questions addressed: How would JHRC’s event be different from the February event that other groups are organizing?

Will our resources and energy be effectively invested in an event one month away, or better wait for, and join the february event? Ms. Jackson suggested to join them. She feels Feb 3rd and 4th will be great and she would appreciate our support.

*After consultation it was unanimously decided that JHRC will join the February event.

Move agenda items remaining to be addressed at the Nov. 6th meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 18:04.

2. Strategic Plan 2024-2025:

a. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women: continue

3. Standing Agenda Topics not addressed at this meeting:

a. FY25 Budget:

1) Treasurer Report: Not addressed at this meeting.

2) Community Engagement Project: Alison will join Haifa and Mary in working on our Community Engagement Project.

b. Celebrating Black History Month 2025: Not addressed at this meeting.

4. Resolution to Temporarily Lower Quorum: Not addressed at this meeting.

5. Resolution Encouraging Assembly Action to Increase Productivity in CBJ Commissions, Boards, and Committees: Not addressed at this meeting.

6. Charge of the Commission: Lance suggested that we consider requesting of the Assembly a change to our charge, so we have some ability to help community members in need of support when it comes to issues around discrimination. We did not get a chance to discuss this topic in depth. Not addressed at this meeting

I. PUBLIC Comments:

II. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

a. Wednesday, November 6, 2024 from 5:00-6:00 pm via Zoom.

b. Wednesday, November 20, 2024 from 5:00-6:00 pm via Zoom.

c. Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024 from 5:00-6:00 pm via Zoom.

d. Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2024 from 5:00-6:00 pm via Zoom.

III. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 6:04 pm.