



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
June 23, 2020, 6:00 PM

ATTACHMENT #1
IAB July 23, 2020

Note: **[Time stamps]** indicate the time in which each section/discussion can be listened to in the [meeting audio](#).

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Seth Fleetwood at 6:00 PM.

Welcome

Mayor Seth Fleetwood provided a brief introduction and thanked the members of the Board. Council Member Hannah Stone provided a brief introduction and welcomed the Board. **[5:14]**

Board Member Introductions [10:20]

Board members introduced themselves by sharing why they joined the board, how they are connected to the community, and what they hope to get out of participating.

Present:

Ada Rumford
Rick Qualls
Liz Darrow
Bridget Reeves
Katie Winkelman
Danielle Siedlecki
Rev. Seth Thomas
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar

Absent:

Monika Cassidy

The City will reimburse language interpreters who assist Board members.

Review/Approval of Agenda [24:26]

The Board discussed the contents of the agenda and the process by which it was created. The agenda was prepared and written by City staff to ensure the logistics of the Board were accomplished during the first meeting. Going forward, the Board will develop their own agenda setting process and seek all Board members' feedback on the agenda.

The Welcoming a Refugee Resolution agenda item was discussed [25:58]. Clarification was made that this request was brought forward to the City Council and the Council wanted the Immigration Advisory Board to review the Resolution and provide input in advance of any Council consideration. The Board is not required to move forward with this resolution.

The organizational structure of the Board was discussed [27:56]. It is up to the Board to decide how they would like to go about their business, elect/designate different kinds of officers, develop the way in which meetings are conducted, develop the framework used to create agendas, etc. The Board will have City staff support regardless of the organizational choices made. Councilmember Stone is willing to hold the space of chairperson until the Board develops its organizational structure.

The Board will develop its structure at a later date. Some key points from this discussion were:

- Encouragement for the board to be critical of systems that are traditionally oppressive such as Robert's Rules of Order
- Developing a structure that gives each member the opportunity to participate, being mindful of how the group decides what items can/will be on the agenda, making sure everyone's voices are heard, etc.
- The struggles faced by organized groups in the time of Zoom
- The importance of the moderator/leadership role to guide meetings
- The Board decided to bring suggestions regarding the organizational structure to the next meeting

Board Set-Up

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Tabled to a future meeting.

2. Length of Member Terms in light of start-up delay [1:03:46]

1 year terms expire 1 year from June 23, 2020.

2 year terms expires 2 years from June 23, 2020.

3. Meeting Schedule [48:15]

The Board discussed their meeting schedule. It was originally scheduled as the fourth Tuesday of the month from 6:00–8:00 PM, but the Board can change their standing meeting date and time. A poll will be developed to find a day and time that works for each Board member.

4. Review of Ordinance 2019-11-033 [55:55]

Councilmember Hannah Stone explained the purpose of the ordinance, the formation of the Immigration Advisory Board, and the freedom of the Board to develop their own work plan.

5. Other Housekeeping Items [1:02:59]

Communications Director Janice Keller spoke about the option for the Board to include a public comment period and the opportunity to bring in outside speakers and encouraged the board to decide this in their organizational structure discussion at the next meeting.

The Board was encouraged to look at the ways all City offices interact with ICE and to keep the Board within the narrow focus of farm worker and immigrant communities, such as the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 to these communities.

Concern was raised about Police Chief David Doll being present in the Zoom meeting and he was asked to become an attendee rather than a panelist. This change was proposed to ensure that Board members and members of the community feel safe expressing their thoughts and concerns during the Board meetings. City staff involvement in the Board's meetings was discussed further. The Board members requested that Council member Stone act as the City Council liaison with the Board. Council member Stone will confirm that Council member Hammill does not have any objection since he currently serves as the Chair of the Public Health, Safety and Justice Committee.

Email exchanges and documents created as part of the business of this Board are public documents and will be subject to disclosure if a request is made.

Board Review and Discussion [1:34:18]

1. Federal Contacts Report

Deputy Administrator Brian Heinrich presented the Federal Contacts Report for November 4, 2019 to June 20, 2020. The Board asked questions and had a discussion regarding the report and expectations for future reports.

2. Resolution – Welcoming Refugees

This item was not discussed further during this meeting.

Old/New Business [1:50:06]

Board members were given the opportunity to ask questions and speak freely.

The City will work on translation and interpretation services, develop a poll for deciding the next meeting date, and gather recommendations for the agenda. The Board will discuss meeting logistics and organizational structure at their next meeting.

Adjourn

The Immigration Advisory Board meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM.



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
July 23, 2020, 6:30 PM

ATTACHMENT #1

Note: **[Time stamps]** indicates the time in which each section/discussion can be listened to in the [meeting audio](#).

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Council Member Hannah Stone at 6:32 PM.

Welcome

Council Member Hannah Stone provided a brief welcome.

Board Member Introductions [1:30]

Each Board member provided a brief introduction.

Present:

Monika Cassidy
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Ada Rumford
Jahn Zuniga Escobar
Liz Darrow
Katie Winkelman
Danielle Siedlecki
Rick Qualls
Bridget Reeves

Absent:

Rev. Seth Thomas
Ramon Barba Torres

Review/Approval of Agenda [19:26]

The Board decided to host a public comment period at the beginning and end of this meeting. No other changes were made to the agenda.

Review/Approval of Minutes [20:55]

The minutes provide a general outline of discussions for an overview of each meeting. Community members are encouraged to listen to the meeting audio to understand discussions in depth.

The Board approved the June 23, 2020 minutes as submitted.

Public Comment Period [23:07]

The Board decided to allow community members to provide public comment with no time constraint within reason. Community members can provide anonymous comment if they wish. The Board emphasized having access to civic engagement by allowing community members to send in written public comment.

Board Set-Up [38:55]

1. Meeting Schedule

The first or third Tuesday of the month works well for members of the Board as a standing meeting moving forward.

2. Board suggestions regarding organizational and decision-making structure [39:40]

Consensus-based problem solving was posed as a suggestion for the Board to consider. The Board discussed this decision-making structure and decided to move forward with a non-hierarchical consensus-based approach.

The following document was shared amongst Board members as a starting off point for this discussion: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ooV0vHdKyaiyMEV4ZDQL5-7ix3YfvmkG9e9TJL1ZiO4/edit>

3. Leadership Positions [54:15]

Each Board member will provide leadership equally and rotate responsibility as the facilitator of each meeting, with 1-year term members facilitating first.

4. Need for Open Public Meetings Act training [57:35]

The Board can collectively work through the Open Public Meetings Act training or do so individually when each member has time. The Board decided to do the training on their own and bring any questions to the group. If Board members want extra support, there will be an opportunity to discuss the content of the training as a group. The requirement must be completed within 90 days of the first Board meeting.

5. Interpretation/Translation Services [1:01:12]

The Board discussed interpretation/translation services, emphasizing the following needs:

- Interpretation to ensure that Board members can participate effectively
- Interpretation to ensure that members of the public can speak and be heard at public comment periods
- Interpretation so that members of the public can listen/understand during the meeting and in the recorded audio
- Translation of documents produced by the Board and brought to City Council

6. Board Background [1:05:45]

Liz Darrow spoke about the work that led to the creation of the Immigration Advisory Board, which was a four-year long process.

7. Reallocation of Funds [1:12:00]

The Board discussed reallocation of funds from the Police and the role the Board could play in this community conversation.

Federal Contacts Review [1:32:08]

1. July Report – Discussions and Questions about Data Collection

The July Federal Contacts Report was discussed. More information on the data was requested and the Board will compile a list of questions to present to the COB staff and/or City Council as appropriate. The need for public accessibility to this information was emphasized.

Public Comment [1:54:11]

Public comment was taken. Written public comments were spoken into the record.

Old/New Business

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM.

The next Immigration Advisory Board meeting is August 18, 2020 at 6:30 PM.



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
August 18, 2020, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM

Board Members

Present:

Monika Cassidy
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Liz Darrow
Rick Qualls
Bridget Reeves
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki
Rev. Seth Thomas

Absent:

Jahn Zuniga Escobar
Ramon Barba Torres
Katie Winkelman

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Alex Perez

There is an audio 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.

Welcome, Logistics, and Minutes [00.16]

- Councilmember Hannah Stone welcomed the group
- Consecutive Interpretation will be provided between the English to Spanish languages. This will allow all board members to participate fully, facilitate participation by Spanish-speaking members of the public, and create an audio recording in both languages for future reference by both board members and the public. Speakers are reminded to pause for interpretation after 1-2 sentences.
- Facilitation of the meeting will rotate. Hannah Stone agreed to serve as facilitator for this meeting. Liz Darrow agreed to facilitate the September meeting.

- The meeting agenda was approved as published
- The minutes for the July 23 meeting were approved as presented

Board Discussion Items [10:01]

- Board Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Members discussed how best to work together given the diverse backgrounds and perspectives represented on the Board. Members reviewed the language in the underlying Ordinance that formed the Board and discussed the purpose of the board.
 - The operative language from the resolution reads, “The purpose of the Board is to review and evaluate existing policies and make specific recommendations regarding City policy related to immigration matters. This evaluation will include, but is not limited to, analysis of City data to determine compliance with E2SSB 5497. The Board will make recommendations for further data to be compiled in order to facilitate its recommendations. In addition, the Board shall support community involvement in and discussion of regional issues and decisions about our city's future as it relates to immigration.”
- Timelines for meetings. [40:35] Agenda items and support materials need to be submitted two weeks in advance to allow time for translation and public distribution in advance of the meeting.
- Open Public Meetings Act training. [42:00] Board members are to complete the training on their own time and notify City staff when completed.
- Action items: Discussion of Federal Contacts Data/Need for Additional Meetings [43:00]
 - The Federal Contact Data provided to the Board is inconclusive. Several Board members requested additional data points to include outcomes and additional details from other jurisdictions.
 - Bellingham Deputy Administrator Brian Heinrich provides the Federal Contacts Data to the Board each month. He will be invited to the next Board Meeting to provide clarification and answer questions.
 - Additional meetings of the full Board are possible but would require City staff presence, agenda, minutes, translation, interpretation, and public notice. The same two-week lead time would be needed for translation of documents and scheduling the interpreter.
 - Informal groups of two or three board members can meet to do research and then report back to the full Board with any findings during the next open public meeting.

Public Comment [1:28:42]

Members of the public provided comment to the board.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

A recording of this meeting with additional details of discussion is posted at:

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 15th 6:30-8:30 p.m.



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
September 15, 2020, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM

Board Members

Present:

Monika Cassidy
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Liz Darrow
Rick Qualls
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki
Katie Winkelman
Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar

Absent:

Seth Thomas
Bridget Reeves

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Alex Perez

City staff: Mark Gardner, City Council Legislative Analyst

Other City staff present: Brian Heinrich, City of Bellingham Deputy Administrator

There is an audio 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.

Welcome, Logistics, and Minutes [00:39]

- Roll call; Councilmember Hannah Stone welcomed the group
- Liz Darrow facilitated this meeting
- New agenda item added: Reports from Affected Community Members
- Minutes for the August 18 meeting were approved as written
- The Open Public Meetings Act training deadline for the Board is September 21

- The ordinance creating the Board will be revised to accommodate logistical changes to its structure. These changes will be brought to the Board for review before being presented to City Council.
- Separate from the regularly scheduled Public Comment period, a time will be set aside on meetings agendas for reports from affected community members.

Reports from affected community members [15:00]

- Board member Ramon Barba Torres is the President of Familias Unidas por La Justicia (FUJ) and the organization is currently working to create a farmworkers union in Yakima. Ramon shared that this effort is very time consuming and it would be good if other union members could participate in Board meetings when he is not able to be present.
- Ramon reported that the police say they do not work with immigration authorities but there is cooperation with immigration enforcement, and there are many traffic stops without reason. Ramon further reported that sometimes police use immigration officers as interpreters.
- Board member Jahn Zuniga Escobar works with the group Raid Relief to Reunite Families (RRRF), which provides assistance in finding lawyers, paying legal fees, posting bond fees, transportation to court, assembling needed documents, etc.
- Background information on historical and current immigration issues has been compiled by some members of the Board. These resources can be added to the Board web site.

Discussion of immigration data issues [39:06]

- Brian Heinrich, City of Bellingham Deputy Administrator, discussed documents that provide additional detail on some of the recent local contacts with federal agencies. This new information provides additional detail on law enforcement activities after a 911 call is made. Ultimate outcomes such as jail bookings or transfer to ICE custody, if any, are not included.
- What-Comm (911 dispatch) serves incorporated cities and Whatcom County and interacts with the jurisdictions in a capacity similar to that of an air traffic controller. Once a situation is being managed by one of the jurisdictions, What-Comm is no longer involved. Under the circumstances, the City of Bellingham does not have readily available information on the final outcomes of many law enforcement contacts.
- What-Comm sometimes facilitates a connection to Customs and Border Protection (CBP), usually at request of a local jurisdiction.
- Some of the other cities served by What-Comm may have mutual aid agreements with CBP.

- Suggestion to have someone from What-Comm speak with the Board to better understand how dispatchers decide whether to initiate contact with CBP.
- What-Comm is staffed by City of Bellingham employees. Whatcom County and the other cities contract with Bellingham and pay for the dispatch service provided by What-Comm.
- The overwhelming majority of City contacts involving CBP or ICE involve law enforcement or the 911 system, although there are a few contacts that originate with other City departments.
- Federal form I-9 data, which can sometimes be used for immigration enforcement, is only collected by the City of Bellingham for its own employees as required by law. This data collection does not extend to private employers.

Public Comment [1:34:25]

Members of the public provided comment and posed questions to the board.

Questions presented were:

1. Will the board consider endorsing the Amnesty International resolution on refugees?
2. How can people encourage the City Council to protect immigrant families and their health and safety during COVID?
1. Does receiving funding from the CARES Act for COVID relief trigger the “public charge” rules?
2. How do City police work with Sheriff deputies in the County, where there is a large farmworker and immigrant community?
3. How is information about the board getting out to the broader community? How will information on racial profiling get to the Council so they can hold the Bellingham Police Department accountable?
4. Will the Mayor and the City Council allow the BPD to regulate itself when it comes to racial profiling and cooperation with border patrol?
5. Is the Mayor supporting the IAB, and how? What is the budget for the IAB and how can community members find out what is in the City budget?
6. How often do City of Bellingham 911 dispatchers interact with CBP and when is it appropriate?
7. How do cities and Whatcom County interact with each other and the CBP?

Other business

- Discussion of the Amnesty resolution will be added to next meeting’s agenda.
- In addition to the Public Comment period, the Board can now be reached by email at immigrationboard@cob.org

Meeting Adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

A recording of this meeting with additional details of discussion is posted at:
<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 20th 6:30-8:30 p.m.



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
October 20, 2020, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM

Board Members

Present:

Monika Cassidy
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Liz Darrow
Bridget Reeves
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki

Absent:

Katie Winkelman
Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Alex Perez

City staff: Mark Gardner, City Council Legislative Analyst

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Welcome, and Board Business [00:00]

- Councilmember Hannah Stone welcomed the group
- Hannah Stone facilitated this meeting
- Proxies. We have been informed by the City Attorney that the City Charter does not allow proxies for Board members. An alternative approach, used by the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Council (MNAC), is to have alternates who are selected through the City appointment process. Board members expressed a desire to add additional representation such that communities rather than individuals can be represented on the Board.
- Minutes for the September 15 meeting were approved as written.

- Board vacancies. There have been two resignations and there is one other vacancy. Rick Qualls and Seth Thomas are no longer on the Board. Liz Darrow reported that Rev. Seth Thomas supports the work of the board and will identify other faith community members who may be able to serve on the board.
- Members discussed the challenges of helping to launch a new board that has never met in person and noted that it takes time to develop common understandings and practices needed to advance the work of the board. Patience is important. One goal is to create a space where all members of the immigrant community feel safe to express their concerns.
- Revisions to the ordinance creating the IAB. Language from MNAC was presented regarding the appointment and function of alternates. Board members expressed a preference for community rather than individual representation. Since this is a Bellingham board the IAB has most influence over the City's jurisdiction, so it makes sense to start by working to improve practices in Bellingham. However, the Charter does not require that all members of a board reside in Bellingham.

Reports from affected community members [55:30]

- Marciano Sanchez reported that farmworkers and community members are impacted by the Police and ICE, as well as by COVID. Often members live in Bellingham but work in Skagit. Many people have lost jobs and some have had to get loans to pay rent. People lack medical coverage to pay for COVID testing.
- People worry about getting stopped for minor incidents, are concerned about racial profiling by the police, and express fears that information is being shared with the Border Patrol or ICE. There is fear of deportation. What can the board do so that families don't have to live in fear?
- It is important to have community members come forward and with clear information regarding any incidents—where, when, and other details. This allows for investigation and provides information that could improve policies. Past reports indicated that BPD was using Border Patrol as interpreters, so a policy was put in place to change that practice. Information about incidents could be brought to the board. One question is whether police stops that don't result in some action get recorded in any way. The Board could work toward creating a form or set of procedures to bring forward reports of profiling. Currently, the police respond to any complaints against them and they end up investigating themselves.

Other Business [1:38:57]

- The Board will have an interim meeting in November to continue discussion of items from the Oct. 20 agenda.

- It would be valuable to have a representative from WHAT-COMM at an upcoming meeting to explain how the dispatch system works. There is also a need to discuss profiling concerns with law enforcement before deciding how to move forward.

Public Comment [1:45:35]

Members of the public provided comment and posed questions to the board. Questions and comments were:

1. It was reported that Debra Lekanoff made a statement in support of the IAB, and a recording was shared.
2. Ruby Castenada is a co-founder of Raid Relief to Reunite Families and is an affected community member. She applied for the board but lived outside of city limits. She can fill in to represent the impacted community.
3. Who is using the Sehome Hill communications towers? Is the data transmitted through these towers secure and encrypted?
4. Amnesty International has sent a report on policing practices to Chief Doll
5. The City should turn to community member applicants to fill the board.
6. What are the steps that need to be taken to know the outcomes from the federal contact data?
7. What is the City's plan to stop militia backlash against community members?
8. There is police collaboration with ICE and people in the community are collecting data. The Board should use this information.
9. How is the board being funded?

Responses to questions from members of the public will be posted on the IAB web site.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

A recording of this meeting with additional details of discussion is posted at:

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
November 2, 2020, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Monika Cassidy
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Liz Darrow
Bridget Reeves
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki
Katie Winkelman

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Lorena Perez

City staff: Mark Gardner, City Council Legislative Analyst

There is an audio 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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:00]

- Councilmember Hannah Stone welcomed the group
- Hannah Stone facilitated this meeting

Discussion of Amnesty International Resolution. [05:08] The Board discussed the content of the Welcoming Refugees Resolution submitted by the local chapter of Amnesty International, and whether they should endorse it. It was noted that the Resolution is a general statement of support and does not contain action items. The Board will continue the discussion at the November 17 meeting and will invite Amnesty International members to attend.

Reports from affected community members [25:00]

- There are concerns about elections and possible violence. Caravans of trucks have been used to intimidate. People are watching to help ensure that immigrants are not targeted for violence or intimidation.
- Residents of Birchwood have been observing ballot drop boxes and will be present on election day. There was one instance of a group of men trying to block someone's access to the Auditor's Office. The County put out a statement on election integrity but it was vague on specifics.
- Board members may craft letters to the City and the County expressing their concerns. A few members of the board could get together to craft some longer-term approaches since the issue will not go away immediately after the election.

Response to questions posed by the public [1:10:04]

- Protecting immigrant communities during COVID. Information is needed in all languages, and outreach is needed. The Board could make recommendations on how to improve outreach to the community. The Opportunity Council has funding available for relief and they are not requiring any information that might implicate immigration status to access this.
- Other questions discussed include how the police work with Sheriff deputies, and what military equipment has been acquired by the Bellingham Police Department. Questions have also arising on the Telecommunications tower—who uses it, and is data secure? These and other questions will be sent to appropriate City officials for answers. Answers to questions will be posted on the Board's web site.
- Members of the public have questions about how the dispatch system interacts with various law enforcement agencies. A representative of WHAT-COMM will be invited to speak at an upcoming meeting.
- A letter was sent from Homeland Security to immigrant students as well as other organizations nationally. It indicated that membership in an organization advocating communism could jeopardize a persons' immigration status. The concern is that this could be used as a form of intimidation to keep people from engaging in political activity. The Board will continue to monitor this and similar incidents.

Public Comment [1:58]

Members of the public provided comment and posed questions to the board. Questions and comments presented were:

1. Funding is available through the end of 2020 from Northwest Youth Services to assist undocumented youth ages 18 to 24 to pay past due rent. To follow up contact mariob@NWYS.org

2. Can the board bring forward the research of the Promotoras in documenting police and ICE violence?

Meeting Adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

A recording of this meeting with additional details of discussion is posted at:

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
November 17, 2020, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM

Board Members

Present:

Monika Cassidy
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Liz Darrow
Bridget Reeves
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres
Katie Winkelman
Jahn Zuniga Escobar

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Alex Perez

City staff: Mark Gardner, City Council Legislative Analyst

There are audio and video recordings 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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:00]

- Councilmember Hannah Stone welcomed the group
- Hannah Stone facilitated this meeting
- Minutes for the October 20 and November 2 meetings were approved as written.
- Revisions to the ordinance creating the board. The ordinance is currently being reviewed by the City's legal department. The new ordinance will allow Whatcom County residents living outside of Bellingham to also apply for membership on the board.
- Board vacancies. Previous applicants living outside Bellingham will be reconsidered. New applicants are encouraged.

Immigrant Support in Other Cities: San Antonio and Seattle [13:21]

- **Tino Gallegos**, Immigration Liaison, City of San Antonio, reported on that city's efforts to assist immigrant communities.
 - San Antonio is the second largest city in Texas and the 7th largest in the U.S., with a population of about 1.5 million. About 250,000 people are foreign-born, and about 85,000 are undocumented. There are high levels of poverty and inequality.
 - His position oversees immigrant legal services and provides issue expertise to the City. The City falls under a state law, SB-4, which prohibits any city in Texas from enacting sanctuary city policies. A number of other Texas cities have similar offices, including Dallas, Austin, and El Paso.
 - In San Antonio legal services are funded at \$150,000 annually. Other services include citizenship preparation and workforce development.
 - The City provides information and support in multiple languages at City departments.
 - Some services are provided to immigrants transiting through the City. Services have expanded over time; for example, the migrant resource center helped set up hubs to find housing for the homeless.
 - There are national programs that are available to support cities that want to provide immigrant services. For example, the Vera Institute of Justice has set up a network to support immigrant legal assistance. The organization New American Economy documents the positive economic impact of immigrants. In December 8 -9 there will be a national immigration integration conference sponsored by National Partnership for New Americans.
- **Joaquin Uy**, External Affairs Manager and Policy Advisor at the Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA), described immigrant services in Seattle.
 - The office grew out of an Immigrant and Refugee Action Plan and was established in 2012. An Immigrant and Refugee Commission was created next, followed by creation of the OIRA. Efforts initially centered around supporting specific immigrant populations such as those in DACA status. The office expanded in 2014 with a new Mayor, with staff increasing from 3 to 9.
 - The office does not provide direct services but instead partners with community groups.
 - Foreign-born populations in King County have been tilted toward those of Asian origin, but more recently immigrants are hailing from Latin America.

- OIRA supports an immigrant integration process that operates along a continuum, ranging from supporting those without documentation, to supporting those who are new citizens.
- For the undocumented a legal defense fund has been established along with a support network including legal clinics. Immigrant defense also supports those with DACA status.
- There is also a new citizen program/campaign, with workshops and one-on-one consultation. Activities include media and outreach work, language classes, job placement services, and community events.
- There are a number of national coalitions that provide support to cities on immigration issues, including Cities for Action, Cities for Citizenship, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors.
- A Seattle COVID-19 disaster relief fund for immigrants has been created, including a small business fund, rental assistance, and emergency grocery vouchers. Information about the program is provided in 7 languages.
- **Discussion.**
 - How can a city gain support for and build a program when it is majority-white? These programs are being created in many parts of the country, even in some rural and conservative areas, to provide needed services to immigrant populations.
 - How can cities build trust with immigrant communities? The process takes time. Show up, listen, follow-up and then return to communicate actions.

Discussion of Amnesty International Welcoming Refugees Resolution [1:37:09]

- The Board discussed a Welcoming Refugees resolution. The resolution was sent to the City Council early in 2020 and was referred to the board as something appropriate for its consideration. The City passed a resolution in 2017 (2017-2-008) that has much of the same general language in support of immigrants, although it does not focus on refugees. A question arose over whether the IAB should endorse such resolutions when they don't contain specific action items. Hannah Stone will provide information to the Amnesty group regarding the content of the 2017 resolution.

Old/New Business [1:56:45]

- The board discussed the three open positions on the board. Current applicants are being reviewed and selection will occur as soon as possible.

Public Comment [2:02:47]

Members of the public provided comment and posed questions to the board. Questions and comments were:

1. Could Bellingham fund services for immigrants by repurposing money that has been spent on the police?
2. The community-based data collection on racial profiling is valuable. How can the board help community members hurt by the police and ICE? There should be a shift of money from police to immigrants.
3. A church is partnering with Community to Community to support immigrants. What are the next steps for the church to take?
4. Money should be shifted from the police to this project.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
December 15, 2020, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM

Board Members

Present:

Liz Darrow
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki
Katie Winkelman
Jahn Zuniga Escobar

Absent:

Monika Cassidy
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Ramon Barba Torres
Bridget Reeves

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

Guest presenters: Scott Grunhurd, Gregory Erickson

City staff: Mark Gardner, City Council Legislative Analyst

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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:00]

- Councilmember Hannah Stone welcomed the group
- Hannah Stone facilitated this meeting
- Minutes for the November 17 meeting were approved as written.
- Revised ordinance. A revision of the ordinance that created this board will be brought to the board for review before being sent to Council early in 2021.
- 2021 meeting schedule. Meetings will continue to be the 3rd Tuesday of every month starting at 6:30 p.m.

Reports from affected community members [10:28].

There are concerns that the same thing that happened two years ago to community members will happen again. Perhaps there is a law or ordinance that can stop this from happening.

It was noted that if community members cannot attend to provide an account of their experiences a video could be shared.

Overview of WHAT-COMM practices and procedures [16:25]

- **Facts about dispatch.** Dispatch is a difficult job and staff respond to things such as break-ins, domestic violence, and suicide. There is a rigorous hiring process and 10 months of training. The system started in 1983 and included dispatch for police, fire, and medical. In 1999 fire and medical dispatch were separated from police dispatch.
- **Organizational Structure.** There is an interlocal agreement that governs the system that lays out funding and oversight. The interlocal indicates that the Bellingham Police Department oversees the WHAT-COMM system but a Bellingham Fire Department division chief oversees fire dispatch. The interlocal includes the County and all of the cities. There is an oversight board composed of officials from the jurisdictions. The system is paid for by a combination of taxes, and fees charged to participating jurisdictions.
- **Flow of communications.** Communications flow from the public to WHAT-COMM, and then to dispatch staff. The dispatch is separated into police and fire ("Prospect"). 911 call takers answer incoming calls and triage them. Fire and emergency medical calls are transferred to Prospect and the rest are sent to law enforcement dispatch, with each jurisdiction having assigned dispatch staff.
- **Civilian director.** From 2017 forward the WHAT-COMM operations director has been a civilian from the emergency response system.
- **Call volume.** About 140,000 calls came into 911 in 2019. Another 75,000 calls came in on a line set up for non-emergency calls. About 75,000 calls went out from the system. Altogether in 2019 about 290,000 calls were processed by the system. A computer aided dispatch (CAD) computer system helps staff manage calls.
- **Law enforcement operations.** WHAT-COMM dispatch staff monitor officer status in the field and take requests from officers. Dispatchers may also send additional officers for backup or other assistance. Dispatch staff may handle 10 to 12 incidents at a time and may be working with 25 officers.
- **Participation in WHAT-COMM.** All local agencies except WWU dispatch through WHAT-COMM. Blaine, Sumas, and Lynden used to dispatch through Border Patrol, and there were concerns that some people wouldn't use the system if they knew they would be transferred to Border Patrol. Local law enforcement agencies have

their own policies for how they interact with Border Patrol or other federal agencies. WHAT-COMM facilitates sharing of resources across agencies and handles requests, such as for running a search on warrants or for reported stolen vehicles.

- **Border cities.** Small border cities such as Blaine, Lynden, or Sumas may request assistance from CBP as they may only have one officer on duty and may need backup for an incident. Also, Border Patrol has helicopters which may be used to search for a missing child or an Alzheimer's patient. Sometimes CBP calls WHAT-COMM if its officers see an incident occurring that is better handled by a local agency i.e. a traffic accident.
- **Federal operations.** There is an Operation Stonegarden focused on border community security that involves federal law enforcement, FEMA, and Home Security, but BPD does not participate in this, nor does WHAT-COMM. However, some small cities do.
- **Questions and Discussion.**
 - What state funding goes into 911? This comes from the 911 state office which collects taxes earmarked for local 911 systems. Each county has a contract from the state to collect and distribute these taxes.
 - Who relies on CPB for backup? Small cities, but the first choice would be other local law enforcement and the Whatcom County Sheriff. Each City has its own policy.
 - WHAT-COMM only calls CBP at the request of an officer. A mutual aid request may come for an officer, e.g. a suicidal subject was near Hannegan Rd. and CBP had a Spanish interpreter. Question: Is this legal under SB 5497?
 - There are proposals to consolidate WHAT-COMM and Fire dispatch. The board would have control over any changes. The board takes public comment into account.
 - Contact data. Dispatchers puts in notes. In the federal contact data it is not always clear that contacts are initiated by other agencies. Is data on contacts complete? The goal is to get all contacts not just those that go through WHAT-COMM.

Old/New Business [1:55:16]

- It was noted that the presentations during the Nov. 17 board meeting were informative and that it would be good to follow up on some of the ideas in future meetings.
- Bellingham Police Chief David Doll announced his retirement. Flo Simon will be interim chief.

Public Comment [1:57:55]

Members of the public provided comment and posed questions to the board. Questions and comments were:

1. There is concern that WHAT-COMM is facilitating interaction with federal agencies. There are also reports of racial profiling.
2. Do the restrictions in SB 5497 cover WHAT-COMM since it includes local law enforcement?
3. How can the local GRACE and LEAD programs support access to all people including immigrants? A harm reduction approach should be used so that everyone can feel comfortable asking for services. This would also apply to the Crisis Triage center.
4. There is potential for harm when WHAT-COMM facilitates calls to the CBP for border towns.
5. We need to know the results of various interactions documented in the WHAT-COMM system. Can detail be added? It is not always clear who is requesting contact with CBP.
6. There is a need for interpreters who are not with CBP.
7. Can we get the text of operational agreements of different law enforcement agencies to see how they interact with CBP? Are there written agreements with CBP? When WHAT-COMM takes calls from CBP, we lose control.

Discussion occurred noting that interlocal agreements and agency agreements are public documents. WHAT-COMM and City staff will work to get these agreements.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
June 23, 2020, 6:00 PM

ATTACHMENT #1
IAB July 23, 2020

Note: **[Time stamps]** indicate the time in which each section/discussion can be listened to in the [meeting audio](#).

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Seth Fleetwood at 6:00 PM.

Welcome

Mayor Seth Fleetwood provided a brief introduction and thanked the members of the Board. Council Member Hannah Stone provided a brief introduction and welcomed the Board. **[5:14]**

Board Member Introductions [10:20]

Board members introduced themselves by sharing why they joined the board, how they are connected to the community, and what they hope to get out of participating.

Present:

Ada Rumford
Rick Qualls
Liz Darrow
Bridget Reeves
Katie Winkelman
Danielle Siedlecki
Rev. Seth Thomas
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar

Absent:

Monika Cassidy

The City will reimburse language interpreters who assist Board members.

Review/Approval of Agenda [24:26]

The Board discussed the contents of the agenda and the process by which it was created. The agenda was prepared and written by City staff to ensure the logistics of the Board were accomplished during the first meeting. Going forward, the Board will develop their own agenda setting process and seek all Board members' feedback on the agenda.

The Welcoming a Refugee Resolution agenda item was discussed [25:58]. Clarification was made that this request was brought forward to the City Council and the Council wanted the Immigration Advisory Board to review the Resolution and provide input in advance of any Council consideration. The Board is not required to move forward with this resolution.

The organizational structure of the Board was discussed [27:56]. It is up to the Board to decide how they would like to go about their business, elect/designate different kinds of officers, develop the way in which meetings are conducted, develop the framework used to create agendas, etc. The Board will have City staff support regardless of the organizational choices made. Councilmember Stone is willing to hold the space of chairperson until the Board develops its organizational structure.

The Board will develop its structure at a later date. Some key points from this discussion were:

- Encouragement for the board to be critical of systems that are traditionally oppressive such as Robert's Rules of Order
- Developing a structure that gives each member the opportunity to participate, being mindful of how the group decides what items can/will be on the agenda, making sure everyone's voices are heard, etc.
- The struggles faced by organized groups in the time of Zoom
- The importance of the moderator/leadership role to guide meetings
- The Board decided to bring suggestions regarding the organizational structure to the next meeting

Board Set-Up

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Tabled to a future meeting.

2. Length of Member Terms in light of start-up delay [1:03:46]

1 year terms expire 1 year from June 23, 2020.

2 year terms expires 2 years from June 23, 2020.

3. Meeting Schedule [48:15]

The Board discussed their meeting schedule. It was originally scheduled as the fourth Tuesday of the month from 6:00–8:00 PM, but the Board can change their standing meeting date and time. A poll will be developed to find a day and time that works for each Board member.

4. Review of Ordinance 2019-11-033 [55:55]

Councilmember Hannah Stone explained the purpose of the ordinance, the formation of the Immigration Advisory Board, and the freedom of the Board to develop their own work plan.

5. Other Housekeeping Items [1:02:59]

Communications Director Janice Keller spoke about the option for the Board to include a public comment period and the opportunity to bring in outside speakers and encouraged the board to decide this in their organizational structure discussion at the next meeting.

The Board was encouraged to look at the ways all City offices interact with ICE and to keep the Board within the narrow focus of farm worker and immigrant communities, such as the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 to these communities.

Concern was raised about Police Chief David Doll being present in the Zoom meeting and he was asked to become an attendee rather than a panelist. This change was proposed to ensure that Board members and members of the community feel safe expressing their thoughts and concerns during the Board meetings. City staff involvement in the Board's meetings was discussed further. The Board members requested that Council member Stone act as the City Council liaison with the Board. Council member Stone will confirm that Council member Hammill does not have any objection since he currently serves as the Chair of the Public Health, Safety and Justice Committee.

Email exchanges and documents created as part of the business of this Board are public documents and will be subject to disclosure if a request is made.

Board Review and Discussion [1:34:18]

1. Federal Contacts Report

Deputy Administrator Brian Heinrich presented the Federal Contacts Report for November 4, 2019 to June 20, 2020. The Board asked questions and had a discussion regarding the report and expectations for future reports.

2. Resolution – Welcoming Refugees

This item was not discussed further during this meeting.

Old/New Business [1:50:06]

Board members were given the opportunity to ask questions and speak freely.

The City will work on translation and interpretation services, develop a poll for deciding the next meeting date, and gather recommendations for the agenda. The Board will discuss meeting logistics and organizational structure at their next meeting.

Adjourn

The Immigration Advisory Board meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM.



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Danielle Siedlecki
Liz Darrow
Holly Pai
Australia Tobon
Ada Rumford
Monika Cassidy
Jagwinder Gill
Marciano Sanchez Lopez
Sierra Green (Alternate)
Tarnjot Brat ("TJ")

Absent:

Bridget Reeves (excused)
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora (excused)
Homero Israel Jose Garrido

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Punjabi Interpretation: Piku Dhillon

City Council Legislative Staff: Nalini Margaitis

City Council Liaison: Council President, Hannah Stone

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.

Welcome, and New Board Member Introduction [3:07]

- Danielle Siedlecki welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the November 16, 2021 meeting were approved as written

Review of Agenda [3:13]

New Board member Introductions [4:16]

- New member, Tarnjot Brat “TJ”, introduced himself stating that he lives in Lynden and is originally from Punjab, India. He joined the Board because he is in the medical field and wishes to help others of his community.
- Alternate, Sierra Green, introduced herself to the Board, stating that she is a student at WWU studying Human Services and works at C2C as a Promotora. Green stated that she is also a community researcher involved in the flood response.
- New member, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, is in Oaxaca until January
- Alfredo Jaurez shared that he has applied to serve on the IAB. He also shared a personal experience of being stopped by the Bellingham Police and being turned over to Border Patrol, where he ultimately spent time in a Tacoma Detention Facility. Juarez shared that, after this experience, he filed a lawsuit against the Bellingham Police Department and eventually settled. He is also a member of C2C and Familias Unidas.

Public Comment/Community Reports [11:25]

- Australia Tobon provided a report out via a pre-recorded video on behalf of Whatcom Promotoras. Displacement issues in Sumas continue to compromise housing – very few families have gone back to their housing units (currently overcrowding and living with other family members in the community, others living in their cars, some with children). The families need shelter, culturally appropriate food, appliances for cooking food (mini-fridges, stovetops), non-perishable food items, washer/dryer, and clothing. Often there was no communication from their local government to evacuate. COVID-19 continues to run rampant in these communities, because they prefer to stay with their families. A lot of information is predominantly in English. The community needs information on tenant law rights. The Promotoras also lost homes during the flood. This groups advocates for the largest racial minority group in Whatcom County. Tobon’s team has been providing audio updates in Spanish. An Immigration Resource Center would be beneficial for this community. Also, language access for emergency response is critical. For more information, please reach out to Danny Gonzales, Australia Tobon, Sierra Green or Liz Darrow.

Flood Response Update (Sierra Green) [21:48]

- Sierra Green shared an update regarding the C2C flood response. The main items included: dignified housing, creating a taskforce (Promotoras program (impacted community members) and movement team (allies)) to respond to the issues seen in the community, food, and other essential needs. In partnership with the Opportunity Council, they have been processing ERAP (eviction rent assistance program) applications (assistance with rent and utility). They have also been in partnership with the Bellingham Food Bank to provide food carts for families in need. Other partners include: Northsound ACH, Whatcom Strong, and Community. C2C still needs to identify what to do in the long-term (defining what dignified housing looks like and create a

preventative plan).

Immigration Resource Center Update (Danielle Siedlecki) [29:25]

- Danielle provided an update on the Immigration Resource Center. The subcommittee had another meeting with Mayor Fleetwood. The City Council has requested another letter further explaining the need for the center and the committee has submitted that, along with the list of organizations that were interested in partnering with/supporting in some way the resource center. Mayor Fleetwood would like another meeting at some point, to see if the County is also interested. The committee is waiting to hear back on when the next meeting will be held.

Process Subcommittee Report (Holly Pai) [32:26]

- Pai shared that she expressed shock from the City after the subcommittee had approached the Mayor's Office to schedule quarterly meetings. Specifically, an email response from the Mayor's Assistant, Brooksana Raney, stated that, quarterly meetings with the group would be "inappropriate", but that the Mayor would welcome invitation to quarterly IAB meetings. Pai expressed disappointment on two levels: that the Mayor did not know how frequent the IAB meetings occurred or that he needed an invitation to attend the meeting, as they are his meetings and that he regularly attends other advisory board meetings (such as Parks). Hannah Stone followed up with the Mayor's Office and was informed that the Mayor's schedule is too busy to meet with each advisory Board on a regular basis. The subcommittee followed up with an email to the Mayor's Office inquiring how other Boards perform their advisory function to the Mayor. Raney responded that she did not have time to craft a thoughtful response, and that the Mayor is receiving updates from the Board from Councilmember Stone and maybe Legislative Staff Nalini Margaitis, and that those two members apprise the Mayor on the activities. Pai expressed disappointment and frustration, because she is unsure how the group is supposed to serve as an advisory function if they are unable to schedule regular meetings with the Mayor.
- Hannah Stone added that the Mayor's Office looks at this as a Council initiated Board and looks to Council for guidance on this Board. Stone added that she wants to make sure that the Mayor's Office is engaged with this work. Stone suggested that the Board reach out to individual Councilmembers to schedule small group meetings (with subcommittees and the individual Councilmember) to urge them to attend the IAB meetings. (Pai recognized that Stone has made herself available for this type of meeting).
- Liz Darrow expressed her frustration stating that the only two items that were sent to Council, were squashed by Council, citing the letter in response to the 1/28/2021 events as well as establishing an Immigration Resource Center. Darrow added that these are public meetings, and if Councilmembers of the Mayor had any interested to attend, they could do so at any time, adding that it is outrageous not to take this seriously.

- Jagwinder Gill suggested that the group compose a formal response and have all members of the IAB sign off on it, Ada Rumford and Danielle Siedlecki supported this idea. Pai stated that she could assist in drafting the letter.
- Monika Cassidy mentioned that this letter should be CCed to the Council.

Public Comment [52:46]

- MB stated that she is concerned about what information has been shared with the Mayor. She believes that this is something the IAB should know. All of the work that everybody on this Board, along with community members has been doing should be noted. She is concerned that the updates are just being passed on in passing.
- Mialee Jose: The work that IAB does intersects with other boards. Following up on Stone's idea of networking, might it be possible to form a relationship with the other committees so that they understand the intersection? (e.g., when Parks meetings, they intersect their meeting to include immigration and that way the Mayor hears these concerns). Darrow added that she agrees, racial equity and immigrant justice should be a part of everything that the City does.
- Michael Betz spoke on behalf of how this Board started – with a group of Dreamers at WWU who were concerned about their parents being grabbed by ICE. This is how the community got involved. The Board got started primarily to protect undocumented community members. Betz said that the center should serve the entire community, but that there are certain members of this community that put food on “our” tables and ICE is hunting them and disappearing them. Betz believes this is an outrage.

Ordinance Update (Holly Pai) [58:12]

- Amending the ordinance on how Board members are selected, moving forward, on the selection process, Pai shared that the Board might want to remove the sector requirements and instead make the Board more representative of the community including immigrant stats, persons of color, and the process of application.
- Darrow added that the Board should review the applications (in Seattle, they have a 2/3-member requirement for people of color) and those who are impacted by immigration enforcement to be a priority for the Board.
- Ada Rumford agreed that the way Board members are selected seems a bit arbitrary, but she gets a bit weary to require people of color. Instead, she believe that everybody should have the opportunity to serve on the Board, regardless of the color of their skin, representing the fluid population of the community. (To this, Darrow responded that she strongly disagrees, citing that one only needs to look at the people are regularly being detained and deported. Darrow added that she agrees that the population is growing, but that this only means that the community is less white). Rumford responded that she does believe there should be specific goals tied to ethnicities or skin colors. (Sierra Green added that if there are biases connected to skin color and ethnicities, then why shouldn't there be goals to counteract these biases and the things that are affecting peoples of color daily lives? As a result, Green stated that the Board should specifically target people of color [to join the Board]. Green stated that it is

important for people of color and BIPOC voices to be represented on the Board). Rumford added that she believes the board should represent the diverse population of the community, but that the ordinance should not have that as a specificity. (Siedlecki added that there is a huge population in the community of Ukrainian and Russian immigrants). Rumford added that she agrees, and that there is also a large Vietnamese community – Rumford stated (and later retracted) that the Board has never had any Asian members. It was later clarified that there are Asian representatives serving as Board members of the South Asian diaspora. (Siedlecki added that the Board could reach out to specific immigrant populations – e.g. Russian and Vietnamese to encourage them to serve as Board members and that way get representation from all over the County. TJ supported Siedlecki's idea, inviting specific groups to meetings, instead of requiring a specific minority quota to the Board). Rumford added that the reason the Board had the current makeup, is because it consisted of members who had interest in immigration issues and took the time to research volunteer opportunities on the City website. (Monika Cassidy agreed with Rumford's statement, that the original Board makeup reflected those who had an interest and experience in immigration issues affecting the community, are immigrants themselves, and have the knowledge of what has happened and what may happen to immigrant groups in the community). (Jagwinder Gill added that the employment sector matters more than ethnic background – that the community will be watching *what* the Board will do and how they will act, rather than focusing on the color of their skin). (Marciano Sanchez Lopez added that representatives of C2C should be members of the Board, adding his frustration about the Mayoral selection of Board members).

Department of Homeland Security HSI Office Tour Report Out [1:20:47]

- On December 20, 2021, five Board members (Liz Darrow, Marciano Sanchez Lopez, Jagwinder Gill, Monika Cassidy, and Sierra Green) along with one City staff member (Nalini Margaitis), were provided a Tour of the DHS-HIS Office in Ferndale, Washington by Assistant Special Agent (overseeing Washington State offices), Matthew Murphy.
- Sierra Green reported that Matthew Murphy met the group and presented some generic information about DHS-HSI (information that can be found on the website). Green shared that when she asked Murphy if he could send her the PowerPoint presentation to her personally, he responded that he could not do so because the information is secured. Green added that a lot of the questions that were asked during the Q&A were dodged, adding that Murphy was combative and hostile in his response and that it was not a welcoming environment. When asked how long people were detained, or a maximum amount of time, Murphy was unable to answer. Murphy told the group that people are not detained there. There was much focus on ERO (and not HIS). They call the Ferndale Center the Blaine Center. Murphy stated that his office focuses on the Canadian border and seizing narcotics. There were three holding rooms (with a bathroom). Murphy stated that they target MS13 gang related activity (Guatemalan, El Salvadoran and Mexican region). There was a fully armed SUV that was transported from Mexico that was used when dealing with dangerous community members. Green added that Murphy responded with a belittling tone.

- Marciano Sanchez Lopez echoed Green's recap. He also added that the immediate imagery was very vivid – working with other law enforcement agencies. Lopez recalled that Murphy appeared proud of what he did, pushing that narrative that they are the good guys hunting the bad guys. Lopez added that Murphy was hostile when responding to the group's questions, either dodging the questions or answering in broad terms. Lopez added that he didn't learn anything from the presentation – he left with what he already knew. There was a 7 by 9 cell, stainless steel, and a bathroom and a sink and interrogation rooms. In the garage, there was military equipment stored against the wall and a big, armored tank. Murphy said that the tank was used for protection based on someone's history (e.g. if they have been aggressive toward cops).
- Jagwinder Gill added that it was an unmarked building – no sign that designates "HSI" or "DHS". He also shared a photo that he took from the front of the building.
- Liz Darrow added that Robert Hammer (Murphy's boss), mentioned that there is an ERO facility within the same complex, about 1,000 ft from the HSI building. The group asked Murphy about this location and he was unable to provide any information about that complex. Darrow added that the only reason the group learned about the HSI office is because of a recollection from a community member. Darrow added that it is concerning to know that there are two facilities in that complex. Darrow added that, upon departing, Murphy told the group that if they don't agree with him, to tell him what he can do to make them agree with him. Darrow explained that this was a very aggressive approach.
- Monika Cassidy spoke about the imagery that was hung on the walls on the complex, power-striking imagery of men in regular clothing hold guns. Cassidy stated that not many staff members were there, but that there was plenty of exercise equipment. Cassidy added that the garage had temporary barriers (Murphy had mentioned that this was practice area). Cassidy wondered if this separation was also used to separate people as an intimidation tactic. Cassidy added that she was not impressed by the armor. She added that she too felt like he was being hostile. She recalled that Murphy spoke about how he did not appreciate the article circulating around, shedding a bad light on him. Cassidy stated that this facility did not look like a facility where they could store people, instead it appeared more transitional, and she believes there must be another location that holds people for a longer time. Cassidy stated that Murphy wanted to present himself like he was friendly and wanted to collaborate, but she does not believe this is the case. The building is new and has only been occupied since January of this year. They recently moved from another location.
- Darrow shared photos of the outside of the building, showing that there were 50 parking spots (for 50 employees). There was an ongoing standing vigil going on, which occurs every Monday. Murphy mentioned that he did not know why there was a vigil.
- Alfredo Juarez shared his experience. He stated that he was asked what gang he was in. He said all he did was drive on a one-way street. He told ICE that he was not in a gang, that he was a student and works during the summer. He stated that during his detention, it was very difficult for his family members to locate where he was. He was only provided a 30-second phone call to let him family know that he was in an ICE

building.

Federal Contact Data [1:49:59]

- Liz Darrow had one question about, *CBP dispatch telephoned our dispatch to ask a question about a warrant return sometimes they don't know how to read certain warrant returns. Our dispatcher helped.* Darrow stated that this is an example of CBP asking BPD for information and BPD giving it to them. If CBP does not know how to do their job, then they need more training. According to the ACLU, BPD is not supposed to provide any information to CBP that is not accessible to the public via a google search.
- To recap, Bridget Reeves obtained useful information on the entries with reference numbers. If there are no reference numbers, then the Board is unable to follow-up. Darrow added that the Board needs help to gain accountability from BPD. Rumford suggested that the Board compile a list (top ten) of cases to present to the City. Cassidy added that whenever this type of communication is brought forward to the Mayor, it should also be attached to the Council and the Governor. Darrow added that the Governor and the ACLU have been provided with plenty of examples.
- Darrow also drew concern to, *our Dispatch telephoned CBP Dispatch at the request of Suman PD for a cover officer on a security check*, stating that this is another example of BPD involving CBP when they otherwise would not have gotten involved.
- Darrow cited a third example regarding a DUI where BPD provided information to CBP that should not have been disclosed.
- Hannah Stone added that the notes column of the federal contact data varies greatly due to the digression of people – various people are compiling these notes.

Old/New Business [2:00:06]

- Hannah Stone requested that a formal request be submitted to her for the funds to cover a board retreat/training. Darrow responded that she and Pai looked into a training by the Anti-oppression resource and training alliance.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Liz Darrow
Australia Tobon
Holly Pai
John Baker
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Bridget Reeves
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki
Monika Cassidy
Marciano Sanchez Lopez

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar
Katie Winkelman

Liaison to the City Council: Hannah Stone, President

Spanish Interpretation: Marcela Rey

City Council Staff: Nalini Margaitis

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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:03]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the April 20, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Announcements [4:23]

- OPMA trainings will be sent by 5/20/2021 and must be completed for Sept 1

Review of the Federal Contacts Data [5:43]

- Liz Darrow reminded that the Board is requesting a results column, so they know what happens to these cases
- Frequency of communication between CBP and BPD stood out
- On 5/11/2021, CBP was called to review a welfare check of a resident – why?
- 4/28/2021: ICE involved in non-immigrant investigation – why were they involved?
- Hannah Stone clarified that this Federal Contacts Data is compiled based on *WhatComm Dispatch*. The contact is initiated by other municipalities within Whatcom County. *WhatComm* handles 911 dispatch (BPD employees). The results, with additional information, are held with the other municipalities. The authority of COB and the Board to obtain this information is outside of the work of this Board. Ultimately, how do we reconcile filling that role of 911 dispatch, when they might not be following the policies of COB?
- Bridget followed up inquiring about an interlocal agreement (that may outline the use of a joint dispatch) – could the Board request an agreement? Yes
- Ada Rumford stated that she has seen this information online and would be sending the group the information
- Danielle Siedlecki proposed that everyone could read over the information and come back with questions for the following meeting
- Liz Darrow suggested she, or another Board member, follow-up with a public records request, adding that the Keep WA Working Act may dictate what municipalities may and may not do

Report from CBP (Council President, Hannah Stone) [21:50]

- Hannah Stone reached out to CBP and ICE from the Blaine sector – their follow-up: What is the Board hoping to accomplish with a tour? Seeing certain facilities? Have someone come speak to the Board? Virtual field trip? CBP includes: Field operations (people in Blue, at the ports of entry); Border Patrol (jurisdiction is between points of entry); Air and Marine (covers air and water) – are there specific requests?
- Australia Tobon stated that the tour should include everything – tour and follow up Q/A – who is their community relations officer and what do they do? Where are they holding people before they transfer them to Tacoma? We know there are two locations in Fernadale, people from Sumas have expressed fear going outside during the pandemic
- Danielle Siedlecki stated that it would be beneficial if the group could go in person to tour the facilities, with PPE
- Liz Darrow added that the Blaine sector has jurisdiction over WA, OR & AK; Tacoma will be closing – transferring detainees to OR (HB 1019)

Reports from Impacted Community Members [39:16]

- None

Report from Immigration Resource Center [40:02]

- Two more organizations support the Immigration Resource Center: Whatcom Community College & NW Regional Council
- Sikh Community expressed interest to learn about: English language, education system, job assistance, affordable housing, workplace, and tenant rights
- Shared updated ordinance [45:02-53:45]
- Hannah Stone: outline the broader policy items for Council, after ordinance is passed the implementation is carried out by the Mayor and their staff, specificity provides more limitation, City would partner with other agencies to provide the services listed in the proposed ordinance, should not just be symbolic, but be impactful for the immigrant community (engage and include), will be successful if there is collective buy-in, present vision of what the Center would look like, advisory Board would present the vision to the Council & Mayor, prepare proposal that would come back to the Board, needs assessments from the Community
- Liz Darrow: intention is that the Center would be funded by the City, but run by immigrants and refugees; subcommittee will meet on 6/1
- Holly Pai: think of this ordinance as a floor – room to build, is there a way to wrap the Board into the Ordinance?
- Maria: Where : could we add “the mission, under the guidance of the immigration Board” into the ordinance?
- Australia Tobon: Do we need to specify the organizations in the ordinance at all? (Hannah added that it does not, but that is shows broader support of the community and the services offered)
- Danielle: Revisions for next meeting
- Liz: group needs to be in alignment with each other, but not with City Council
- Bridget Reeves: proposed one more review outside of the Board meeting
- John Baker: Requested group orientation
- Australia Tobon requested that the ordinance be sent out to all Board Members

Old/New Business [1:44:25]

- Agenda process (Liz Darrow): pulling away from hierarchical structure – instead: everyone leads – how do we decide what is being discussed in this space?
- Hannah Stone added that Stone Garden pertains more to County than to City (the Board should approve agenda items with a request to stay more focused on City issues)
- Reminder to submit “about me” section and prepare mission & vision statement

Public Comment Period [1:55:24]

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Liz Darrow
Holly Pai
John Baker
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Bridget Reeves
Australia Tobon
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki
Monika Cassidy
Marciano Sanchez Lopez

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar
Katie Winkelman

Liaison to the City Council: Hannah Stone, President

Spanish Interpretation: Marcela Rey

City Council Staff: Nalini Margaitis

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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:00]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the May 18, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Announcements [2:18]

- Nalini: Bios for website and OPMA training reminders

- Hannah Stone: in communication with CBP Chief and shared information about a visit from the Board (they will send dates for August or Sept); Mayor will be issuing reappointments to the Board on 6/21/2021 (will be shared at following meeting)
- John Baker asked: who is the Board Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission? (Board formed to accommodate for co-facilitators) – add this to the agenda item for the 7/20 IAB meeting

Review of the Federal Contacts Data [11:59]

- Bridget Reeves: June 6, 2021 clarifying call – what does “CSI” stand for? (CSI Whipple): why was a call made to CBP for the license plate? (Response: Mellissa Whipple is an Investigator for the Bellingham Police Department)
- Liz Darrow: Results column? (Response: this is on the Board, Liaison and Council Staff to obtain this information)
- Three to follow up: CSI Whipple, last month’s ICE (Danielle requested)
- Holly Pai: Set up a group to ask specific follow-up questions
- Monika Cassidy: What happened to the letter written to the Mayor?

Reports from Impacted Community Members [29:46]

- Marciano Sanchez Lopez: In Lynden, there were three farmworkers were detained (possibly by ICE) on their way to work – detained on the 10th of June, unknown facility – agencies unable to provide detention location information (online, just states that they were detained with no further information) – for two days, the family member did not know where they were. Frustrating that community members disappear to unknown location.
- Danielle Siedlecki: Why is this information not on the Federal Contacts Data?
Response: Because the federal contacts data only includes the city of Bellingham interaction, nothing beyond that. If notification of the County, it will likely go to the WCSO.
- Response: the Board could identify ways to locate community members at all times, but reminder that this is a federal system and there is only so much a municipality can do
- Australia Tobon: important to have a transparent system to locate loved ones, even as a municipality should be able to identify where these loved ones are, right to know where they are, can talk to a loved one before they go, etc.
- Liz Darrow: agreed with Australia and reminded the Board members of its purpose
- Danielle wanted to know what can be done right not
- Response: reaching out to other groups and recognizing the City’s limitation – e.g. Holly, Hannah and Dept of Homeland Security (Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties) – they Board can identify solutions on how to locate loved ones

- Holly Pai: can be a resource between community and the organizations to identify the structure of these agencies, but also understands the limitations and realities on the ground
- Liz Darrow: could we organize a community event this summer? (with Marciano, Australia as well as others who know the structure of the agencies); Any way to communicate to the Tacoma Center to express how the Board feels about what happened? (Holly clarified: now that they are with ICE, they are under Federal Immigration Law and therefore the outcome is dependent on each person's immigration history).
- Response: long overdue for a community clinic (outreach information) – Marciano and Australia please advise the group how to proceed with this
- Bridget Reeves: writing letters to influential members (congressmen, ICE, etc.) and delivered to the lawyers by whom they were represented
- Response: this is helpful, but each person's options are different – they all need legal Counsel. Other Cities have immigrant defense funds that help pay for Counsel (Liz added: City's with these funds have a line item in their budget for this)
- Going forward: Liz will reach out to Australia and Marciano to find out the best communication method for this

Presentation: Information Gathered from the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs in NYC and the Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Office in Denver (Liz Darrow) [55:24]

- Denver: 7th City Liz, Australia, and Danielle have met with -Office of Immigrant Affairs in different quadrants of the country
- Offices started and funded by the City, but the process was led by the people
- NYC (began in 1993 with one person), today with 22 field organizers (who find out the needs of the community) – instead of a non-profit structure, it is a government led, community supported processes (via community engagement to learn about better understand the processes of civic engagement); Civic ID program (de-coupled from the federal program) – avoids federal database (that can be subpoenaed)
- Denver Star program: unaffiliated emergency response separate from Police (Bellingham is looking into this too)
- Overall observation: Mayor and City Council support has been fundamental
- Denver: Office was established by executive order by the Mayor (NYC: strongly encouraged and supported by Mayor)
- Difference: agricultural community (stronger in Whatcom Co)
- Recommendation to City Council: to figure out a way to establish and fund the Board and then allow the community to construct (via an immigrant and Refugee Resource Center)
- Biggest support: Cities for Action

Presentation: Refugee Resettlement Office in Whatcom County by World Relief (Steven Shetterly) [1:10:14]

- Presentation included background information on the global refugee crisis
- Goal: Interest to open a refugee resettlement office in Whatcom County that would offer the following: providing a ride from the airport, preparing culturally appropriate meal, connect with social services that would assist with housing, helping adults connect with ESL classes, providing training and vocational support, provide avenues of friendship, paths to citizenship and entrepreneurial for those interested to start a business, housing (Whatcom county is lower than other western WA counties)
- Note: areas that accept refugees have experiences positive economic impact
- Timeline: applying for federal recognition for Whatcom County to be a resettlement site (hopeful to receive this approval fall of 2021, followed by a period of training with first refugees arriving in the spring of 2022)
- Request that World Relief be added to the resolution
- Contact: sshetterly@wr.org
- QA responses: Catholic Community Services now only receive resettlement if you have family ties in Whatcom County (sub-office of another larger office in Snohomish county), World Relief would request that Whatcom County be recognized as a primary resettlement location by the Federal Govt (allow for increased resettlement, once federal recognition is received) , Resettle NW (work alongside other agencies)
- Funding is coming from: federally funded (every refugee has a certain amount – covers resettlement and administrative costs), other funding: private sources, grants, state sources, local abilities to raise money (>50% federally funded)
- The Board feedback included questions about how this presentation made it on to the agenda

Report from Immigration Resource Center [1:46:21]

- Danielle read aloud the updates in the current document
- Hannah Stone added that the City Attorney has stated that he will not review the ordinance until the City Council provides guidance
- Danielle asked if it would be possible to set up a meeting with the Mayor and City Attorney before the next IAB meeting
- Bridget asked if it would be possible for the Board members to be added to a subcommittee report during a City Council meeting
- Hannah will share the document with Council on Monday (and this is the version that Legal will view it) and will report out on the result
- Updated ordinance was emailed to the Board

Old/New Business [2:00:52]

- Hannah: regarding the letter re events on 1/26 (letter brought to Council on 4/26 meeting), May 7th meeting the letter was discussed (outlining the policy concerns/items for discussion) – suggestion to Council for agenda item re Mutual Aid agreements to be presented during the 7/12 meeting (looking specifically at mutual aid agreements between the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County)

Public Comment Period [2:06:12]

The meeting adjourned at 9:13 PM.

Recordings of this meeting with additional details of discussion is posted at:
<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
July 20, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Liz Darrow
Australia Tobon
Holly Pai
John Baker
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki
Monika Cassidy
Marciano Sanchez Lopez

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar
Bridget Reeves
Katie Winkelman

Liaison to the City Council: Hannah Stone, President

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

City Council Staff: Nalini Margaitis

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Welcome, and Board Business [00:05]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the June 15, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Reports from Impacted Community Members [2:43]

- Moved to Old/New Business (see 2:17:148)

Announcements [10:40]

- Liz Darrow shared comments from a community member relating to public comment and impacted community members – worried that the concerns they bring are never addressed
- Hannah Stone shared the Mayor's reappointments of Ada Rumford and Liz Darrow to two year terms (leaving one Board position open)

Co-facilitator vote [15:34]

- Panelists unable to participate in the voting feature, so the votes will be accepted via email to immigrationboard@cob.org by 5PM on July 23rd.

Review of Federal Contacts Data [25:22]

- The following items stood out to Australia: Translation, missing children, driving infraction and DUIs
- John Baker wanted clarification on the federal contacts data process
- Holly Pai explained that this is communication between the local dispatch and federal agencies & don't want to see cooperation and communication about non-federal issues between the two agencies (citing e.g. #23 where Lynden PD asked CBP if they had someone to interpret for them – inappropriate)
- Ada Rumford reminded the Board that WhatComm controls 911 calls – there are interlocal agreements (911 is largely paid for by the COB), ask for a change to the interlocal
- Liz Darrow added that it is prohibited by state law for CBP to ask for interpretation assistance and stated that it was on the Board to follow up individually with the reference numbers to see what happened
- Danielle spoke about making suggestions to WhatComm (to not make calls to the border, to make a policy suggestion, etc.) – Liz agreed (because all municipalities must follow state law), making the line of communication between CBP and WhatComm illegal (follow up to ensure this is outside of state law)
- Holly Pai wants to know if this federal contact data is being shared with the Mayor and the City Council (Hannah did not believe that it was)

Work Plan for 2021-2022 (John Baker) [52:24]

- John Baker proposed that the group would have a workshop to look over the work plan for the upcoming year and at the end of year, evaluate what the group has achieved throughout the year.

Orientation for New Board Members (John Baker) [102:15]

- John Baker proposed to have an orientation for new board members – he stated that the language level needed for comprehension of the OPMA trainings was one of a post-graduate level and is requesting something less intimidating for new board members.

Outreach Campaign (Ada Rumford) [1:07:30]

- Ada Rumford proposed an outreach campaign whereby effort is made to make the immigrant community of Bellingham aware of the Board and to notify the community that the Board would like their involvement (specifically: identify areas with high immigrant populations – community centers, etc). Part two would include a flyer that is distributed among these community centers that encourages people to get involved with the IAB – the flyer would be written in multiple languages.
- Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora and Monika Cassidy expressed interest to serve on the subcommittee

Proposition of New Work Group (Ada Rumford and Holly Pai) [1:28:41]

- Proposal by Ada Rumford and Holly Pai request the City to publish all City documents in multiple languages and Holly wanted to know if it is necessary to draft an ordinance or write a letter to the City. This subcommittee would pull together some numbers to present to City Council for budget approval.
- Liz Darrow added that the Whatcom County Council has interpretation services via headphones for multiple languages.
- Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora proposed creating a needs-based survey to distribute to local communities in order to understand what the community is looking for from the IAB.
- Hannah Stone suggested the school district as a resource.

Subcommittee Reports [1:48:03]

- **Immigrant Resource Center (Danielle Siedlecki)**
- Danielle wanted to know the Council/Administration feedback.
- Hannah responded that the Administration and Council are on Board, but have some questions regarding what this would look like and what the Board was asking for. As a result, it was suggested that the Mayor join several IAB meetings or schedule a meeting with Board members to discuss this further. Hannah suggested that a small group meet directly with the Mayor and then provide a report out to the Board.
- **Process Subcommittee (Holly Pai):**
- Continued discussion on how to increase community involvement as a Board with a big portion being the public comment period.
- Suggestion that a Board members rotate to respond to public comments
- Subcommittee would like to return to in-person meetings (Hannah added that this is possible as long as meetings are open to the public/are in a public space)
- The subcommittee also suggested conducting quarterly meetings with the Mayor – to ensure federal contact data information is getting to the Mayor and City Council
- The subcommittee discussed creating a new board member packet (and ask that John Baker consider joining this subcommittee)
- Finally, the subcommittee discussed Board members who have not been present (Hannah suggested that an alternate be selected for the Board member who has missed the last five meetings).

- Holly Pai added that the IAB should not necessarily be covered by the OPMA, as it is merely advisory (Hannah added that the City Attorney has requested the Board comply with the OPMA).

Old/New Business [2:17:48]

- Impacted community member shared a story with the Board about a victory they experienced. (When they were 15 years old, BPD pulled them over and requested their SSN, CBP was called in, and they were detained – most recently this person received a settlement in the amount of roughly \$100,000 from the COB). Overall, this experience took quite a long time to settle – after a racist experience occurred, questioning a minor about their SSN. The organization does not want to hurt the budget of Bellingham, but the organization wishes to see some policy changes down the line.

Public Comment Period [2:24:02]

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 PM

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
August 17, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM

Board Members

Present:

Liz Darrow
Holly Pai
John Baker
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Ada Rumford
Monika Cassidy
Marciano Sanchez Lopez

Absent:

Australia Tobon
Danielle Siedlecki
Ramon Barba Torres
Bridget Reeves

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Punjabi Interpretation: Ekinderjit "Piku" Dhillon

City Council Staff: Nalini Margaitis

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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:011]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the July 20, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Public Comment [16:56-51:15]

Co-facilitator Announcement [52:43]

- Nalini shared that there are now three facilitators: Liz Darrow, Ada Rumford, and Danielle Siedlecki

Board Member Response and Commitment to follow up [54:09]

- Liz Darrow responded to public comment: the FAQ on the IAB website is public comment, funding for Immigration Resource Center is yet to be determined, a sub-committee will be meeting with the Mayor in September, the intention is to establish a city-funded entity (with respect to the Immigrant Resource Center), office of enforcement with the AGs office (meeting has been set up) and hopeful to gain response prior to the next meeting re federal contact data, thanked those who urged a racial justice focus, border patrol is in addition to ICE, applications and a promise for appointees on August 30th to the IAB (to fill the vacancies)
- Monika Cassidy responded that she has directly experienced trauma from border patrol and that the IAB consists of people who are knowledgeable about these issues
- Ada Rumford added that this Board is moving in the direction to become more cohesive

Review of Federal Contacts Data [1:09:30]

- Liz Darrow pointed out the notable frequency with which CBP Dispatch calls COB & they are calling about specific things (which they are not supposed to be calling about) – the AG needs to follow up on this (e.g. welfare check domestic call); a second alarming item where a drug dog was called in (why does COB not use their dogs?); Liz urged that members of the community write directly to the Mayor; Holly and Liz suggested meeting quarterly with the Mayor about these issues
- Monika Cassidy commented that she cannot wait until the response from the AG & asked if the BPD has a translator (language exchange?), stressing that language access is very important.
- Liz Darrow volunteered to follow-up on the questions that she brought forward

Language Access (Ada Rumford) [1:18:30]

- After attending a webinar on language access (by the City of Seattle), Ada Rumford shared her notes from the webinar
- Goal: to create equitable distribution of information regardless of English proficiency; establish formal processes so that , as the City grows, policy and budget are created in a more inclusive manner (perhaps a part of an immigrant resource center?)
- Ada Rumford will initially look at the data (what languages are spoken, etc.) and understand information access
- It is suggested that tiers are set up (e.g. based on communication and current accessibility – e.g. tsunami pamphlet vs City park pamphlet)
- Suggestion: translate the IAB page of the City website (and eventually all pages of the City website)

- Liz Darrow mentioned that this would be a good thing to craft for the City (she also mentioned the multi-lingual packet in the medical office related to an ICE response)

Outreach Campaign (Ada Rumford) [1:30:30]

- A short survey asking the community, “what can we focus on?” “What are your concerns?”
- Ada Rumford shared a potential flyer encouraging immigrant community members to participate in IAB meetings

Community Outreach (Ada Rumford) [1:30:33]

- Surveying the public with the main question, “what can we focus on?” (survey to be translated to multiple languages)
- Zoom display: “Effect Positive Change in Your Community” flyer (encouraging the immigrant community to participate in IAB meetings)
- Public comment: mail video, comments, etc. to: immigrationboard@cob.org, mail to: 210 Lottie St c/o Immigration Advisory Board Bellingham WA 98225

Subcommittee Reports [1:45:19]

- IRC group: meeting with the Mayor in September (report back next month)
- Follow up to City Council letter (report back next month)

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Liz Darrow
Holly Pai
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Ada Rumford
Monika Cassidy
Bridget Reeves
Australia Tobon
Danielle Siedlecki
Jagwinder Gill

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres
John Baker
Marciano Sanchez Lopez

Spanish Interpretation: Marny "Debby" Barrau

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Punjabi Interpretation: Ekinderjit "Piku" Dhillon

City Council Staff: Nalini Margaitis

City Council Liaison: Hannah Stone

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.

Welcome, and New Board Member Introduction [00:011]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the August 17, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Public Comment [6:02-26:15]

City Council response to the January 28, 2021 letter (Ada Rumford) [26:16]

- No response from City Council re the January 28, 2021 letter
- Hannah Stone was hoping for a response and interest from other Councilmembers (she will issue a formal written response to the Board) – meanwhile, she is trying to bring the issues that the letter raised in an agenda bill to look at mutual aid agreements, looking at how the aid agreements are carried out and what standing the city policy has (if anytime the City partners with the county, would border patrol be present?) – there has been resistance to having those discussions, but she is still working on that and hopeful to bring it to Council before the end of the year.

IAB Timeline (Liz Darrow) [26:46]

- Liz Darrow shared a timeline of the IAB (2019- C2C writes ordinance to create an Immigration Advisory Board, support from Hannah Stone and Council passed the ordinance 7-0. IAB officially established on 11/4/2019). Ultimate goal: transparency and protection for immigrants that live and work in the community via oversight and safety mechanisms.
- The timeline is located online: <https://cob.org/wp-content/uploads/IAB-Timeline.pdf>

New Member Orientation (John Baker) [34:27]

- John Baker absent, Liz Darrow presented his outline for New Member Orientation

Report: Meeting with Seth Fleetwood and next steps for the IRC [47:50]

- Mayor had to reschedule meeting (now, Oct 5) – will be included in following agenda

Subcommittee Reports [39:20]

- Process Subcommittee Report (Liz, John, Holly): Holly Pai shared the agenda and notes from the subcommittee meeting – formalized orientation to orient new member (timeline, procedural rules, agenda, OPMA, opportunities for subcommittees, etc.); Suggestion for facilitators to operate in staggered terms with an experienced member; retreat for IAB members; Holly will send out Doodle poll for availability; process to respond to public comment, how to respond to comments received by email in between meetings; federal contacts data- request a Board member to be a point person to obtain results (Bridget Reeves volunteered for this role); quarterly meetings with the Mayor and City Council; term limits for IAB members
- IRC [58:22]: Danielle Siedlecki reported on the changes in the draft ordinance and read them aloud [59:14-1:03:50] – the Board agreed to share the outline (not the draft) with the Mayor

Report: Federal immigration policy in the budget (Liz Darrow) [1:28:54]

- Effort made to fit immigration reform into the budget reconciliation processes, however it included criminal bars – straightforward pathway to citizenship
- Senate parliamentarian said “no”, b/c its broad policy change (not allowed in the budget)

- The House may move forward with previous proposals (Senate would need super majority) – worse case scenario: go back to farm workforce modernization act
- Proposed legislation on DACA and TPS – how easy it is to get excluded with interaction with law enforcement (and farmworkers: if employer does not vouch for you, you do not qualify)
- House will try to update the date of the registry (from 1972 to 2010) – could also exclude a lot of farmworkers, because there are a lot of migrant workers
- Cities for Action has a useful toolkit to get involved/informed (rural workers are not getting recognized in DC) – encourage to contact state representative
- In WA State: Don't want to expand H2A or mandate E-Verify
- Deadline for proposals: Sept 30, 2021

Flyer (Ada Rumford) [1:47:58]

- Ada shared the flyer with the Board (“Affect positive change in your community”)

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Liz Darrow
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Danielle Siedlecki
Holly Pai
Australia Tobon
Ada Rumford
Bridget Reeves
Jagwinder Gill

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres
Monika Cassidy (excused)
Marciano Sanchez Lopez

Spanish Interpretation: Taos

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Punjabi Interpretation: Piku Dhillon

City Council Legislative Staff: Nalini Margaitis

City Council Liaison: Council President, Hannah Stone

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.

Welcome, and New Board Member Introduction [0:00]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the October 19, 2021 meeting were approved as written

Review of Agenda [3:00]

Announcements: Resignation and 2 Openings on the Board [4:40]

- John Baker resigned from the Board, there are now two openings
- The Board discussed the need to diversify the IAB to represent the immigrant population of the community
- Hannah Stone shared a document identifying the different sectors each Board member represents (12 Board members, 9 sectors – the Board responded that they did not believe their sector was accurate – Stone mentioned that these were based on what information was provided on the application and were set when the Mayor confirmed the appointments
- To apply: <https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/Boards-and-Commissions-Application-Process>

Public Comment/Community Reports [40:15]

- **MB** referenced a letter written by Liisa Wale to the Mayor and Administration regarding drone surveillance at Camp 210. Deputy City Administrator, Brian Heinrich, responded to this inquiry via email with the following statement, “The City of Bellingham does not work with or respond to Customs and Border Patrol or other relevant federal agencies as it relates to immigration matters”. MB contrasted this statement to the federal contact data evaluated at the previous Board meeting, where there was evidence that the City did engage with federal agencies related too immigration matters, citing September 18, 2021 and Sept 20, 2021 correspondence, as well as data from Oct 28, 2021, confirming the continuation of such correspondence. MB added that BPD working with federal immigration violates the Keep Washington Working Act.
- Bridget Reeves responded to MB and shared communication records [44:31]
- Reeves explained that What-Comm employees are considered BPD employees, so they follow BPD policies and procedures. The next step: examine their internal procedure to see if any violations occurred in addition to the Keep Washington Working Act violation.
- Liz Darrow added that the BPD policy is in compliance with the Keep Washington Working Act and states that they do not give away information to any federal immigration agency, including CBP. Without a judicial warrant, they are in violation.
- Holly Pai added that it sounds like it is a training issue if the What-Comm employee contacted the federal immigration agency, which is in violation of BPD policy.
- **Liisa Wale** spoke in support of the Immigration Resource Center. Danielle Siedlecki shared that she will meet with the Mayor next week and provide an update during the December IAB meeting. Australia Tobon added that the Resource Center would help with environmental disaster preparation (flood, fire, earthquake, etc.) to increase civic engagement in times of emergency.
- **Maddi Parvankin** spoke about her disappointment in the make up of the Board, not properly representing the immigrant community in Bellingham, undocumented community members, Latinos, agriculture workers, etc. She is concerned that the Mayor appoints members without Board feedback. She believes it is important that Board members either have Community organizing experience or lived experience.

- **Henry** stated that he agreed with everything stated by Maddi, advocating for the Resource Center. He also added that getting rid of the sectors from the Ordinance is important to breaking down barriers in the organization.
- **Jackie Tabone** also advocated in support of the Resource Center and that Leilo be a consideration for the Board.
- **Dena Jensen** supports the ideas brought forth earlier, the importance of a resource center addressing emergencies (including unsheltered community members who are facing emergencies on a daily basis), as well as urging the Mayor to take into consideration the Board members' recommendations. Jensen also mentioned that attendees might want to know how many other participants there are.

Discussion and Approval of 2022 IAB Meeting Calendar (Nalini Margaitis) [1:09:40]

- The ordinance establishing the IAB states that the Board must meet once per month (it does not address the length of time, nor a specific date per month that the meeting would occur. The proposed calendar includes meetings for 2022, continuing with the third Tuesday of every month. The Board approved this calendar.
- Reeves requested additional quarterly meetings beyond the 12 monthly meetings.

Policy Subcommittee What-Comm (Bridget Reeves) [1:18:20]

- Alison Everback urged the Board to place public records requests for any concerns regarding the Federal Contact Data
- In communication with Sarah Chaplin Sarah Chaplin regarding the process for requesting public records in a timely manner
- Liz Darrow reminded the Board that Ordinance states that, "the Board will receive any and all information about contact with any municipality" – what are the mechanisms to obtain all of the other data?
- Reeves next steps: request the records of all What-Comm contracting law enforcement agencies policies related to Keep Washington Working Act. She stated that she has made records requests, with the What-Comm County Sheriff's Department, Blaine Police Department, Sumas Police Department and Lynden Police Depart, for all of their policies related to immigration, Keep Washington Working Act, engagement with federal agencies like CBP and ICE. Once these records are obtained, the Board could make a recommendation to the Administrative Board of What-Comm to obtain a copy of the policies for each contracting law enforcement agency related to to Keep Washington Working Act To and make that standard practice and policy for the for the future, so, for instance. Reeves stated that the Board could make a recommendation to the Administrative Board of What-Comm that they require any contracting agency with What-Comm have a policy in line with the Keep Washington Working Act. Finally, follow up with the October 26 call with the ACLU and UW.

Update on Enforcement and Removal Facility (Liz Darrow) [1:28:15]

- There is an enforcement and removal facility that is an ICE detention Center in the Pacific Industrial Park in Ferndale (unmarked building in Commerce Place) – C2C has

found out that this is detention facility by people who have been detained there (calling C2C and describing the location to them). Permitting documentation confirmed that at the end of 2020, 13 new bathrooms and showers and a slop sink. Even though it has not been stated that this is a detention facility, they are detaining people there. Brenda Bentley is in charge of vigils. For more information: bentleybb65@hotmail.com

Process Subcommittee (Holly Pai) [1:35:20]

- The Process Subcommittee met on 11/2/2021 and Holly provided a report out. Items the committee was working on: new member orientation packet (welcoming new members, background of the IAB, mission, goals, procedural rules). Hoping to have a new member orientation/PPT that will live beyond this Board. Current subcommittees includes: resource center, process, and community outreach). The subcommittee wanted to have an alignment meeting – most people are available on Friday afternoon. Hopeful to have a meeting in January/February, but if the IAB has quarterly meetings, then perhaps there is no need to have an alignment meeting. Darrow asked about the City budget process to pay for the facilitator (roughly \$500-\$1000). Hannah Stone mentioned that the IAB should make a request to the Mayor or the City Council and that she would be able to track down funding for this. Pai share that the committee discussed how to respond to community inquiries (public comment/emails, etc.) The committee proposed to have a monthly community outreach liaison and created a schedule for 2022. The Board ultimately decided to create a single email where all public comment may be received and Board members will rotate on a monthly basis to respond from this email address. The email has been created and the address is: advisoryboard.publicoutreach@gmail.com

CBP Tour (Australia Tobon) [1:57:08]

- Australia Tobon shared an update regarding the CBP Tour that will occur on January 25, 2021 from 9:00AM – 11:00AM. Tobon has sent email invitations for this event.

Follow-up from City Council on January 28 Letter [1:58:57]

- Hannah Stone responded that the Mayor and City Council President will have a written response before the end of the year. Stone stated that there was not a formal request from Bellingham to Whatcom County for mutual aid for that day. Stone stated that Council was definitely not involved in this, and that they found out the same day as the public on what happened on that day.
- Darrow stated that the Board was hopeful that the Council would respond with dignity and humanity regarding the events of January 28, 2021

Federal Contact Data [2:06:30]

- Liz Darrow shared the federal contact data from Oct 26, 2021-November 10, 2021
- The Oct 26, 2021 caused concern and the Board will follow up on this
- Darrow noted that the K-9 situation is being referenced monthly lately

Old/New Business [2:09:38]

- Darrow shared that Familias Unidas por la Justicia and C2C are hosting a webinar: www.foodjustice.org
- Bridget Reeves was curious about land acknowledgement as a Board. Darrow hopes that this will be brought up during the alignment meeting or during the quarterly meeting.
- Reeves also wanted to inquire about feedback from past Board members on why they left. Stone responded that this information could be shared with the Board if there is interest.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting
January 19, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM

Board Members

Present:

Liz Darrow
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Bridget Reeves
Danielle Siedlecki
Katie Winkelman
Monika Cassidy

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar
Ada Rumford

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Marcela Rey

City staff: Mark Gardner, City Council Legislative Analyst

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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:00]

- Councilmember Hannah Stone welcomed the group
- Hannah Stone facilitated this meeting
- Minutes for the December 15 meeting were approved as written.

Reports from impacted community members [04:42].

Australia Hernandez Cosby works as a Promotora with Community to Community. Promotoras work in both Whatcom and Skagit counties and in urban and in rural areas. There was a recent incident where a worker who was employed doing construction was not being paid for the full value of his work. The homeowner doing a remodel hired a number of undocumented workers

and did not pay them all that they were owed, and the owner threatened the workers with a harassment charge if they did not accept the pay offer.

Some statewide organizations that could potentially help were not able to do so in a timely way. Legal representation from local attorneys or Law Advocates could help. People are entitled to pay for the work they do regardless of immigration status. People can present such complaints to the board to document patterns of abuse and the board can discuss whether a remedy might be possible.

Edgar Franks works with the union Familias Unidas por la Justicia (United Families for Justice). Many workers are put in a tough position by landlords, especially during the offseason. The union is also monitoring the transition from Trump to Biden and what that might mean for farmworker communities -- in particular how it might impact the number of immigrant enforcement agents within our community, and also policy on detention and deportations. The union is also participating in the state legislative process to monitor and influence things that impact immigrant and farmworkers.

The Bellingham Tenants Union has been a great resource on landlord issues. Different laws regulate farmworker housing and the farmworker union is working with other groups to see what can be done to improve protections. There is often intimidation and fear about housing problems.

Presentation and discussion on revised ordinance [35:41]

Council member Hannah Stone presented the ordinance, which has been reviewed by the City Attorney and the Mayor's office, and it is scheduled for consideration next Monday. [Subsequently the ordinance was delayed until February to incorporate the changes recommended by the board]. Changes will allow for alternates for each board member. Not every position would require an alternate but it will be an option. Alternates would ideally come from the same sector of the community as the primary member. Board members could recommend alternates. Members would be required to be residents of Whatcom County for one year, and applicants not living in Bellingham would need to be employed in Bellingham. Two co-facilitators for meetings would be identified, rather than chair and co-chair. A Council member will be appointed as Liaison but does not have to be Chair of the Council's Justice Committee.

There was discussion on whether the ordinance could be revised to eliminate residency requirements entirely to maximize flexibility. There is no absolute requirement that people be City residents to be on a board but that is the default choice for the City. Indicating a wider geography in the ordinance helps ensure that this remains an option in the future. The provision requiring those not living in Bellingham to work there could be dropped. If the ordinance requires Whatcom County residence, the application could include a question allowing people to identify their connection to the City of Bellingham, rather than meeting a specific criteria such as working in the City.

There are a number of board vacancies, and filling the positions has been delayed during ordinance revision. The City will work to expedite filling the vacancies as soon as the new ordinance passes.

Discussion on Municipal Immigrant Program Presentations at the Dec. 15 meeting [1:13:02]

At the December meeting representatives of immigrant assistance programs in Seattle and San Antonio presented information about their programs to the board. Some of the ideas discussed could be appropriate for Bellingham. The Board could encourage the Mayor to join Action Cities for Citizenship. Having a physical building where people could go for services, such as ESL and citizenship assistance, would be good. Could there be funding for a paid convenor to coordinate this effort, perhaps working with the County? Could funds be reallocated in the 2023-24 budget, or sooner, to start this process? This topic will be added to the next meeting's agenda for further discussion.

Discussion of December WHAT-COMM presentation [1:26:00]

The Board discussed the presentation from WHAT-COMM supervisors at the December meeting. Right now the 911 director reports to an assistant chief in the Bellingham Police Department. There is concern that people may not want to call knowing that their calls go to an agency supervised by the police department. The Emergency Management program under the Fire Department is one possible alternate location for this service.

Board members expressed concern that the state law regarding collaboration with federal agencies is not always being followed. Also, since the Bellingham Police Department is seeing funding increases over the rate of inflation, why are there no interpreters? There is a BPD policy in place indicating that using ICE or CBP for interpretation is not permitted. The Board could form a working group to investigate issues regarding WHAT-COMM and law enforcement interpretation capacity, and bring back the findings from that investigation to the Board for further discussion. Having four or fewer members on this work group would be important to avoid a quorum of the board.

Additional follow up will occur to see what can be provided to the board on the outcomes of the federal contacts indicated by the data. There are a number of mentions of military equipment in the contacts data -- can the board get information on what this equipment is and who has it?

Public Comment [1:56:12]

Members of the public provided comment and posed questions to the board. Questions and comments were:

1. The board should recommend to the mayor the creation of an office of immigration so undocumented people could bring forward complaints about violation of their rights and have them addressed, especially the exploitative practices of employers.
2. If more incidents are brought to the board and board members see a pattern of violation, will the board be able to respond to these violations? Also, some people were having difficulty finding the link for the meetings – can this be improved?

3. We need an office of immigration to help document and respond to labor and other issues. Does the board need more authority to solve problems?
4. The IAB should be encouraged to move forward with big things that have been discussed, esp. regarding police accountability. It is concerning that the police budget was passed without dissent from City Council.
5. The Transitional learning office at Whatcom Community college provides ESL for immigrants and refugees, and also high school diploma courses. What are the needs of the immigrant community, what classes should be added, and which processes can be changed to improve access?

Old/New Business [2:12:56]

There have been some changes to the IAB board web pages to put more information on line. Links to resources, both City and external, have been added as has a new FAQ page for responses to questions asked at the IAB meetings . See <https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board> for the resources and a link to the FAQs. Spanish language content will be continue to be added.

There was a request to start public comment earlier as it really important.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53.

Recordings of this meeting with additional details of discussion is posted at:
<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Liz Darrow
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Bridget Reeves
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki
Katie Winkelman
Monika Cassidy

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres
Jahn Zuniga Escobar

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Marcela Rey

City staff: Mark Gardner, City Council Legislative Analyst and Nalini Margaitis, City Council Legislative Assistant

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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:00]

- Councilmember Hannah Stone welcomed the group.
- Hannah Stone facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the January 19 meeting were approved as written.

Ordinance Revision and Filling the Board Vacancies [02:47].

Recently, the City issued a notice with Board openings but the IAB was not listed on that. However, there are three vacancies. Filling the vacancies was on hold until the ordinance updates were approved by Council. There are 6 applications currently under review (in addition, four applications that had been previously rejected because they lived outside of City

limits) and 6 applicants that were not appointed during the first round of the application review. The ordinance is set to go to Council at the next meeting on the 22nd of February at 7PM. This evening: review the proposed changes with the Board.

Proposed changes:

- Membership and appointment, Terms, Residency, Organization and Meetings
- The Mayor and City Attorney have both signed off on that change.
- There are no separate requirements tied to residence or employment with the City of Bellingham.
- The intent of the Board is to serve the City (anticipate the new application to ask about connections to Bellingham and why individuals are interested in serving on this Board)

Reports from Impacted Community Members [21:11]

Marciano Sanchez Lopez discussed concerns from the immigrant farmworker community and proposed COVID vaccine sites with location sites easily accessible for farmworkers.

Main message: *There are still farmworkers and immigrant families that don't have confidence in the vaccine, and those that do want to go get vaccinated, go to clinics where those vaccines are no longer available, or because of the time that they get off of work, the clinics aren't open. We saw what we've been saying all this time, which was that the police and border patrol constantly work with each other, and we'd like to know what's something the Board would do about this, because there is constant fear from farm workers from the border patrol.*

Responses from Border Patrol regarding January 29, 2021 events: presented by Legislative Analyst, Mark Gardner [32:29] [Screenshare beings 33:52]

- Encampment Removal: Total cost to City: \$74,000; Labor cost (primarily police): \$29,000; Public works: \$45,000
- City statement on Border Patrol and operational involvement between Bellingham Police and Custom and Border Protection (CBP)

Discussion [44:47]

- Liz Darrow expressed concern regarding the police answering for their own behavior and urged the Board to compose a letter to Council, with a copy to the Attorney General re violation of the Keep Washington Working Act. Liz Darrow received permission from the photographer , Bodie Hallett, and displayed three photos. The photos included library lawn with BPD and CBP (with a camera).
- Bridget Reeves, Ada Rumford and Monika Cassidy agreed to compose a joint letter to Council on behalf of the Board.

Follow Up Discussion Re Policing Issues and Engagement with Federal Agencies [1:17:12]

- Updates provided in previous section

Continued discussion on improving Immigration Services in Bellingham [1:18:06]

- Presented by Danielle Siedlecki, sharing a list of potential needs including the resource center, navigating health care, and addressing hate crime concerns, with follow-up questions from the Board regarding budget availability.
- Goal: *I am hoping for feedback going forward in the next month – thinking about reaching out to these partner organization – mentioning that we are part of IAB, that we're looking at idea of immigration resource center but that we're in initial stages and in research for potential partners they came up, if they would potentially be interested in working with us, if they know of any needs or other organizations, provide information on IAB and invite them to listen in on our meetings and longer term (for work now and in the future): we would like to research our immigrant and refugee demographic, we're like to keep growing and specifying the needs , we'd like to begin to write a proposal for City Council, and start to get an idea for a budget proposal.*

Review of the Federal Contacts Data [1:30:37]

- Bridget Reeves had a question regarding the Jan 13th conference call with representatives' regional congressional offices to discuss City issues. Is the fact that this is included on the sheet evidence that CBP was involved in that call?
- Councilmember Hannah Stone will follow-up with response.

Old/New Business [1:33:14]

- Introduction of Legislative Assistant, Nalini Margaitis (this Board will be transitioning to her, but Mark will still be assisting)
- Request from community member, Josh Cerretti (Professor at Western), he would like to give a presentation to the Board regarding militarized police and the connections with federal immigration. (~20-30 minutes presentation in March?)

Public Comment Period [1:38:05]

- Comment 1 (Bodie Hallett): *Photographer from photos shared by Liz Darrow earlier in the meeting. I was there all day and saw; to be told that people were not armed is completely false; I would be willing to certify that these photos were taken when they did.*
- Comment 2 (Carmen Gilmore): *Regarding Board's response to Camp 210 sweep; Wondering if this advisory board is going to include what they wished the City would have done differently and also if they will be requesting of the City a promise of what they will do or not do next time; I looked at your potential partners for the immigration resource center and thinking that you could consider the BPS family resource center as a potential partner – the resource center offers translation services and basic needs assistance to refugees and immigrants.*
- Councilmember Hannah Stone added that the Family Resource Center and Goodwill are additional resources
- Comment 3 (Sara De Roy): *Having lived and worked on the US/Mexico border (and worked with few families coming to Bellingham), I have concerns about the level of*

control those agencies are given and how that can impact people who are in Bellingham and that may not be able to be documented.

Feedback regarding agenda for next meeting [1:50:34]:

- Follow-up in small groups work can continue in between meetings.
- Mark Gardner and Nalini Margaitis will follow up on some questions that were raised in the meeting this evening.
- If there are additional agenda items for next month, please send to Mark Gardner or Nalini Margaitis via email.
- Liz Darrow to extend invitation to Josh or pass along his information as contact for next month's presentation.
- Councilmember Hannah Stone: Extended appreciation for the Board's continued work and persistence
- Board to reach out to Ramon Torres and Jahn Escobar to decide alternates.
- Liz Darrow: Ramon Torres would like to nominate Marciano Lopez.
- Councilmember Hannah Stone requested that Marciano Lopez complete an application so that we can formally have his name in the queue for nomination of an appointment.
- Next meeting: final ordinance in place and three vacancies filled.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 PM.

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Liz Darrow
Bridget Reeves
Ada Rumford
Danielle Siedlecki
Jahn Zuniga Escobar
Katie Winkelman
Monika Cassidy

Absent:

Ramon Barba Torres

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Marcela Rey

City staff: Mark Gardner, City Council Legislative Analyst and Nalini Margaitis, City Council Legislative Assistant

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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:00]

- Councilmember Hannah Stone welcomed the group.
- Hannah Stone facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the February 16, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Ordinance and Vacancies Update [06:00].

Council adopted the ordinance on 3/08/2021, which included the following changes:

- to allow alternates
- to allow members to reside anywhere in the County and
- to have co-facilitators of this group (instead of Chair, Vicechair, etc.)

The Mayor can now proceed with appointments (3 vacancies and 2 alternates (which will come forward on 4/12/2021)).

Identify Co-Facilitators [8:31]

Table to following meeting (4/20/2021)

Reports from Impacted Community Members [11:01]

Marciano Sanchez Lopez voiced concerns of farmworkers:

- Unequal distribution of vaccines with inaccessible locations
- Requesting accessible locations where farmworkers have fair access and fair treatment (similar to *C2C Promotoras*, ensuring adequate vaccine supply)
- Marciano will reach out directly to Hannah to set up meeting with Health Department (meeting: Ramon, Marciano and DOH)

Hannah Stone

- Director of Health has stated that there is a mobile health unit

Jahn Zuniga Escobar [20:33]

- In agreement with the statements regarding the Resource Center and would like to thank the *Mount Vernon Promotoras* (for the ability to receive access to the vaccine)
- In case I cannot make it to the next meeting, can someone come on my behalf? (Reply: Yes, an alternate is possible and if you have someone specific in mind, please have them fill out an application).

Report from Committees [25:05]

Danielle Siedlecki [25:24]

- List of organizations
- Outreach resources: difficulty to locate (if not on the list, please contact Danielle to add)
- Census data reflects immigrant community
- Next month: permission to continue to work?

Liz Darrow [29:05]

- Worked with Joaquin Uy, Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, City of Seattle (who connected with Vanessa Saldivar, Cities for Action)
- Cities for Action: working on a nationwide template to establish immigrant resource centers and would like to work with the Board on best practices and pilot project
- Board has established networks
- Next step: meeting with Vanessa on Friday (3/19) and expand opportunities for community input (e.g.: a public forum (remote) relating to immigration)

Hannah Stone [32:00]

- World Relief reached out to the Council – exploring new locations for refugee resettlement and they are holding stakeholder meetings to consider Whatcom County or Bellingham for a new location (encourage to reach out)

Discussion and Approval of IAB Letter to City Council [34:00]

Ada Rumford

- Reading of the letter [35:20-49:03]

Bridget Reeves [49:53]

- Two comments received regarding the third request
- Need for clarification on how a point person with BPD would be beneficial (not to participate in the meeting or to be a part of the Board, instead the intention was to promote greater transparency in situations like this)
- [59:02] Better to move forward quicker than to stall process entirely
- Possible to remove requests and instead ask Council for response?

Ada Rumford [51:36]

- Purpose to include third request: to answer questions to simplify communication/front of mind for Board and community while also having a barrier so people would not feel targeted
- [1:03:55] Acceptable not to have 100% consensus and would like everyone's feedback

Liz Darrow Question [52:55]

- We already have an avenue for communication with Police: they work for us
- Information that was sent to us was false
- Opposed to using language like "liaison" and "collaboration"; it alienates the community that is not yet trusting of this Board to maintain community relationships
- Pro: discrepancy vs communicated portion of the letter (but oppose last section)
- Cannot proceed with this letter with the current Board makeup

Hannah Stone [56:11]

- Letter should be addressed to the Mayor and the Council (issues are administrative as well as policy-based)
- Share Liz's concern: not moving forward swiftly
- Request: call out inaccuracies (caution Board to solve, ask City for response)

Monika Cassidy [1:01:02]

- We should address the issue, because we work with the immigrant community
- Possible to create a "sanctuary City"?

Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora [1:04:45]

- Move forward with the parts that we're in agreement with
- Response: as Board, our responsibility is to offer recommendations to the Mayor
- Need a response from Mayor and Council, but not sure how to move forward on what to recommend

Marciano Sanchez Lopez [1:06:55]

- Will CBP be taking part in the meeting?
- (Hannah clarified that the letter is an objection to CBP's participation in an event and one suggestion was to work with BPD, not CBP)

Hannah Stone [1:09:18]

- Proceed: end of letter could change to say: *in response to this incident, we ask the Mayor and the City Council to take action to build trust*

Liz Darrow: [1:11:37]

- Could the City respond with a policy that is in line with the Keep WA working Act?
- (Hannah clarified that this letter is a way to put Council and the Mayor on notice of the incident: *this happened, you lied about it, and we're upset* with follow-up communication and Ada Rumford followed up stating that this was the intention of the letter. Monika Cassidy suggested a Liaison for collaboration.)
- Requests removal of words "liaison" and "collaborate" (followed by discussion surrounding the communication designation referenced in the third request of the letter)

Bridget Reeves [1:18:22]

- Possible to revise and update letter, send it out and receive final go ahead via email?
- (Hannah: acceptable, as long as there is not a huge change from tonight's discussion)

Ada Rumford [1:19:23]

- Consensus to remove third request and keep first two?
- (Bridget Reeves clarified that the consensus was to remove all three and keep it open to how Council and Mayor want to respond. Hannah Stone added that this also included the option to revisit those points at a later point and time. And Monika Cassidy stated that the most important part is to let Council and Mayor know that we noticed, and we know what's going on. Hannah Stone ended the discussion by stating that the edits will be made via email).

The Militarization of Policing, A National and Local Concern: presented by Associate Professor Dr. Josh Cerretti [1:22:19]

- A presentation on militarized policing both at the national and local levels, discussing the relationship between militarism and policing, the invention of SWAT, the 1033 program (including increased militarized policing in recent decades), the history of militarization in Bellingham, the contemporary status of these issues, and common defenses made of these problems. Contact for questions: imagineokages@gmail.com
- Hannah Stone added that questions may be emailed to: immigrationboard@cob.org
- Questions [1:55:38] 1) regarding City and County banning 1033 programs and if this has been discussed by Bellingham and Whatcom? (Dr. Cerretti: not aware of a current effort apart from the state level) and 2) material serves as example that reformation language is stifling to real change and any attempt at collaboration folds into the status quo and doesn't push back against the harm that has been caused by the Police and ICE.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2021, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Ada Rumford
Bridget Reeves
Australia Tobon
Danielle Siedlecki
Holly Pai
John Baker
Liz Darrow
Monika Cassidy
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Marciano Sanchez Lopez (alternate)
Ramon Barba Torres

Absent:

Jahn Zuniga Escobar
Katie Winkleman

Liaison to the City Council: Councilmember Hannah Stone

Spanish Interpretation: Marcela Rey

City staff: Nalini Margaitis, City Council Legislative Assistant

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.

Welcome, and Board Business [00:38]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes from the March 16, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Introduction of New Board Members [3:52]

- Holly Pai [4:35]
Immigration attorney for 5.5 years, studied at WWU, practiced law in NY until 2016
- John Baker [6:16]
From California, worked in Mexico with refugee shelters (literacy and asylum preparation) and will soon be deployed to Texas to work with displaced children
- Australia Tobon [8:14]
Resident of Bellingham, supporting community organizing efforts with C2C as well as a role at BTC, supporting immigrants, refugees and agricultural workers
- Marciano Sanchez Lopez, alternate [10:05]
Comes from a farmworker background in Whatcom County and Union organizer for Familias Unidas por La Justicia (~500 indigenous farmworkers, 80% Mixteco speakers)

Reports from Impacted Community Members [13:45].

- Hannah Stone clarified that this time is set aside and separate and apart from general public comment for those community members whose voices are not always elevated have opportunity to speak
- Liz Darrow added that as the board membership becomes more equitable and diverse, this separation between impacted member and general public comment will be reduced

Subcommittee Reports [18:36]

- Immigration Resource Center Report, Danielle Siedlecki [19:10]
- Reading of Ordinance [19:58-28:22] & screen share of interested organizations [28:34]
- Liz Darrow reminded the Board that this is a draft and would welcome Board feedback
- Ada Rumford had a question regarding employment report section (how many employers there are in Bellingham), is it focused on independent contractors?, concern that it's a sector for workers that don't have good avenues, it should be an avenue for those who aren't being represented
- Liz Darrow replied indicating that the section was in place per request from an undocumented worker – urges Board that there needs to be labor support regarding the Center. Immigrant and refugees suffer workplace grievances and have nowhere to put them - labor issues are immigrant issues. Later, Liz Darrow added that it is difficult to capture the number of undocumented residents due to the nature that they are undocumented.
- Australia Tobon clarified that it is not just independent contractors, but any immigrant that is having trouble working things out with their employer (e.g.: Nooksack Casino worker, had a hard time communicating with their supervisor due to limited capacity of

English proficiency; labor in Bellingham related to house cleaning – without formal contract or lack of contract) – many of those places do not have representation from a Union, and the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center is not good for labor issues (lack of trust, unknown processes for many, they do not understand the concept of mediation because they are not experts in labor). The Dispute Center requires advocates for mediation and that does not work for immigrants. There are workers who are represented by major companies and they do not feel supported at work (for all workers) and provide an avenue for support that Union mediation cannot assist. Ideally, the Center should be a place for immigrants by immigrants. Later, Australia mentioned that these immigrant communities reporting something that we do not see, creates a picture of what is really going on in the City of Bellingham. It is a democracy pathway for them to actively participate even though they cannot potentially vote, this is civic engagement. Later, Australia Tobon indicated that the US Census Bureau keeps track of the following data: place of birth, citizenship, year of entry into the US.

- Hannah Stone would like more feedback on the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center as the City continues to develop partnerships (it would be good to know what is benefiting the community and what is not). In the ordinance “Bilingual services” – hope to expand to provide additional languages (e.g. School District with 46 languages – add an additional whereas clause that addresses the fact that there are 46 languages represented). Later, during the discussion of non-citizen immigrant, Hannah Stone explained that this might include naturalized citizens, DACA recipients and other immigrant groups who have received citizenship. Hesitant to separate people out, because it might become less inclusive.
- Holly Pai: To clarify, is this a partnership to encourage mediation of certain issues? And a question regarding the inclusion of “minority owned businesses” (differentiation between immigrants and minorities).
- Danielle Siedlecki: there needs to be a safe place for immigrants and refugees to be able to make that report.
- Bridget Reeves: Do we need to specific a specific category of immigrant in those lines? (the 2nd Whereas) Are there different protections that those groups need? If the Center is for any and all immigrants, then the ordinance should include all. In support of the ordinance after reading it, because it is very helpful to have something like this locally. The Mission would be willing to be included on the list to support – doing research, staff stopping by, getting the word out about shelter options.
- Nalini Margaitis asked Danielle Siedlecki what she needs from the Board or staff going forward, and Danielle Siedlecki responded that she will update the draft with the discussed changes and it would be nice to send it out in between meetings, so that it would be ready to sent out at the following meeting. Liz Darrow agreed and informed the new members that there is space on this subcommittee, as there are currently only two members. Nalini reminded the new members to complete their OPMA training once the information is distributed via email.

Continued discussion of IAB letter to Council [1:2:43]

- A discussion led by Bridget Reeves related to the comments received from Board members to include updates and changes to the letter. They are as follows:
- First paragraph: change “protecting” to “safeguarding”
- Top of page 3: “consider” to “request” & “rebuild” to “build”
- Removed quotes from “materials information” and “evidence”
- Removed statement #3 altogether (appointing liaison between CBP and IAB)
- Last paragraph: removed “willing to collaborate with BPD or another COB Dept”
- Questions and discussions included: Australia Tobon inquired whether the group has met up with the Border Patrol Chief. Bridget Reeves replied that they have not met with the Patrol Chief directly and have specifically not had these members at the Board meetings.
- Bridget Reeves also added that this was one of the reasons behind suggesting a liaison position in the letter and referenced a time an ordinance was developed by the City and CBP that violated practices of social work and HIPPA. (A consensus occurred only after all interested parties sat down to discuss the topic in depth, that resulted in an ordinance with necessary changes that did not violate laws).
- Australia Tobon agreed that any involvement with CBP would hinder the work of this group. Tobon urged to collaborate with this organized and recommends that the Board take a field trip to CBP.
- Liz Darrow thanked Bridget Reeves for removing item number three. Darrow disagreed that people experiencing houselessness have been treated with dignity by the community. Regarding number 2: there is a state law prohibits partnering with CBP with BPD. Instead, it should read, “create a procedure or policy for complying with the Keep WA Working Act, which prohibits partnering between CBP and BPD”. To increase community safety by always drawing that line between local law enforcement and federal law enforcement and they should not be working together is the objective of this Board.
- Bridget Reeves proposed meeting twice a month beginning in June.
- Hannah Stone: The City is exploring options that will maximize time during these meetings (simultaneous translations, etc.) and encourages individual committee work.
- Liz Darrow moved that the Board votes to approve pending the last change to present the letter to Council before the May 10, 2021 meeting. Darrow also posted a link to all panelists to a website displaying a timeline by which public feedback to the Governor was accepted relating to the Keep WA Working Act (last year). The BPD has an immigration policy that is violated nearly monthly.
- Australia Tobon agrees that it is important to have this acknowledged at a City level.
- Bridget Reeves reread the 2nd request: *create and publish a procedure or policy that aligns with the Keep Washington Working Act that draws a line between local Law Enforcement partnering with federal agencies, such as CBP.*
- Liz Darrow requested it state, “a policy and procedure”
- Ada Rumford suggested to remove capitalization of Law Enforcement
- Monika Cassidy (via chat) expressed agreement and would like to send this letter ASAP

- Liz Darrow moved that they send this letter to the City Council ASAP, Australia Tobon 2nd – passed unanimously.
- Hannah Stone will bring forward this letter during Old and New Business during the next scheduled City Council meeting.

Review of the Federal Contacts Data [1:36:40]

- Liz Darrow stated that there were two consecutive months where there was a domestic violence involvement from the CBP to the dispatch and a language interpretation request from CBP to dispatch. Follow up in conjunction with the field trip and getting in touch again with WhatComm to let them know that this needs to stop. March 11 (second to last) “CBP has called the Blaine PD to report a driving with a license suspended” – there are two problems: WhatComm is City funded and the prosecutor has been very vocal about not processing misdemeanors. The result is much more detrimental for a non-citizen than it would be for a citizen. Also, there is evidence of racial profiling as one of the primary ways to identify individuals in the community. The interim Police Chief has gone on record saying, “a person with a cracked windshield is most likely driving with a license suspended” and so that has resulted in poverty profiling. These are the deeper stories of peoples’ lives – where have these human beings ended up?
- Hannah Stone: The Council is looking into addressing pretextual traffic stops. Regarding data collection and the need for more information, this should be discussed as a group.
- Nalini Margaitis reached out to neighboring municipalities regarding the federal contacts data.
- Australia Tobon stressed the importance of maintaining contact with the neighboring municipalities and referenced an incident where undocumented community members were followed by the Police before they turned on their lights and stopped for a DUI infraction. Due to a language barrier, they are a target for immigration proceeds (working with Public Defender). The community member stated they were stopped based on the way the car looked and were unable to communicate properly with the Officials. Because of this, it is important that the group becomes subject matter experts on the practices of local municipalities.
- Liz Darrow suggested to have a public disclosure subcommittee to follow up on items on the federal contacts data. Hannah Stone stated that it would be appropriate for a small group (no more than 4) to meet separately about this topic and to report back to the group during the following meeting.

Old/New Business [1:53:37]

- Nalini Margaitis suggested the group create a mission and vision statement and an “About Me” section on the IAB website (for each Board member)

Public Comment Period [1:58:00]

- Comment 1 (Maddi Parvankin) advocated the idea of a mission and vision statement and urged Board to stay focused on immigrant safety and wellbeing

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM.

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Danielle Siedlecki
Holly Pai
Homero Israel Jose Garrido
Liz Darrow
Monika Cassidy
Tarnjot "TJ" Brar
Bridget Reeves
Australia Tobon
Alfredo Juarez

Absent:

Ada Rumford (excused)

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

Punjabi Interpretation: S. Mahood

City Council Legislative Staff: Nalini Margaitis

City Council Staff: Hannah Stone

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.

Welcome, and New Board Member Introduction [0:08]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the March 15, 2022 meeting were approved as written

Announcements [5:58]

- Two Board openings: Maria Isabel Cortes Zamora and Jagwinder Gill both resigned
- The Board welcomed back Australia Tobon

Public Comment and Community Reports [7:05]

- Lelo Juarez shared that on March 22, 2022, a tulip worker stopped working because there was a lot of harassment on-site, often working without water and proper gloves (the company spoke to a select number of employees) – the employees went on strike in order to negotiate their situation. The outcome: the company agreed to provide gloves, restrooms, and water.
- Lelo Juarez also shared that there will be a Marche Campesina on May 1, 2022: gathering at 9AM at Edgewater Park (600 Behrens Millett Rd Mount Vernon)
- MB asked CM Stone if there has been any progress on the IAB's request for better data. Stone responded that there has not been but that there has been movement to bring this item to the Council's agenda on the first meeting in May (May 9, 2022) during the Public Health, Safety, and Justice Committee as two separate agenda items: one for the IRC and the other for the ordinance updates. The latter item would like be presented at a subsequent meeting before the Committee of the Whole.
- Von Ochoa shared that children would benefit from the IRC

Commitment Process Regarding Public Comment [22:32]

- Holly Pai shared that the Board has been receiving emails from the public that go unanswered. An active participant suggested that the Board make a commitment to take action regarding public comment.
- The Board members held a discussion related to answering public comments. Suggestions included: taking time during the following meeting to answer questions from the previous month, Board members to volunteer to respond to specific questions, stick to the community outreach liaison system. The outcome: the Board decided to continue with the monthly liaison position. Email: immigrationboard@cob.org
- Monika Cassidy shared that she had a lunch with the Mayor where she expressed frustration that there is no support for the Immigration Resource Center, that the IRC should be accessible by bus, discussed the IAB flyer that she, Danielle, and Ada created. Overall, Cassidy expressed that she would like to see better communication and connection with the Council and the Mayor.

Process Subcommittee [54:14]

- The Mayor will be present at the May 17, 2022 meeting. Please send questions to Brooksana Raney by May 11, 2022: braney@cob.org
- Hannah Stone suggested to update the draft ordinance based on the outcome of the May 17, 2022 meeting – there was disconnect between the Mayor and the Board and she hopes to have a conversation to have some clarity on the direction of the Board.
- Holly Pai screen shared the ordinance and stated that she did not receive and edit suggestions from any Board members. Liz Darrow outlined the changes clarifying that replacement appointees shall serve a two-year term on the Board (beginning the date they are appointed) and that the applications are sent to the Board members. Hannah Stone added that, after speaking with Tracy Lewis, she learned that all Boards and

Commissions are appointed in a similar fashion. The newest Board members stated that they were not informed of their term limits. Liz Darrow requested that the Board view any updates to the ordinance prior to the ordinance being presented to the Mayor.

- **ACTION ITEM:**

**Holly Pai/ Monika Cassidy moved to approve the ordinance as presented
Motion carried 9-0, Ada Rumford excused.**

- The process subcommittee removed the country of origin from the matrix & Hannah Stone reminded the Board that, as an advisory Board to the City, to ensure that the questions asked in the matrix are permissible with city standards (equal protection) and that she would be happy to take that to Legal.

IAB webpage updates [1:35:57]

- Danielle Siedlecki presented Ada Rumford's updates to the city webpage: the addition of the banner on the IAB page and to group information into drop down sections of accordions. The subcommittee is looking for approval from the Board. In addition to English, the city has agreed to provide translations of the website into the following languages: Spanish, Punjabi, Vietnamese, and Russian. There was consensus on the Board to proceed with the image depicting the raised hands.

Immigrant Resource Center update [1:42:14]

- Lelo shared that, on April 4, 2022, Liz, Homero, Danielle, and Lelo met with CM Dan Hammill, where they explained why the immigrant community needs a resource center: immigrant families do not have access to a lot of the government services that are offered. The group asked CM Hammill what steps they can take to speed this up and create the IRC. CM Hammill liked the idea of creating the resource center and requested that the IAB present him with a draft ordinance of what they want and then he will present it to his fellow CMS.
- Lelo presented the following change in the ordinance: *WHEREAS, for many immigrants, a sense of place and belonging will foster positive interactions with government and build trust*
- Liz Darrow shared that the Racial and Equity Commission provided feedback on the wage provided in the ordinance, stating that it was too low
- Hannah Stone added that the City would likely not be employ someone who is not authorized to work in the US

Federal Contact data review [2:04:02]

- Bridget Reeves drew attention to the incident on March 31, 2022 PR lieutenant telephoned HSI as well as an increase in CBP dispatch initiating contact
- Liz Darrow drew attention to CBP request of Blaine PD to assist with a juvenile that illegally crossed over from Canada to US and observed that the federal system and the courts were not kept separately

- Bridget Reeves requested Board members to join the federal contacts subcommittee – Holly Pai volunteered to participate in this subcommittee
- Bridget Reeves looked into the Keep WA Working Act and there is a list of law enforcement agencies that have submitted their own policies (Bellingham is not on the list nor has the City adopted the AG's policies)

Old/New Business [2:17:01]

- Liz Darrow shared that the CDC will be ending Title 42 effective May 23, 2022
- Holly Pai and Liz Darrow suggested obtaining information from other City agencies (in addition to WhatComm) for immigration related data
- Town Hall on Public Safety: May 16, 2022 at 6PM via Zoom
- Lelo Juarez asked if the Board is able to meet in-person for the next meeting (at the moment, all Boards and Commissions remain remote); Subcommittees are able to meet in-person

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 PM

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2022, 6:30 PM

Board Members

All board members were present: Christian Sanchez Alvarez, Monika Cassidy, Liz Darrow, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Von Ochoa, Holly Pai, Sophia Rey, Ada Rumford, Australia Tobon, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Legislative Staff: Mark Gardner, Jackie Lassiter, Nalini Margaitis

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

Russian and Spanish Interpreters

There is a 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 view the recording.

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Welcome

Board members and community members introduced themselves.

OPMA Training (City Attorney, Alan Marriner) [00:4:59]

Because of difficulties with the hybrid format and translation, board members determined the best path for this meeting would be for City Attorney Alan Mariner to conduct a question and answer session instead of a formal presentation. Topics included:

- Quorum issues and when a quorum of member can meet. If a quorum of members is invited to an event by a third party where board business will be discussed, it must be properly noticed and be open to the public. If members are invited to a social event where business is not being conducted, it does not need to be noticed or public.
- Definition of quorum, which is defined by the board rules or in code.
- The Public Records Act and what kind of communication is subject to it.
- Serial meetings and the rules pertaining to electronic communications

Darrow suggested that staff figure out how to go ahead with Alan's planned presentation in Spanish at a later meeting.

2023 IAB Meeting Schedule (this item was moved from the Sub-committee Reports section of the agenda) [00:40:19]

Members discussed the meeting schedule for the upcoming year.

Darrow moved that the IAB will meet on the third Tuesday of each month in 2023. Tobon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Announcements and follow-up on public comment from the November meeting [00:54:08]

Darrow explained that the meetings had been conducted in a co-facilitator model with herself and Rumford facilitating. She and Villalba introduced the idea of using the stack method for future meetings in which discussion items are opened by a facilitator and a stack keeper keeps track of who wants to speak and in what order they will speak before discussion starts. Stack will be taken throughout the discussion for responses, which means that people will be responding to topics that were brought up earlier in the discussion. The purpose is to give everyone who wants to speak a chance to participate.

Public Comment/Community Reports [01:03:45]

- Tobon reported that she has helped three Bellingham residents with issues in the Whatcom County Court system who have did not receive notices in a timely manner from the Public Defender's office. She said that language barriers are still a fundamental issue when it comes to accessing services and that the court is failing to understand how language and cultural customs prevent people from fulfilling their obligations to be at court and attend hearings. There is also a fear that immigration will be called if a person fails to appear at court.
- Tobon added that she recently had a conversation with Ukrainian immigrants, who told her that they did not know where to deliver their ballots for the election. Those Ukrainian immigrants said that they get information through social media, not governmental websites. They also reported that they had difficulty accessing information about childcare.
- Community member Susan Ryan said that she was disappointed to see that the recently passed city budget did not include funds for the Immigrant Resource Center (IRC) and instead funds were being used for a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). She asked for clarification on the timeline and process for the RFQ.
- Darrow reported that the IAB received a letter that was sent from Peace Health Chief Executive Charles Prosper to Mayor Seth Fleetwood. Darrow read the letter into the record. The letter thanked the Mayor for his support of immigrants and creation of the IAB and urged support for the IRC.
- Community member Melida asked about further involvement in the IAB and involvement in the creation of the IRC. Melida also asked what the current sub-committees of the IAB are.

- Community member MB asked if committee members felt that the RFQ was a good way to move forward with the IRC. MB asked if there was interest in pushing back against the RFQ, as it may feel redundant given the work that has already been done and may also delay the creation of the center. MB also asked for clarification on what the IAB would be looking for in an ideal respondent to the RFQ.
- Juarez reported that he had received communication from a farm worker who needed to go to the emergency room for chronic pain. This community member is relatively new to the area and did not know who could accompany her to the emergency room to help with translation. Juarez assisted with translation and he emphasized that this is the type of service that the IRC would be able to assist with.

Subcommittee Reports [1:34:39]

Rumford answered a previous question about the subcommittees by stating that she is a member of the Communications Subcommittee and there is also a Federal Contact Data Subcommittee, a Processes Subcommittee, and an Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee. Darrow added that there is an inactive Policy Committee. Darrow said that they would need to strategize on methods of engaging the public.

Pai reported for the Federal Contacts subcommittee. She said that the Committee has been inactive for some time, but there is increased interest and they plan on re-starting operations.

Rumford reported on the Process Subcommittee:

- Process to create agenda and facilitate. Villalba proposed that the agenda for each meeting be created by the Process Committee and that each subcommittee would have an opportunity to contribute to it. The agenda would then be shared with City staff who would share it with the full group. They also suggested that the Process Subcommittee be responsible for facilitating the meetings of the full group.
 - *Darrow moved that the Process Subcommittee will create the agenda from this point on and that members of the Process Subcommittee will facilitate the meetings. Rey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*
- Process to join a subcommittee. Pai proposed that if a member is interested in joining a sub-committee, that person should reach out to express interest. The sub-committee would meet with the interested party and would make a recommendation to the full board on whether they should be made a sub-committee member. Darrow added that ideas for new subcommittees can be brought to the IAB and members will vote on creation.
 - *Rumford moved to create and formalize the process as described above. Rey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*
- Strategic planning session for the week of January 9th. Darrow stated that they wanted to hold this meeting to discuss the work they wanted to take on in the coming year. She proposed three possible dates and said that she will poll members via e-mail.

Garrido reported on the Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee. He stated that they had met with the Immigrant Refugee Center in Seattle. The group advised them on how they were created and how they operate. Zeferino added that the subcommittee also had a meeting with the Mayor and Martens. At that meeting, it was decided that the Mayor's office would draft an RFQ and would share it with the subcommittee.

Darrow responded to a question from the Public Comment session, by reporting that the Board has asked for different alternatives to funding the center other than conducting an RFQ and have been told no in response to all the ideas presented. She stated that she thinks it is important for the Board to stay involved in the process.

Old/New Business [02:05:34]

Members discussed logistics of the planned strategy session for early January.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M.



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2022, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM

Board Members

Present:

Tara Villalba

Liz Darrow

Lelo Juarez

Holly Pai

Australia Tobon

Ada Rumford

Homero Israel Jose Garrido

Absent:

Monika Cassidy

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

Punjabi Interpretation: Piku Dillion

City Council Legislative Staff: Nalini Margaitis

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

Deputy City Administrator: Brian Heinrich

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Welcome [3:32]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the July 19, 2022 meeting were approved as written

Announcements and follow up on public comment from June meeting [4:56]

- Welcome to the new City Council liaison, Kristina Michele Martens
- Bridget Reeves has resigned from the Board

Public Comment I [6:24]

- Dena Jensen shared her enthusiasm on the efforts that have been made for an IRC and shared that she sent a letter to City Officials urging a more human level of support toward the IRC. Jensen also mentioned that the August IAB meeting was cancelled and that the butterfly installation was removed – she placed a record request for email correspondence between Hannah Stone and the Mayor. Jensen read an email aloud that she received from the public records request.
- Maya Morales, WA Privacy for People, shared comment with the Board addressing immigrant lived experience (including the hardships and barriers they face), urging City officials to support the Immigrant Resource Center, and support for the butterfly display.
- Dana commented on the last-minute cancellation of last month's IAB meeting
- Ian Schaefer Lorenz, WA Poor People's Campaign, spoke on behalf of those experiencing poverty in the state of WA. Ian shared that his organization helped with the installation of origami butterflies in City Hall and read a statement aloud addressed to the Mayor and City Council in support of the art installation as well as an IRC.
- MB requested that the federal contact data from August be uploaded to the website.
- Henry Bennett requested that the federal contact data be uploaded as an Excel file.

Report Back on Two Tours (Australia Tobon and Tara Villalba) [22:40]

- Australia and Tara reported back on the two tours that the IAB participated in (CBP-Blaine in July and Port of Entry trip in Blain in August (blue uniforms)).
- Tara shared that key take aways: how much border patrol is used in local law enforcement (including as a training resource)
- Australia shared the following about the tour to CPB Blaine: toured the administrative office and spoke with individuals who are in charge of different operations, the tour emphasized that they are members of the community (most have military experience and have served in the Southern border of the state), patrol by land and by water (through Idaho), they need more budget and personnel to continue their operations, they would like to keep their focus on the federal level but often get called in by local law enforcement, the working relationships with cities in Whatcom county seems informal (nothing written down on how they work together), they have received training and are in compliance as well, big crimes include warrants for arrest coming in from Canada, the individuals detained at border patrol tend to be Romanian nationals (next is Latin American countries), questions were asked about discretion (they have to detain people in 99.9% of cases), will detain people that did not present themselves as point of entry, biggest charge is setting foot on US soil as a criminal charge, their goal is to process people

- Australia shared the following about the tour to the Port of Entry: deals with issues of expired documentation, visa renewals, change of immigration status at the port of entry, they deal with items that are confiscated that should not be brought into the US. An active shooter incident was discussed (an active shooter in a school) and a lot of Port of Entry workers had their kids in that school (there was a connection with the schools to have law enforcement support to deal with that situation) – example of how federal agencies are intertwined with the community.
- The objective was to let these agencies know that the IAB exists and that there are communities here in Whatcom County that have concerns about what has been going on - tried to convey view of the public regarding immigrants access to basic services (the 911 system, getting local resources, etc.)
- Holly Pai added that the Port of Entry emphasized how they are the good guys and wanted to help the community and wanted to differentiate themselves from CBP. When field operations are called to provide backup for local law enforcement, they are there purely in a support role and not looking to enforce federal immigration laws. However, if someone is at that port of entry, then they have less discretion. This new Port Director is willing to engage with the IAB (previous Port Directors did not do that).
- Liz Darrow added that the Port of Entry is focused on promoting their image (they provided the IAB with Port of Entry memorabilia). Darrow also mentioned that much of their budget goes toward surveillance (62 night cameras in North Whatcom county – e.g. a farmworker making movement at night) and discussed expanding funding for more surveillance. Officer Gil stated that their division is responsible to profile people because they must visually make an assessment based on what they look like, what they're wearing, or what they are driving)
- Holly Pai shared that it was disappointing to hear the misunderstanding of how immigration laws affect the individuals. For e.g.: officers believed they were doing community members a favor by putting them into deportation proceedings so that they could go to an immigration judge and get a green card (when in reality, that is not how it works)

Subcommittee Reports [49:20]

- Tara shared that the process subcommittee has been meeting with people who have expressed interest in serving on the IAB (interviewed 5 people in the past month and 1 more coming up) & have recommended certain people to the Mayor's Office to be added that the committee has been working on the ordinance and was hoping for an update from CM Stone, but will now work with CM Martens on that (shelve the ordinance work for now and come back to it in the near future) & the process subcommittee is working to ensure that the Board members are in compliance with the OPMA. The process subcommittee will no longer facilitate a community outreach liaison – it was suggested that the outreach subcommittee can do this.
- Holly Pai provided an update on the federal contact data subcommittee recognizing the help that Bridget Reeves was able to provide for this subcommittee. The subcommittee looks over the contact data and advises the City if there are any violations with Keep

Washington Working Act. Pai recognized Deputy Administrator Heinrich's response to this. The City and County have responded to the ACLU's letter. The state AG office is still looking into the City and the County regarding these violations.

- Ada Rumford reported out on the outreach subcommittee's goal to establish a language access for the City. The City website has been updated with a new image and once agreed upon, the goal will be to translate the website into multiple languages. Top 5 languages spoken in Bellingham include: English, Spanish, Punjabi, Russian, and Vietnamese. Rumford shared that she hoped pamphlets would be created in multiple languages.

Public Comment II [1:24:12]

- Vaughn shared how to access a language translator in MS PowerPoint: new presentation > enable "always use subtitles", under subtitle settings (asks spoken and subtitle language) (view video at: 1:26:12-1:28:19)
- Maya shared that it is important to recognize when the voice recognition technology is on because it is surveilling students in the classroom when it is on. Maya also shared that they City was using a third party company to gain feedback on Broadband and that feedback to a third party included a lot of self-identifying information (including IP address and identifying information on broadband). Maya also shared that the image that Ada presented appears like a profile and isn't community centric.

Butterfly Installation in City Hall and the IRC (Tara Villalba and Lelo Juarez) [1:36:28]

- Lelo provided the Board with a quick report on the butterfly installation that took place on August 5, 2022, hanging butterflies and honoring Ernesto an immigrant farmworker who died in Whatcom County in 2017. The work supports and immigrant resource center. Many of the local stores were hanging the butterflies. Lelo added that the IRC will not collect immigration status and all immigrants will be welcomed at the center.
- Tara shared a some photos of the butterfly installation.

Update: Brian Heinrich, Deputy City Administrator [1:47:25]

- Brian Heinrich shared that Mark Gardner, Senior Legislative Analyst, did some research of IRCs in other cities
- Heinrich shared that there are three models: a City staffed funded model, an intergovernmental partnership (City-County, City and other small cities, etc.), or a contract with a city-serving organization (the models that Mark looked at includes a blend of all three)
- Next step: the direction given in May from City Council was to explore these models (presentation in front of City Council in October during the 10/24 meeting)
- Budget process: Mayor will release budget to Council on 10/1, followed by a series of workshops in October and November with an eye of adopting a biennial budget no later than the December meetings (two dates to set ordinance) – once this is done, the biennial budget for 2023-2024 calendar year will be in effect

- At the moment, the Administration does not have direction from Council to fund an Immigrant Resource Center (there is ability to amend the budget at a future date)
- Heinrich requested to return to the IAB during the 10/18 IAB meeting to have a discussion with the IAB to make a recommendation to City Council (memo, email, can be included in Council packet)
- The IRC subcommittee will set up a meeting with Councilmember Martens

Public Comment III [2:08:41]

- Maya expressed concern that there is not an actual report to look at given the tight timeline for the next meeting
- Heinrich responded that he will make available documentation for the 10/18 agenda packet ahead of the meeting

Old/New Business [2:12:08]

- Ada Rumford shared that the outreach committee would welcome new members

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM

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>

Recordings of this meeting with additional details of discussion is posted at: <https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2022, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Danielle Siedlecki
Liz Darrow
Holly Pai
Ada Rumford
Monika Cassidy
Alfredo Juarez
Sierra Green (Alternate)

Absent:

Bridget Reeves (excused)
Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora (excused)
Tarnjot Brat ("TJ")
Jagwinder Gill (excused)
Homero Israel Jose Garrido
Australia Tobon

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Punjabi Interpretation: Piku Dhillon

City Council Legislative Staff: Nalini Margaitis

City Council Liaison: Council President, Hannah Stone

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.

Welcome, and New Board Member Introduction [4:32]

- Danielle Siedlecki welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the December 21, 2021 meeting were approved as written

New Board member Introduction [8:09]

- Alfredo Juarez joins the IAB as an official board member

Process Subcommittee Report Part I (Liz Darrow, Holly Pai, Sierra Green) [11:59]

- Holly Pai reported that the subcommittee worked new language to insert into the proposal from the previous month (to update the ordinance regarding the selection of members)
- Holly Pai shared the email from the Riveters Collective regarding the City's response in the selection new members for Boards and Commissions:
 1. Which Mayor's Office staff are responsible for selecting new members? *Tracy Lewis and relevant City staff responsible for coordinating with members of the specific Board and Commission assist in selecting new members.*
 2. Does the Mayor's Office consult with active members as part of the selection process? *The Mayor typically receives a recommendation from City staff and the relevant Board and Commission on the recommended applicant.*
 3. When vacancies exist, what internal deadlines has the Mayor's Office set to 1) review applications and 2) appoint eligible applicants? *The Mayor highly depends on staff and the board/commission to review applicants for a cohesive fit within the board/commission and to make a recommendation for appointment in a timely manner.*
 4. How does the Mayor's Office report the status of applications and appointments back to active members? *The communication goes to the administrative staff coordinating with the board/commission. They receive a copy of the acknowledgement letter (with the application) sent to the applicant and if there was a recommendation for appointment and the Mayor appointed, they receive a copy of the letter that was sent to the new member. The appointment then goes to City Council (for information or approval) and rosters are updated on the web with the previously sent link to give the full status of the board/commission.*
- Adding to section 2.26.020 – Membership appointment to read: *The Board will review all new Bboard member applications and make recommendations to the Mayor for appointment. Member applications shall receive a two-thirds affirmative vote from the Board before being forwarded to the Mayor for appointment.*

Public Comment/Community Reports [20:37]

- **Liisa Wale** inquired about translation options for those dialing in
- **Henry Bennett** inquired about a new Zoom feature present when signing on to the meeting, asking for address and comment. Bennett encouraged the Board to continue work toward creating an Immigrant Resource Center
- **MB** advocated to have the majority of the Board makeup represent impacted community members – racial profiling by Police and border patrol. MB reminded the Board that the reason it was created was to evaluate and strengthen existing policies based on experiences of impacted community, adding that the people who get detained and deported in Whatcom County are overwhelmingly immigrants of color. MB urged the Board to recognize the inequity in immigration experience for people who aren't White. Access and information are things that the Board can take action on now, developing a solid plan with clear achievable steps, such creating an IRC.

- **Maddi** shared that she was upset after watching last month's IAB meeting, indicating that is much color blindness in the racial makeup of the Board, which should not be the case on an Immigration Advisory Board. The people who are harmed by anti-immigrant laws and rhetoric are disproportionately people of color, indigenous people, darker skinned people, poor people, people of the Global South, people from colonized backgrounds
- **Dana Erickson** commented on the conversation surrounding the Board makeup, stating that an immigration advisory board should prioritize the BIPOC population – adding that it does not make sense for the Mayor to be making these appointments without coming to these meetings
- **Jackie Tabone** echoed that the Board should be prioritizing those with lived experience, those closest to the experience will have the most knowledge about it, adding that statistically the BIPOC populations are the ones being targeted.
- **Dena Jensen** stated that by focusing on the crisis that immigrant populations face within the community – addressing the physical, emotional, mental trauma – will translate to the fact that something significant is being done and that can help with trust and communication. Approaching this through a crisis management lens will open doors for the IAB.

Community Reports [38:06]

- None

Process Subcommittee Part II [39:40]

- Pai continued to present the proposed changes to the ordinance language
- Second proposal – to take out the sector requirements from the ordinance and to replace that with: *It is a priority that the composition of the Immigration Advisory Board reflects the impacted community that the Board serves. For this reason, the Board recommendation to the Mayor will take into consideration factors such as immigration status, race, class, and sector of our community that could impact a potential board member's experience in the community.*
- Remove the following portion that provides the Mayor with autonomy: *The Mayor shall consider individuals from the list provided by the Board for possible appointment, however, the Mayor may select other individuals who are interested in serving and whom the Mayor believes will effectively serve as alternates.*
- Ada Rumford asked if there was an opportunity to explain why the Board is removing certain sections. Stone added that any revisions that come forward would need to be approved by the Council and there are opportunities for explanation: a memo that addresses the proposed changes, IAB members could be present at the meeting to provide feedback (and to potentially respond to questions from the Council regarding the proposed changes). Pai proposed that the IAB do both – compose a memo and attend a Council meeting to present the proposed changes. Cassidy added that Board members could be present at City Council meetings on a rotational basis. Stone reminded the Board that Council meetings are open to the public, but that the opportunity for dialogue would be dependent on an agenda bill (typically an item taken

for action) – also take into consideration which Committee this would be for (Public Health, Safety, and Justice or the Committee of the Whole). Siedlecki added that it would be a great opportunity for the IAB to present in front of Council. Rumford added that the Board should prioritize the topic presented to Council and instead present on the IRC (and not the proposed changes to the ordinance). Darrow added that the greatest obstacle has been figuring out how to schedule an agenda bill in front of the Council – what’s the timeline for presenting an agenda bill? When and how can the IAB get on the agenda? Stone responded that the agenda bills are brought forward by the Chair of that Committee – for Public Health Safety and Justice, it would be Dan Hammill. For Committee of the Whole, it would be Hannah Stone. The agenda bills would need to be finalized 10 days before a City Council meeting. Darrow requested that the board vote to move forward with the proposed ordinance changes when the guest speaker suggested Darrow might want to wait until her presentation before such a motion is made.

Presentation (Krystal Rodriguez) [55:42]

- Rodriguez provided the Board with a presentation titled, ‘Obtaining Information from the City of Bellingham’
- Rodriguez is from the Riveters Collective: to improve components of the justice system
- Rodriguez shared that the City has an obligation to respond to a public records request within 5 business days (they may also extend this deadline based on the size of the request)
- Rodriguez provided examples of data she has requested – for example, a year’s worth of 911 data
- Rodriguez shared her frustration with obtaining information of public records – citing examples of the homeless camps, What-Comm 911 service call data, police complaint and investigations records, police union contracts, and homeless camp sweeps bodycam videos
- Rodriguez shared that Board member applications are never disqualified and that no letter is sent to an application who is not selected
- Rodriguez recommended that the Board provide specific deadlines when recodifying the appointment process (e.g. “reviewing applications within XX days”) and suggested that the Board use a scoring matrix, improving language based on member experience
- Darrow requested that Rodriguez send the slides to the IAB
- Stone clarified that Tracy Lewis sends the applications to herself and Nalini and that they are public information and can be shared

Address what the public is saying [1:08:24]

- The reasons why the Board needs to be more specific in the intent of the Board
- Green added that the community is saying that the Board must ground themselves in the purpose of the Board and bring that up more in conversation when things are being discussed – purpose and reason of being here , Siedlecki echoed Green
- Green expressed for affirmation for having a scoring matrix for applicants

- Siedlecki added that she would like to see all of Riveter's suggestions
- Darrow acknowledged the public comment speakers for addressing entrenched white supremacy in this space and stated that a head nod by Council is not enough – responsibility to address those things
- Siedlecki shared that she interpreted the public comments to mean that the Board should not focus all of their attention to one people group, and instead all immigrant communities represented in the area (Whatcom County), having more BIPOC members has never been in question, but that there are other immigrants who have been impacted by ICE (including East Indian people)
- Green perceived that the public comments meant that the Board should be comprised of impacted community (and what that means to the Board – who is having negative experiences? And who is struggling the most? Who is in these detention centers? Who is in ICE?) Ultimately, who is this resource center for? What are we trying to solve? What is the purpose?
- Cassidy agreed with Green, stating that it is important for the Board to continue with the resource center – only then will it be apparent which types of people will come to seek help at the center
- Juarez expressed interest to help out with the resource center – specifically, helping out with medical bills. Cassidy suggested that the resource center partners with a doctor, lawyer, and daycare assistance. Siedlecki invited Juarez to join the IRC subcommittee.

Immigrant Resource Center Update (Danielle Siedlecki) [1:26:08]

- Siedlecki reported that since the last meeting, she emailed the Mayor and City Council, put together a letter of interest for the Resource Center (along with the organizations interested in supporting) and is waiting to hear back from the next steps. Siedlecki has not heard back from the Mayor since then.
- Darrow added that she had hoped that the Mayor would attend an IAB meeting
- Stone shared that the Mayor will attend the next meeting in February. Cassidy suggested that the Board prepare three questions to ask the Mayor at the following meeting. Darrow directed IAB to email questions to the co-facilitators.

New Law in Illinois (Alfredo Juarez) [1:31:10]

- Juarez shared that he read an article that the state decided not to renew their contract with the detention center
- Darrow added a comparison with the Tacoma Detention Center (which will be shutting down in the end of 2023, when their contract expires). Darrow also notified the Board that the Jan 25 field trip is cancelled. Darrow stated that she located a second enforcement and removal center and is trying to get into contact with them.

Training (Liz Darrow) [1:35:55]

- AORTA: Anti Oppression Resource and Training Alliance offers trainings for groups and confront white supremacy in organizational spaces, and strengthening equitable facilitation. The training is filled and the IAB is on a waitlist.
- Stone mentioned that Darrow's training proposal was sent to the Mayor and is under consideration and Stone will follow up.
- Siedlecki will work to get the IRC on the Council agenda
- Darrow asked Stone if Council will provide a formal response to the letter re the January 28, 2021 incident – Stone says she will follow up.

Federal Contact Data [1:50:45]

- WhatComm facilitating contact between border protection and the jail, which is in direct violation of the Keep Washington Working Act
- Communications between US Immigration police and local law enforcement seem illegal – Darrow would like to get a clearer picture of what is going on

Old and New Business [1:53:18]

- Margaitis suggested to provide the Mayor for a 1-page brief on a monthly basis summarizing the IAB meeting. Darrow, Rumford, and Cassidy expressed interest in starting the brief. Pai suggested to ask the Mayor what the best way to communicate would be. Siedlecki and Pai drafted a letter outlining frustration that is being shared with Board members – looking for feedback before it is sent to the Mayor.
- A request was made for members to send 3-4 questions to the Board ahead of the meeting with the Mayor on February 15, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>



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

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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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City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2022, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Danielle Siedlecki
Ada Rumford
Holly Pai
Homero Israel Jose Garrido
Liz Darrow
Bridget Reeves
Australia Tobon
Alfredo Juarez
Monika Cassidy

Absent:

Tarnjot "TJ" Brar

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

Punjabi Interpretation: Piku Dillion

City Council Legislative Staff: Nalini Margaitis

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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 [0:12]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the May 17, 2022 meeting were approved as written

Announcements [4:44]

- A community member notified the Board of a new sector chief for Blaine CBP

- Australia requested a tour of the CBP Blaine facility, and it is scheduled for – July 27th 9:00AM-11:00AM & is trying to schedule a tour of the Port of Entry at the Peace Arch (Border patrol: green uniforms, port of entry: blue uniforms) – TBD (possibly 2nd week of August). Email Australia if you plan to attend. Border patrol chief for Blaine sector for the 7/27 Tour requested a brief description of Board members attending to be sent to the chief prior to the tour (why you're on the Board, etc.) & reciprocated information will be provided to the IAB (the Board will receive information and background of the border patrol staff present during the tour).
- Monika Cassidy shared that she responded to students who requested information about the IAB & spoke with a journalist for Salish Current regarding the ACLU, the situation in Ukraine and opportunities for immigrants in the community.
- Homero Garrido shared with the Board that he spoke with Kai, a reporter from the Salish Current, who had asked Garrido to report on the Immigrant Resource Center & Garrido provided the reporter with a brief description of who the Board is, what the Board does, and what they hope to accomplish with the IRC.
- Australia Tobon shared that she too had a similar interview with the same reporter.
- Holly Pai shared that she too spoke with the same reporter who was inquiring about legal service those seeking information on immigration law in Bellingham and what the IRC might be offering.
- Danielle Siedlecki shared that the IRC was mentioned in the Bellingham Herald and the Cascadia

Public Comment and Community Reports [16:27]

- MB shared that they were happy to see that the Racial Equity Commission was on the agenda for today [6/21] & followed up on comments from CM Hannah Stone and Mayor Fleetwood that there may be some redundancy between the Racial Equity Commission and the work that the IAB is doing. MB shared that both groups are doing work that is distinct and complementary to each other & looks forward to the presentation to see how both organizations can strengthen each other's work. MB urged that the IRC be led by the immigrant community that the center is going to be serving.
- The board then discussed strategies to encourage broader input on what the IRC should initially be comprised of – outreach, etc. Public may also email: immigrationboard@cob.org to provide input. The city will present their proposal during the July IAB meeting [7/29]. Suggestions from the board included: satellite offices, reaching out to Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NIRP) [<https://www.nwirp.org/>], local immigration attorneys holding free clinics, presentations, citizenship clinics, health resources, assisting people to integrate into the school system, etc.
- Maddi was encouraged by the Board's unified vision of the IRC, but there needs to be push at the Mayor's Office (Maddi suggested to email and call the Mayor's Office to

move the IRC forward in a way that is equitable, led by community members, and funded by the City & oversight with the IAB.

Presentation – Whatcom Racial Equity Commission (Shu Ling Zhao) [30:36-50:25]

- Zhao provided a presentation on developing a Whatcom Racial Equity Commission, including an overview of the planning and preparation. Zhao works with the Chuckanut Health Foundation as the Project Team Lead. CHF awarded a grant to Kristina Michele Martens and Zhao to explore the development of a local racial equity commission. So far, the planning has exceeded 22 months. For more information on the ongoing project, please visit: www.chuckanuthealthfoundation.org or email: shu@chuckanuthealthfoundation.org
- Following the presentation, Board and community members asked questions [50:29-1:10:08]

Follow-up on the ACLU presentation from the May 17, 2022 meeting [1:10:27]

- The ACLU has received responses from the county and the city in relation to the letter that was sent (e.g. Whatcom County prosecuting attorney admitted there were violations and took the allegations seriously).
- Pai shared that she and Reeves had a follow-up meeting with Brian Heinrich re the ACLU presentation. Heinrich responded via email (changing policy and language in the WhatComm manual, changing the language in the interlocal agreement – replacing calling Sumas and CBP for services, stop using CBP for interpretation services. Heinrich’s email also stated that the City disagreed on the ACLU’s interpretation of KWW in regard to calling CBP on criminal matters). Pai and Reeves conducted FOIA requests and were able to bring up specific information from April-May contacts that could potentially put people at risk for their involvement/engagement with CBP. Heinrich responded that he will bring back this topic with the BPD and the City and admitted that he did see a potential problem with the examples cited from April-May. Reeves and Pai will follow-up with Heinrich prior to the July meeting for a potential report out. The next layer of conversation will include WhatComm.
- Australia asked is the Board would be able to request the training manuals that WhatComm is using (Reeves and Pai have FOIAed the BPD policy manuals to see if they have formally incorporated KWWA model policies). Pai responded that she and Reeves received different manuals through their FOIA requests & that it appears no one wants to take ownership of WhatComm. Tobon also asked Reeves and Pai if any recordings of the meeting took place. Tobon also requested that the Board have funding and access to funding needed to obtain dispatch records. Reeves says she will look into that. Pai added that it is \$9 for an audio transcript.

Federal Contact Data Review [1:34:28]

- IAB members outlined concerns in the federal contact data that were in violation of the KWWA. The board agreed to proceed with an “outcomes” column for a handful of monthly items (a monthly report).

Process Subcommittee [1:48:30]

- Holly Pai shared that the process subcommittee has been interviewing prospective IAB candidates and that it has been going really well.

Old/New Business [1:52:06]

- Board member's thanked Danielle Siedlecki for her dedication to the IAB during her last meeting
- Darrow announced there is an opportunity to table the Birchwood international market in July

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM

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City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2022, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

Board Members

Present:

Danielle Siedlecki
Homero Israel Jose Garrido
Liz Darrow
Holly Pai
Ada Rumford
Monika Cassidy
Alfredo Juarez
Sierra Green (Alternate)
Bridget Reeves

Absent:

Maria Isabel Cortes-Zamora
Australia Tobon
Tarnjot "TJ" Brar
Jagwinder Gill

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

City Council Legislative Staff: Nalini Margaitis

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Welcome, and New Board Member Introduction [0:08]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the February 15, 2022 meeting were approved as written

Announcements [4:10]

- Monika Cassidy provided information on organizations accepting donations on behalf of Ukraine's refugee crisis:

- **Magdalena's Creperie** in Fairhaven
(1200 10th St Ste 103, Bellingham, WA 98225)
10AM-2PM on Tuesday and Wednesday
Items: bacteria ointment, pain medication, bandages, electronics, phones (not, clothes and shoes)
- **Ukrainian Association of Washington State**
(https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=QNBZXQRSPYYB4)
- **American School of Warsaw Foundation Inc**
<https://go.rallyup.com/aswforukraine>
- **The Red Cross**
- Ada Rumford added that there is a large Ukrainian and Russian population in the area and that it affects the immigrant community
- Danielle Siedlecki added that it would be helpful to gain feedback from Ukrainian and Russian community members as to how to advise the City and suggested to make contact with Steven Shetterly (World Relief)
- Holly Pai added that she has been in contact with Steven Shetterly and that World Relief deals specifically with those classified by the USDS as refugees resettled in the US (World Relief can't assist other groups). Pai added that it is not the role of the IAB to collect donations, instead the role of the Board is to advise the City and the Mayor on policies that affect the people of Whatcom County. Pai also added that she hopes that this will spur action toward the Immigrant Resource Center.

Co-Facilitator Vote [20:35]

- Sierra Green acknowledged that there is a lack of engagement on the Board, often leaving the engagement up to the co-facilitators, and suggested that the facilitator role be on a rotational basis
- Holly Pai expressed that the Board is not ready for this, due to the low engagement of certain Board members and is worried that the Board might fall apart & suggested to wait a couple of months in case the meetings return in person
- Bridget Reeves suggested that some of the lack of engagement might be due to the virtual environment and that the engagement could increase as Boards return in person
- Ada Rumford added that the once per month meeting affects the disengagement
- The Board agreed to revisit this at a later date

Public Comment and Community Reports [32:30]

- Topics included: the Board's accountability to the public, Keep Washington Working Act, the importance of the Immigrant Resource Center (timeline and next steps)
- A discussion on the Board email response rotation scheduled followed. The Board suggested that each Board member reply from their personal email once the email is forwarded from immigrationboard@cob.org.

Immigrant Resource Center [51:42]

- Danielle Siedlecki reached out to Council President a couple of times and received one response to the first email
- Liz Darrow stated that Council President Stone replied stating that the IAB proposal is still under consideration by the Mayor and his team and that if the IRC subcommittee has not received a response from the Mayor and his team, that President Stone would be able to follow-up with them. Darrow replied indicating that she has not received a response and that was the last of the communication.
- Holly Pai reminded the public that the Board is not the hold up on the IRC and urged the public to contact the City Council and the Mayor on the subject
- Homero added that the IRC doesn't have to be something created from scratch, instead the Board could look at what other cities have done and piggyback off of that
- Liz Darrow suggested that the Board reviews the proposal during the next meeting for those Board members who have not yet viewed the IRC proposal, adding that the Board does have good allies for IRCs in San Antonio, Seattle, and Denver
- Sierra Green suggested to improve the onboarding process of the IAB and requested that the Board review all of the sub-committee opportunities
- Holly Pai added that the Process Subcommittee meets with new board members
- Liz Darrow stated that the current sub-committees include: Process, IRC, and Outreach
- Ada Rumford added that she has been in communication with Janice Keller, Communication Director of the City and that Keller is on board with increased language access on city publications. The City of Bellingham suggests: Spanish, Punjabi, Russian, Vietnamese, and English
- Darrow suggested that the FAQ portion of the website gets updates

Process Subcommittee [1:09:04]

- Liz Darrow added language on accountability to the public into the proposed amended IAB ordinance incorporating the suggested language from Krystal Rodriguez (timeframes and matrix), removing the co-facilitator section, and the intersectionality of other Boards with the IAB (e.g. community safety))
- Sierra Green shared an updated version of the Board recruitment scoring matrix (updates included: connection to impacted community, ensuring the Board is held accountable for diversity (race/ethnicity/age/etc.)
- Holly Pai explained how the matrix would assist the IAB makeup
- Ada Rumford added that she would like to see more country representation (CIA and USDS defined regions)
- Nalini Margaitis suggested the Board could include language on the frequency of Board meetings – Bridget Reeves inquired if there is a budget to include interpreters for additional meetings (this is pending Finance Dept approval). The Board decided to add “at minimum” into the ordinance
- Darrow reported that Stone is currently updating the ordinance as well
- Lelo Juarez drew attention to the data section regarding the outcome of immigration interactions between BDP and federal immigration agents

- Action Item
 - Liz Darrow moved to proceed forward with the ordinance draft as written
 - MOTION CARRIED 7-0, 5 absent members

Statement on revoking Title 42 [1:43:37]

- Liz Darrow shared that Title 42 is the policy that keeps refugees out (enacted under Trump), Biden revoked and then was sued (SCOTUS will hear this in April)
- Darrow added that an increased sentiment around European conflict from the Board is a problem if the Board does not also address the refugee crisis in other parts of the world (e.g. Haiti, Somalia, Palestine, Yemen, Syria, etc.)
- Holly's proposal: recommend a statement in support of revoking Title 42
- Monika Cassidy shared that the reason Ukraine was brought up was being she is personally involved in it and wanted to share this information with the community
- Bridget Reeves offered to help Liz and Holly in drafting the statement

Federal Contact Data [1:54:33]

- Observations included: increased HSI activity, language interpretation, officer Renick's name is all over the data (former BPD Officer)
- Bridget Reeves added that the Board has two options: address each item individually with the city police, or address the policy in place at the police department. Reeves stated that she would be interested to continue this work on a committee.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM

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

<https://cob.org/gov/public/bc/immigration-advisory-board-materials>

November 15, 2022 Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Welcome [00:00:07]

Legislative Assistant, Nalini Margaitis opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed participants. Darrow called role and participants introduced themselves.

Announcements and follow-up on public comment from the October meeting [00:21:57]

Liz Darrow stated that Scott Powell had volunteered to work on Federal contact data

Welcome and Introduction of new Board members [00:18:28]

- Darrow gave a brief introduction to the space, the history of the Board, and its purpose.
- One of the presenters was not able to make it in person.
- Darrow invited all participants, including non-members to engage.
- New members Christian Sanchez, Von Ochoa and Sophia Rey, were joining for the first time.
- Non-member participants on Zoom were announced by name.

Public Comment/Community Reports [00:22:40]

- Lisa thanked the Board for the work that went into the presentation to City Council.
- Lisa asked how the translation worked. Translation was only available to Zoom participants. Liz Darrow and others discussed how to make translation available for in-person participants.
 - Member agreed that two interpreters, one for Spanish and one for Punjabi, should be present at the next meeting.
- Members and staff discussed the date change for the next meeting.

Subcommittee reports [00:35:56]

Darrow explained the function of the sub-committees and the rules governing how many members each can have. Australia Tobon gave the name of each committee as well as the names of the members. She also explained that anyone in Whatcom County can apply to be a member.

- Process Subcommittee: Liz Darrow reported for this committee, stating that:
 - They have received one application to be an alternate member.
 - There is still an opening available, and Darrow encouraged interested community members to apply.
 - Members discussed how the appointment process works, special cases, disengagement from the Board, and members' interest in the Immigrant Resource Center.
- Immigrant Resource Center (IRC) Subcommittee:
 - Homero Jose reported that Tara Villalba had given a presentation that gave a clear vision for the form the IRC might take, however it seems that the City Council does not understand that vision.
 - City Council Member and Board member Kristina Michelle Martens described the next steps with the City Council, including presenting on a potential budget and improving communication between the Board and the City Council.
 - Members discussed the difficulties involved in setting out a clear vision for the IRC, communicating that to local governments, and clarifying how it can come to fruition

with the support of those governments. Martens emphasized that Bellingham has never done anything like this before, so communicating all of this into a framework that government officials can understand has been a challenge.

- Martens added that the Mayor has committed to issuing a request for qualifications (RFQ) for a vendor with experience in building a Center like the one they are envisioning.
- Members continued to discuss the IRC including:
 - What actions would be beneficial while the RFQ is being developed.
 - The value of the RFQ itself and the role an RFQ respondent might play.
 - The potential function of the IRC and the organizations that might participate in the IRC or support its creation.
 - The timeline for creation of the IRC could be lengthy even though community members need services immediately. It is important to balance the need to build the Center the right way so that it is able to offer services for years to come with the urgency of offering services as soon as possible.
 - Alternatives to the RFQ, including the possibility of a member of the Board responding to the RFQ and serving as the contractor rather than hiring an outside expert.
 - A community input night may be useful.

Vote on 2023 meeting dates

This item was not discussed

Presentation - Research findings from Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington

This item was not discussed

Old/New Business

This item was not discussed

Adjourn [2:20:13]

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2022, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM

Board Members

Present:

Tara Villalba
Liz Darrow
Homero Israel Jose Garrido
Australia Tobon
Ada Rumford

Absent:

Monika Cassidy
Holly Pai
Lelo Juarez

Russian Interpretation: Alfia Logunova

Spanish Interpretation: Martha Sabalsa

Punjabi Interpretation: S. Mahood

City Council Legislative Staff: Nalini Margaitis

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

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.

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Welcome [5:05]

- Nalini Margaitis welcomed the group.
- Nalini Margaitis and tri-facilitators facilitated this meeting.
- Minutes for the September 20, 2022 meeting were approved as written at 8:52PM [see 24:42 in video for record]

Announcements and follow up on public comment from September meeting [6:25]

- Homero Jose reported out on a community report

- Liz Darrow shared that the Board received emails from the public in support of the IRC as well as dangerous air quality in Whatcom County and Juarez asked that Darrow share that farmworkers were still working today despite the air quality conditions

Public Comment and Community Reports [10:25]

- No members of the public provided comment at this time

Subcommittee Report: Process Subcommittee [11:49]

- Tobon stated the committee is waiting on several Board member appointments and also shared that she and Garrido attended a Latinx Heritage event where they promoted the IAB and the IRC

New item: Discussion of in-person meetings - Because the meeting was ahead of schedule, the Board had a discussion about the location of in-person meetings beginning November 2022 [16:19]

- Darrow moved that the November meeting be in the Council Chambers, Garrido seconded – city Staff will confirm the possibility of this location
- Council liaison suggested the library room as the best spot if the Board keeps growing
- The library will be designated as the back-up location

Subcommittee Report: IRC Subcommittee [25:17]

- Garrido reported that the subcommittee met with Council Liaison Martens – Garrido reported that the meeting was productive
- Martens shared that she was on the founding team for the Whatcom Racial Equity Commissions (passed by County Council last Tuesday and started in August 2020), funding came from Chuckanut Health Foundation and interlocal agreement (County and City each provided \$45,000). Martens shared that the strategy was to tell the City and the County what they wanted instead of waiting for them to gather information
- Martens advised the IAB to pull exactly what they want, figure out what that number that is in order to accomplish everything in the first year that the center is established and add 10-15% on top of that and turn that over to Council to put a placeholder line item in the budget
- Rumford asked if there is a template or a form that the IAB should use to compile the information – Martens will send the Board the artifacts from the Racial Equity Commission
- Martens urged the Board (if possible) to propose a budget and then later worry about the ordinance stating that right now is a critical time to request the budget – Martens reassured the Board that the public will be there
- Darrow suggested that the IRC subcommittee get on a Council agenda to represent the presentation that they gave in May
- Tobon shared that the subcommittee is leaning heavily on the guidance of the Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs – they have provided the subcommittee with feedback, guidance, and budget proposals

Subcommittee Report: Federal Contact Data Subcommittee [48:08]

- The Board discussed items of concern on the federal contact data sheet citing September 10, September 21 (ICE, translation request), September 26 and Oct 6 as examples
- Tobon suggested the Board create a federal contact data cheat sheet to put on the IAB website

Public Comment II [52:10 – 1:07:35]

- Several members of the public provided comment and Board members responded

Presentation: Opportunities for the Immigrant Community (Katie Ruddy, Whatcom Community College)

- Presentation postponed – speaker unavailable

Presentation: (Tara Villalba, IAB Member) [1:09:12-1:44:38]

- Villalba provided the Board with a presentation titled, “Supporting Community Leaders from the Ground Up”

Presentation Brian Heinrich, Deputy City Administrator [1:44:44]

- Heinrich acknowledged that Mark Gardner, Council Staff, prepared the research on the models (Denver, Seattle)
- Heinrich pointed out three edits in the memorandum that was distributed: 1) on page 2 – sentence related to the reason that was raised from a federal law enforcement perspective was because of potential impact and 2) the chapter on the BMC section F B there was a spelling error and 3) changed “user information” to “personal information”
- Heinrich stated that from a process perspective, the administration is providing Council with the information requested on 5/9/2022 on operational models
- The Board urged Heinrich not to present the memo as is to Council

Old/New Business

- Australia Tobon moved to have the December 20 meeting on December 13, 2022
MOTION CARRIED 5-0-3

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 PM

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City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
December 19th 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Jian He, Imanat Kang, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members absent: Daniel Cruz, Gabriela Montenegro, Holly Pai

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Member: Hannah Stone

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

City Council Liaison, Kristina Michele Martens, was absent

Russian, Punjabi, and Spanish Interpreters

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Liz Darrow called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM

Equity Reminders

Liz Darrow made a land and border statement, acknowledging the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe, and that the border between the US and Canada is not part of the traditional lands of the peoples who were here prior to colonization. She announced that there is an upcoming holiday bazaar at the Silver Reef Casino.

Liz went over best practices for speaking while interpretation is occurring.

Roll Call

Approval of minutes

Liz requested that City staff send out the minutes to the Board before the meeting for review and feedback.

Homero Israel Jose Garrido moved to approve the November minutes. Imanant Kang seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Public Comment

A community member, Atul Deshmane, thanked Liz for inviting them to the meeting.

City of Bellingham Updates



City of Bellingham

Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

December 19th 2023, 6:30 PM

City Council Member Hannah Stone stated that she was there to address the growing tension between the Board and the City. She said it was important to her to come to the Board as an individual councilmember in order to engage with them before the Council's reorganization meeting in January. She stated that she felt that the Board was in need of changes, listing several issues that she sees, including logistics regarding the ordinance, how business is conducted, the scope of work of the Board, lack of budget, and the role of the Board. She said the Board has done significant work that she does not want to downplay, but she is not seeing the work move forward. Council member Stone continued, saying that she is considering suggesting a pause to the operations of the Board. Board members and community members discussed. Topics included:

- The importance of alignment between the Board and the City
- Frustration with the slow progress of the Immigrant Resource Center (IRC) and the feeling that the City is purposefully delaying the work
- The role of the Board and the scope of work:
 - Several people spoke to the relation between the City and the County and pointed out that many people live in one jurisdiction but work in another
 - The role of the Board as an information source for community members
 - How board members can know how to assist and advise the Council and Mayor
 - The Board often acts as a place to facilitate more direct communication between the community and the City and to provide a place for community members to express concerns
- The importance of respect, honesty, and transparency in interactions between the Board and the City
- Systemic issues, including systemic racism and the distribution of resources
- Acknowledgment that the Board works differently from other City boards and commissions, which is reflective of the desire of Board members to do something different and give a higher level of access to members of the public
- Several people spoke directly against the idea of pausing the operations of the Board, stating it would silence the voices of immigrants and send a message that the City does not care about the immigrant community
- The opportunities that could be seen with a new Mayor in place, and what a pause in the IAB's work would mean for that relationship
- Council Member Stone's suggested that she meet with certain Board members before the Council's reorganization meeting on January 2. Purpose and logistics of that potential meeting were discussed
- Frustration over lack of transparency and poor communication from the City



City of Bellingham

Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

December 19th 2023, 6:30 PM

County Community Updates

This item was not discussed

Community Updates

Lelo said that January 23, 2024, the non-profit he works with will be participating in a lobby day in Olympia representing farmworkers.

Subcommittee Reports:

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee:

Lelo said that he had asked Janice Keller, Interim Deputy Administrator, for a final meeting to select a winning respondent to the RFP and has not heard back. Homero said that he had also reached out and hadn't heard back.

Process Subcommittee:

Tara passed around a proposed retreat agenda and reviewed it with Board members.

Federal Contact Data Subcommittee:

Scott Powell said that members are finding it difficult to interpret the limited information that they have access to and that they felt the need to have a conversation about the committee's scope, role, and goals.

Outreach Subcommittee:

Imanat Kang discussed the fliers. She said that they have a flier ready to print, but, due to time constraints, it was not shared during the meeting. Committee members agreed that it should be distributed via e-mail by Jackie Lassiter, Council Legislative Assistant, for review and feedback before being printed.

Old and New Business

Review Action Items:

Liz asked Jackie about social media for the Board. Jackie responded that she had inquired with the Communications Director and the City Attorney and found that no City board or commission currently has social media. She stated that it would need to be a project for the City to work on and summarized the considerations that would be made in relation to the records created, who would administer the page, etc.



City of Bellingham

Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

December 19th 2023, 6:30 PM

Calendar Approval for 2024 IAB Meetings

Homero moved to schedule 2024 IAB meetings for the third Tuesday of each month in 2024.

Tara seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Adjourn 8:47 PM



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
April 18th, 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Monika Cassidy, Liz Darrow, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Von Ochoa, Sophia Rey, Ada Rumford, Australia Tobon, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members excused: Holly Pai

Board members absent: Christian Sanchez Alvarez

Staff and Others Present:

City Communications Director: Janice Keller

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

Russian, Spanish, and Punjabi Interpreters

City Council Liaison Kristina Michele Martens was not present

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 view the recording.

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Liz Darrow called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM

Language Justice Process [00:00:05] Sophia Rey and Liz Darrow instructed members and attendees on how to access the provided interpreters. Interpreters introduced themselves.

Roll Call [00:01:30]

Review and Approval of March Meeting Minutes [00:02:32] *Liz Darrow moved to approve the March minutes. Sophia Rey seconded. Motion carried with no opposition.*

Announcements [00:03:55]

- **Marcha Campesina:** Lelo Juarez Zeferino informed the group of an upcoming march to support farm workers. The event will be held on April 30th beginning at Edgewater Park in Mount Vernon at 9:00 AM.

Public Comment/Community Report [00:09:05] There was no public comment.

Subcommittee Reports

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee [00:10:00]: Sophia Rey read aloud a letter that the committee put together in response to the City's edits to the IAB's proposed changes to the



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
April 18th, 2023, 6:30 PM

Request for Proposals (RFP). The letter expressed resistance to several of the changes Brian Henrich, City of Bellingham Deputy Administrator, made to the IAB's version of the RFP. Members discussed the letter, potential changes to it, and potential responses from the City.

Australia Tobon moved to approve the letter as it was presented by Rey. Monika Cassidy seconded the motion. Motion carried with no opposition.

Janice Keller, City of Bellingham Communications Director, discussed next steps with members. If the City agrees to what is laid out in the letter, members agreed that the RFP can move forward. If there is more discussion needed, the subcommittee should meet with Brian Heinrich and/or other city administrators and Heinrich should be invited to the next meeting.

New subcommittee proposal [00:45:12]: This item was not discussed.

Process Subcommittee [00:45:47]: Ada Rumford announced that this will be her last meeting as an IAB member and that she will not be seeking another term.

Villalba moved to recommend Liz Darrow be reappointed for a second term. Rey seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Darrow announced that a facilitator had been selected for the upcoming Board Retreat. The facilitator, Victor Rodriguez, introduced himself and gave an overview of his work. Members discussed the retreat, location, format, interpretation, and other details.

Communications Subcommittee [01:09:41]: Rumford briefed the group on a recent event held at Western Washington University. They tabled at the event and gave information on the Board and membership.

Darrow moved to appoint Von Ochoa to the Communications subcommittee. Rumford seconded the motion. The motion carried with no opposition.

Rey suggested that they come up with a flyer, business card, or handout for outreach purposes. Members discussed this idea, the flyer the Communications Subcommittee has already been working on, and outreach more broadly.

Old and New Business [01:29:36]: Tara Villalba reported that the City Council had recently passed an ordinance criminalizing public drug use. Members discussed what this could mean for the immigrant community, communication between the City and affected communities, Board involvement in policy, data on race in the Whatcom County Jail, and the ability of the immigrant community to offer input and comment on public policy.



City of Bellingham

Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

April 18th, 2023, 6:30 PM

Ochoa reported that he had been in communication with kiva.com and found out that a social security number was not required to apply through a loan from them. He also gave a report on several state level bills and initiatives.

Adjourn 8:35 PM



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
August 15th 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Daniel Cruz, Gabriela Montenegro, Holly Pai, Sophia Rey, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members absent: Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Jian He, Imanat Kang

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

City Communications Director and Interim Deputy Administrator: Janice Keller

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

Russian, Punjabi, and Spanish Interpreters

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Sophia Rey called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM

Language Justice Process

Sophia Rey went over best practices for speaking while interpretation is occurring.

Roll Call

Announcements

New members Daniel Cruz and Gabriela Montenegro introduced themselves, stating why they were interested in joining the board and explaining their connection to the immigrant community.

Tara Villalba acknowledged that this is the last meeting for Sophia Rey. Sophia spoke to the board about her excitement to see new members joining and her experience on the board. She read a letter to board members, a copy of which is included in the meeting documents.

Lelo Juarez Zeferino reported on a three day, 40 mile march that he and three others completed in California. The purpose of the march was to bring attention to HR 1511, a federal bill that would open a pathway for undocumented community members to achieve legal status after living in the United States for seven years. He asked that the Mayor and City Council to support the legislation. He added that farmworkers he's spoken to are in support of the legislation.



City of Bellingham

Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

August 15th 2023, 6:30 PM

Daniel Cruz asked Sophia what they can do differently on the Board and what she would have liked to see changed. She responded that they have been advocating for the creation of an Immigrant Resource Center for over a year. She said it has been difficult to get traction on the idea and gave background on the issue. She added that there was not a sense of mutual respect from the City towards the immigrant community. She described her feelings of struggle to have the voices of the immigrant community be heard.

Gabriela Montenegro asked why the original budget amendment didn't pass. Sophia said that her interpretation was that the budget amendment they proposed didn't look like proposals the City is used to and didn't include data in the way that the City is accustomed to. She said the problem is that their data comes in the form of testimonials and conversations.

Daniel Cruz asked Sophia what she thinks it would take for the City to pay attention. She stated that the City needs to take an honest look at facing systemic racism. She said she would call for an intensive reckoning from the City in relation to their processes. She reiterated the struggle to have the voices of the immigrant community heard by the City and urged City leaders to think about why they aren't able to hear those voices.

Public Comment

Community member MB thanked Sophia for her work on the board and expressed her agreement with the statements she had made. MB also asked about the remaining vacancies on the board and what is being done to fill the spots. Tara said that the Process subcommittee didn't have clarity on the status of Sunida's application. She said that she and Janice Keller are having a continuing discussion on that appointment. She added that they have interviewed one other person. She said that her understanding is that those who are not recommended for appointment are welcome to reapply.

Community member Claudia Rey asked if the City has asked for a collaboration between the IAB and a potential RFP awardee. Lelo responded that he hopes whoever is awarded the RFP will collaborate with them. Sophia added that the word "collaboration" had been struck from the RFP in favor of the word "advisement". Council Member Kristina Michele Martens said that while working in the white supremacist system, the RFP is the avenue they have to achieve their goal. She added that Janice Keller is the best champion they could have at the City and she has seen that Janice truly wants to see them succeed.

Process Subcommittee and IRC Subcommittee Member Liz Darrow thanked Sophia for her work and the letter that she wrote. She stated that she feels extremely frustrated by constantly feeling like the rug is being pulled out from them by systemic racism and white supremacy. She relayed background on how the board has grown from its original format and membership to



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
August 15th 2023, 6:30 PM

what it is today. She said that thanks to board member effort, they have achieved diverse membership and increased awareness of the Board's work. She added that the City has put up roadblocks and setbacks at every turn, but she is confident that the board will achieve their goals.

Community member Jackie Tabone thanked Sophia for her work and expressed agreement with her statements. They said that they look forward to hearing the follow up from Tara's communication with Janice Keller and expressed support for filling vacant board seats.

Subcommittee Reports:

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee:

Lelo stated that they have not had a chance to meet regarding the RFP. Janice stated that she has attempted to schedule a meeting with IRC subcommittee members and they have been struggling to find a time. Homero had recommended that they wait until next week. Janice emphasized that it is important that the IRC committee members be present in the meetings. Sophia asked if there could be a sign-up list for folks other than IRC committee members who were interested in being included in evaluating the RFP. Janice responded that she would like to prioritize seated members of the IAB, especially the IRC subcommittee. Tara added that Liz Darrow needs to be included on e-mails on this topic since she is a member of the IRC subcommittee, and Janice agreed. Tara said that every subcommittee member carries the same weight, whether they are a member of the larger Board or not. Federal Contact Data Subcommittee member Scott Powell stated that he thinks he has a good background to be a part of the evaluating committee. Janice and members discussed who would participate in reviewing the respondents. Subcommittee members agreed to add Scott Powell to the Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee and also agreed that the evaluators for the RFP from the IAB will be comprised of the four current subcommittee members (Scott Powell, Lelo Juarez Zeferino, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, and Liz Darrow).

Process Subcommittee:

Tara stated that there are openings on all subcommittees and that the communications subcommittee in particular will be completely vacant after Sophia leaves. Sophia gave an overview of what the Communications subcommittee has been working on. Members and staff discussed the status of the flyer.

Communications Subcommittee: This Committee did not give a report. A discussion of the status of the flyers was had during the Process Subcommittee report.



City of Bellingham

Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

August 15th 2023, 6:30 PM

Federal Contact Data Subcommittee:

Holly Pai gave an overview of what the subcommittee is tasked with for new members. She said that she sees that there is increasing detail in the data, however this also highlights the high level of contact between local law enforcement and immigration officers. She said that this level of contact is not normal for any county in Washington, even other border counties. Janice Keller asked what a good next step would be. Holly said that a cease in desist order had been issued in the past to limit the contacts and remain in compliance with the Keep Washington Working Act. That order was met with response from the City attorney's office stating that the City values public safety over compliance with the Act. She said that there are differing opinions on how to move forward.

Lelo stated that farmworkers have told him that they border patrol agents will show up to work sites on the public side of the road and watch the workers all day. Holly asked if there was an increase in activity since the new reporting facility in Ferndale was established. Lelo said that they do not want that facility to be there.

Review and Approval of July Meeting Minutes

Holly said that she had reviewed the minutes and saw that there was a lot of feedback from Board and community members about the Mayor's decision to not reappoint Liz Darrow. She said that she has not seen a response or communication from the City or the Mayor in response to that feedback. Janice Keller stated she did not have an update to give in that regard.

Sophia Rey moved to approve the July minutes. Holly Pai seconded. Motion passed with no opposition.

Adjourn 8:49 PM



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Monika Cassidy, Liz Darrow, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Von Ochoa, Holly Pai, Sophia Rey, Ada Rumford, Christian Sanchez Alvarez, Australia Tobon, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

Russian, Spanish, and Punjabi Interpreters

**City Council Liaison Kristina Michele Martens was not in attendance*

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Language Justice Process [00:00:25]

Legislative Assistant Jackie Lassiter called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM. Australia Tobon reminded participants of the best practices in regards to allowing time for interpretation while speaking and the conduct of the meeting.

Roll Call [00:03:23]

All members were present.

Review and Approval of January Meeting Minutes [00:04:29]

Sophia Rey moved approval of the January meeting minutes and Liz Darrow seconded the motion. Motion carried with no objections.

Announcements [00:05:27]

- Justice in sentencing policies: This item was not discussed.
- SB5 476 (State Senate Bill regarding overtime for farmworkers): Tobon said that about two weeks ago, a group of farmworkers went to Olympia to defend overtime regulations. She summarized the proposed law and the impact it would have, making 12 weeks out of the year exempt from existing overtime laws for each employer. Many farmworkers testified in opposition to the bill and the bill did not progress in the legislature. She asked participants to call legal assistance at 360-399-9670 and ask for Lorena Perez if the existing overtime laws in place are not working for them.



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Public Comment/Community Report [00:16:47]

Christian Sanchez asked about the process of creating a subcommittee. He stated he wanted to create a subcommittee dedicated to the prevention of criminalization of Latin American youth. He is currently working with a community member whose primary language is not English or Spanish, which has made things difficult for this community member. Tara Villalba and Liz Darrow summarized the process for subcommittee creation. Committee members discussed the possible creation of the subcommittee, including:

- A suggestion that Sanchez work with another board member to clarify the vision for the new subcommittee and come back to the board with more information.
 - Sophia Rey expressed interest in working with Sanchez on this and gave some examples of injustices occurring at her school against Black and Brown students.
- It was decided that Sanchez and interested board members would take time to discuss the potential subcommittee and bring it forward at a future meeting.
- Villalba stated that members of the community could be a part of a subcommittee even if they are not a member of the board.

Rey stated that a friend of hers recently experienced the death of a spouse, whom the friend was financially dependent on. She reported that the friend is struggling with housing and legal responsibilities in the wake of her husband's death. The legal documents this friend has been sent are in English, which is not this person's primary language. Rey is attempting to help her friend, but stated that this is an example of how immigrants face difficulties in accessing the legal system in their native language.

Tobon announced that on April 12th from 4 – 6 PM there will be a community Know Your Rights Workshop hosted by public defenders and other community groups. This workshop will be focused on knowing your rights when approached by law enforcement. Interpretation will be provided and the location will be announced at the next IAB meeting.

Tobon stated that she was approached by two immigrant families who did work for which they were not paid. Those community members wish to take the case to small claims court, but there are no interpretation services available at small claims court in Whatcom County.

Sophia Rey stated that at the hearing in Olympia for Senate Bill 5476, there was not interpretation services available for those wanting to testify about the bill. A community member added that she was there and had a friend to interpret for her, but there were many people there who did not have any interpretation services. She said that there were agricultural



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company leaders there who were telling the workers what to say. The interpreter who was present at the IAB meeting volunteered her time to accompany people to Olympia and to provide interpretation services.

Villalba reported on State legislative efforts to slow rent raises and the status of those bills. She advised that if anyone wanted to help in the effort to pass those bills, they should reach out to the Bellingham Tenants' Union.

Subcommittee Reports [00:55:47]

Process Subcommittee: Darrow reported for the Process Subcommittee. She stated that the committee had come up with a list of characteristics that they thought the board would want to see in a facilitator for a board retreat. Villalba stated that they need to come up with a list of suggested people before they choose someone. Members discussed the timeframe of the retreat and how best to go about selecting a facilitator. It was decided that the Processes Subcommittee would gather suggestions and come back to the board with a proposal at the next meeting.

Federal Contact Data Subcommittee: Villalba said that members of the committee had met with the Attorney General's (AG) office to ask about the Bellingham Police Department's (BPD) compliance with the Keep Washington Working Act. She explained what the law does and how it is enforced. The BPD's compliance plan has not yet been submitted to the AG's office.

Holly Pai described a letter that the committee had drafted from the board advising the City to advocate for new language to be included in the interlocal agreement with WhatComm that would require all signatories to abide by the Keep Washington Working Act. The letter was read into the record. *Darrow moved to change the date and send the letter. Villalba seconded.*

Members discussed possible additions and intricacies of what the letter addresses. Pai emphasized that the letter was requested by the City after many conversations about the Keep Washington Working Act. The Deputy Administrator is in support of adding this language, but needed a letter to present to the WhatComm board. Members agreed to add a reference to the relevant RCW. The motion carried without opposition.

Communications Subcommittee: Tobon stated that the committee had met and that they are working with Janice Keller and the city on updating the IAB website. The committee is preparing to go out in the community with invitations to participate in the board.

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee: Lelo Juarez Zeferino presented the subcommittee's summary of the Request for Proposals (RFP) process. He said that they had met with the Mayor's office and had received a draft of the RFP. He explained what the RFP contains, what can be changed by the IAB, and some key points the subcommittee had chosen to highlight:



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- The subcommittee feels it is important for IAB members to be a part of the evaluation committee tasked with selecting who is awarded the contract.
- The City can modify the contract at any time, including directing the awardee to be advised by the IAB.
- Evaluation criteria used to select the awardee can be changed and the IAB should work to decide which criteria is most important.
- Whoever is selected should have experience so that they do not have to spend a lot of time learning.
- The IAB can add further terms and conditions to the exhibit attached to the contract.

Members discussed the presentation and the RFP process. Homero Israel Jose Garrido emphasized that it is vital that IAB members participate in the process. Darrow stated that the subcommittee would meet and come up with a proposal for the IAB to vote on at the next meeting. If approved, that proposal would then be presented to the city. She encouraged members of the community to give input as well.

Old and New Business

This item was not discussed.

Adjourn 8:50 PM



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Monika Cassidy, Liz Darrow, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Von Ochoa, Holly Pai, Sophia Rey, Ada Rumford, Australia Tobon, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members excused: Christian Sanchez Alvarez

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

Russian, Spanish, and Punjabi Interpreters

There is a 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 view the recording.

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Welcome [00:00:20]

Liz Darrow asked the interpreters to introduce themselves and make themselves available to anyone who may need them. She emphasized the importance of being mindful of the interpreters while speaking so that everyone can have language access.

Sophia Rey moved to approve the minutes. The motion passed with no opposition.

Announcements [00:04:45]

Darrow explained President Biden's extension of Title 42. She and Holly Pai described several aspects of this, including:

- The scope of this order and the impact it has had on the local community.
- Parole programs, which act as exceptions for people from certain countries.
- There is now an app that people are expected to use to apply for asylum before they reach the border, which presents several challenges.

Pai stated that there is a new Supreme Court decision that has to do with the Remain in Mexico Policy. She said that immigration judges in Tacoma are using this ruling to deny bond, stating that people are not eligible for release.



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Subcommittee Reports

- Processes Subcommittee [00:15:29]

Darrow gave an overview of a recent meeting between the Process Subcommittee and City Councilmember Martens, Council President Lilliquist, Bellingham Mayor Seth Fleetwood, and staff members. She stated that the Mayor and administration did not want the IAB to hold the strategy session that members had previously voted on. The administration would like to be included in the meeting, have input on the agenda, and include a facilitator at the meeting. Members discussed and asked questions. Topics included:

- Tension between City administration and the IAB, which was acknowledged by the Mayor, and the Mayor's expressed desire to build a better relationship.
- Potential role of the facilitator at the strategy meeting, and the best way to find an appropriate facilitator.
- City Council members and the Mayor (or staff from his office) are welcome and encouraged to attend IAB meetings.
- The process for the creation of the agenda for the strategy session.
- The potential date for the strategy meeting, the format it may take, and the process laid out by the administration for scheduling the meeting.

Pai moved to work with the city on a retreat and hiring a facilitator for the meeting. Monika Cassidy seconded. No members were opposed.

- Federal Contacts Data Subcommittee [00:44:17]

- *Pai nominated Tara Villalba to be a member of the Federal Contact Data Subcommittee. No members were opposed.*
- Pai recognized a member of the public, Scott Powell, who was present at the meeting and who has been helping with the Federal Contact Data.
- Villalba gave an overview of the progress the committee has made. They have decided to split up the committee into groups, each in charge of reviewing a specific part of the data.
- Pai explained what the Federal Contact Data documents.
- Pai, Villalba, and Darrow gave an overview of the Keep Washington Working Act and an example of instances in which it would be relevant.
- Von Ochoa asked about the benefits and drawbacks of obtaining a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) in order to obtain housing.
 - Members discussed how the TIN functions, the potential vulnerabilities for those who have this number, and potential services available from



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non-profits and other organizations. Members agreed that this number was mainly used for paying taxes.

- Outreach/Communications Subcommittee [01:01:58]
 - *Ada Rumford nominated Australia Tobon to the Outreach/Communications Subcommittee. No members were opposed.*
 - Rumford suggested that name tags be available for in-person attendees.
 - Rey asked if the proper name for the committee is Communication or Outreach. Members agreed Communications would be a better fit.
 - Rey gave a suggestion for an update to the website in regards to increasing transparency of what the Board is doing and what documents are made available to the public.
 - Tobon gave an overview of efforts being made to invite more community members to the meetings and the implications of that in regards to interpretation services offered at the meetings.
 - Homero Israel Jose Garrido brought up the importance of having access to participants' native languages to encourage participation. Members discussed this and the best way to provide that.
- Immigrant Resource Center (IRC) Subcommittee [01:19:43]
 - Garrido reported that the group gave a presentation to the Whatcom Human Rights Task Force on the IAB, its background, the work being done, and the status of the IRC.
 - Lelo Juarez Zeferino said that, in his part of the presentation, he spoke about the vision for the IRC and the community need for it. He expressed frustration that it has been over a year of work and that the City is still wanting to spend more time to go through the process of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ).
 - Darrow invited members to contribute ideas on what qualifications should be listed in the RFQ.
 - Members discussed the potential function of the IRC and how it could be helpful in various situations.
 - *Darrow nominated Rey to the Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee. No members were opposed.*

Public Comment/Community Report [1:32:44]

There was no public comment.



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Overview of Main Objectives of IAB [1:33:24] *(this item was added to the agenda)*

Pai introduced a discussion on the scope and purpose of the IAB. Darrow read the stated purpose of the IAB according to the originating ordinance. Pai stated that there had been disagreement between the City and the board on what the scope of the board is. She stated that the board could evaluate city data beyond the Federal Contact Data and increase community involvement in determining the direction of the board.

Villalba emphasized that services are concentrated in Bellingham, but are meant to be available to people throughout the County. The interpretation of “future of the city in regards to immigration” includes the well-being of immigrants. The purpose of the retreat was to reach agreement as to what the work of the board is actually supposed to be.

Members continued to discuss this subject. Topics included:

- How to make City government accessible to all immigrants.
- The website needs to include the history and the goals of the IAB.
- The retreat with the City, the IAB, and the public needs to focus on the work that the IAB is tasked with.
- Pieces of the work intended for the retreat can be done in regular meetings.

Old and New Business [01:47:21]

Darrow asked non-board members who were present to introduce themselves. Thirteen attendees gave brief introductions of themselves.

Darrow asked members to get any agenda items for the next meeting to her in the next two weeks.

Members expressed appreciation for the interpreters.

Adjourn 8:28 PM



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Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
July 18th, 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Von Ochoa, Sophia Rey, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members absent: Holly Pai

Staff and Others Present:

City Communications Director and Interim Deputy Administrator: Janice Keller

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

** City Council Liaison Kristina Michele Martens was absent*

Russian, Punjabi, and Spanish Interpreters

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Sophia Rey called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Language Justice Process

Jackie Lassiter, Council Staff, went over best practices for speaking while interpretation is occurring.

Roll Call

Review and Approval of May Meeting Minutes

Sophia Rey moved to approve the June minutes. Lelo Juarez Zeferino seconded. Motion passed with no opposition.

Announcements

Janice Keller announced that Sam Quinones will be visiting Bellingham for a free event on August 1st at 6:00 PM focused on solutions to the opioid crisis.

Homero Israel Jose Garrido stated that he made contact with a group that gives free surplus food from farmers to the community in the Birchwood neighborhood on Saturdays.

Public Comment

Lelo Juarez Zeferino asked City Staff to explain the decision to not re-appoint Liz Darrow. Janice Keller stated that the Mayor decided to not re-appoint Liz in order to make room for more



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membership from directly impacted communities. She added that we have a number of applicants that fit that description.

Homero stated that the decision to not appoint Liz was surprising and it should not be taken lightly. He stated that when someone joins the IAB, it takes quite a long time to learn how to be effective. Liz was a key member of the board and she is now being left out of the decision making process. He expressed concern that the membership is shrinking and that the lack of re-appointment reflected a lack of trust. He said that he and other members would be writing a letter to the Mayor.

Community member Shawn Hops stated that they have been part of the IRC campaign since it was started. They said that they wonder why the board is still meeting as they see poor leadership from City Council and the Mayor. They said that the IRC has community buy-in and is low hanging fruit and they see the Mayor as having an adversarial attitude towards the Board and their work.

Community member Misha Blackburn said they thought it was a huge mistake not re-appoint Liz. They said the Mayor's reasoning feels disingenuous and urged the Mayor to reconsider his decision.

Community member Dena Jensen agreed with previous commenters and reflected on times in which the Mayor had attended meetings and the retreat. They said that they see communication and trust are both big issues between the Board and the City. They said that the decision should have been announced much earlier and should have been up for discussion.

Community member Miale Jose stated that they have seen Liz make many contributions to the Board. They said that meeting facilitation should be able to solve some of the communications issues and that the decision not to reappoint should be reconsidered. They referred to a previous Board member who they saw as having good communication with the Mayor.

Community member Ian Schaffer Lorenz stated that the situation reminded them of a situation at their workplace, in which a critical member of a bargaining unit who was trying to unionize workers was fired. They said that the timing of these incidents are rarely coincidental and that the decision was made in bad faith. They urged the Mayor to reconsider and added that having people with different communication styles on boards is a good thing.

Sophia Rey said that Liz was integral in her understanding of how to make contributions to the Board. She said it brings her a lot of anxiety and fear about having a Board without any founding members. She said this will be a Board made out of new members and it will be very difficult to provide any continuity of direction or purpose. She said that she still leans on Liz to



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understand how processes work. She pointed out that every IAB member voted unanimously to recommend Liz for reappointment and to have the Mayor not honor that felt contradictory. She went on to say that the IAB valued lifting up those with lived experiences, but it doesn't mean anything without leadership on the Board.

Community member Storm Sealove said that they have heard from Board and community members tonight that they trust Liz and that they also feel a lack of trust of the Mayor because of this decision.

Community member Sunita said they agreed with all the comments about Liz. They said that they live in Everson and work in Sumas and Nooksack picking blueberries. They live and work with a lot of other immigrants. They said that Liz has been a great contributor to their community who has helped people learn about their rights. Liz opens their eyes to their rights and things that they don't know. Liz let them know about the IAB meetings and nobody else is telling them about these things.

Community member Maya Morales said that Liz is a connector in the community who many people in the community respect. She said it was very odd for the Mayor not to renew an appointment who the members have voted to approve. She said it feels political to her. What matters to the IAB should be what matters to the Mayor. The IAB exists so that there can be a body who can bring different kinds of voices.

Lelo stated that he wanted to ask the Mayor to reconsider his decision and that Liz has knowledge that a lot of the current members lacks. All members of the board voted for her reappointment and it worries him that they learned of the decision today, right before a meeting and when they are at a very important part of establishing the IRC. The current members, who are volunteers, will have a difficult time helping new members to understand how the IAB functions and how it interacts with the City.

Tara Villalba stated that the Mayor's decision is deeply disappointing and discouraging and shows that the City doesn't understand or care about the work of the IAB. Liz is a champion and community members trust her. The IAB is trying to follow the process that the City has set up. Announcing the decision was bad process. She also wants to protest the Mayor using the Immigrant community as the reason for his decision. She expects the City to show in action, not just words, a commitment to Immigrant Communities.

Jian He said that, as an applicant to the Board, they have had conversations with Liz and Tara about the origins of the Board and how they can be an effective member of the Board. They said that they needed to stand up and speak up.



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Homero said that he had a statement for the public: Liz has proven to be a great asset as a leader in the community. She has volunteered for years without financial compensation and has taken time away from her personal life to work for the community. He said that you cannot lean that kind of character, you are born with it. There is a lot of work that needs to be done and the IRC is just the beginning of what the Board can do. They need leadership and doers, not just thinkers, to accomplish those things. He is disappointed that Liz has shown this kind of leadership but is not going to be able to continue on the Board.

Homero introduced his friend Mary Burgess. Mary said that she owns the Lynden Birth Center, where she moved in 2017 to help serve the migrant and immigrant community. She said that she knows of three farmworkers associated with a certain church in Lynden who recently gave birth and all were given C-sections. The woman who knows them felt that the decision to have a C-section was made due to the language barrier. She said if you don't speak English, you don't get the same opportunities as English speakers regarding birth and healthcare. Her clinic is set up with language access and her goal is to offer the same kind of care that English speaking patients receive.

Community Member Moonju Cho stated that she has taught refugee children whose parents do not speak English. She said that the Bellingham School District does not do enough to teach those children. The teacher is in charge of 152 students. She gave an example of an Afghan 5th grader whose native language is Pashtu. His language skills are at about 1st grade. He did not receive proper education in his home country and couldn't read to standards in his own language. The School District is sending him to middle school anyway and she fears that this student will do nothing but sit in his desk because she has seen this before. If language skills are behind, it is very difficult to catch up in education and kids like these are destined to be excluded from society.

Members and Moonju discussed what the Board could do about this problem and how other school districts handle these issues.

Subcommittee Reports:

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee: Committee members said that they were waiting for the City to move forward with the Request for Proposals (RFP). Janice Keller said that she was asked to extend the deadline for the RFP at the last meeting. She did that and proposals are due at 11 AM on July 26th. Submissions are not reviewed until the deadline and she does not know how many, if any, submissions they have received. If the deadline comes and we have no submissions, we can again extend the deadline. We can see that some people have viewed and downloaded the document and City Staff have also fielded a number of questions about it.



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She also clarified some language regarding IAB member advisement in the decision making process. She said she wanted to work with the subcommittee to decide how they will evaluate the proposals, rate them, and share and compare ratings.

Janice and members discussed an addendum to the RFP that contains the agreed upon language; why the language wasn't included in the original RFP, where the addendum can be found, why meeting requests haven't been answered, the purpose of Janice's proposed meetings after submissions have been received, timelines involved, what kind of questions are being asked by interested parties, accessibility of the RFP and who it has been sent to, systemic issues with that exclude access to certain potential respondents, and who will be on the committee tasked with evaluating the applicants,

Process Subcommittee: Janice Keller reported that four of the five applicants recommend by the Board are being appointed by the Mayor and will go before the City Council for confirmation at the next meeting. Members asked why the fifth recommendation was not appointed. Janice stated that the fifth person is still in process. Tara asked what happens if an applicant is recommended by the Board but not appointed by the Mayor and if he reports out on that publicly. Janice said that each Board and Commission has a slightly different process and recommended that the Board decide on a process to give feedback when appointments are not made. Discussion was made about whether or not Council can appoint a member without a recommendation from the Mayor.

Communications Subcommittee: Sophia stated that she is working with former board member Ada Rumford to get a version of the flyer that is editable.

Federal Contact Data Subcommittee: No report was given.

Adjourn 8:48 PM



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
June 20th, 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Monika Cassidy, Liz Darrow, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Von Ochoa, Holly Pai, Sophia Rey, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members absent: Tara Villalba

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

City Communications Director and Deputy Administrator: Janice Keller

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

Planning and Community Development Director: Blake Lyon

Senior Planner: Elizabeth Erickson

Long Range Planning Manager: Chris Behee

Russian, Punjabi, and Spanish Interpreters

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Sophia Rey called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Language Justice Process

Jackie Lassiter, Council Staff, went over best practices for speaking while interpretation is occurring.

Roll Call

Review and Approval of May Meeting Minutes

Holly Pai moved to approve the May minutes. Sophia Rey seconded. Motion passed with no opposition.

Announcements

Jackie Lassiter proposed a permanent move to the Public Works Operations Center for future Board meetings. Members discussed and asked questions. Board members agreed to the move.

Monika Cassidy announced she would be resigning from the board and this would be her last meeting.



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Presentation – Comprehensive Plan

Blake Lyon, Planning and Community Development Director, presented on the Comprehensive Plan. He gave an overview of what the Comprehensive Plan does, how it is formed, and the process for gathering community input for the upcoming plan. Lyon, Senior Planner Elizabeth Erickson, and Long Range Planning Manager Chris Behee answered questions from members and asked for their feedback about the best way to gather input from the immigrant community.

Public Comment

Board members and others thanked Monika for her service to the IAB.

Subcommittee Reports:

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee: The Committee reported that their workplan for the next 18 months includes:

- Recruiting new members for the board and for their subcommittee
- Collaborating with the City on the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for the Immigrant Resource Center (IRC) project
- Keeping the community informed on developments regarding the IRC
- Looking for existing services that are already available for immigrants, building relationships with the leaders of those organizations, and distributing information on them to the community
 - They proposed that we reserve time at the beginning of each IAB agenda to present on an available resources
- Engaging with the community to gather input
- To have the IRC funded, established, and running

The Committee provided an update on the RFP, which has been posted to the City website. Members and staff discussed the process that bidders go through and what will happen once the timeline closes. It was suggested that the deadline be extended and Janice Keller agreed to look into that. *Note: the RFP deadline was extended by one month after the IAB meeting based on this request.* Once the deadline has passed, a workgroup will be convened, which will include IAB members, to review the responses.

Process Subcommittee: Holly Pai announced that she will be stepping down from the Committee.



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The Committee reported that their 18 month workplan includes:

- Clarifying and documenting the processes for:
 - Forming and joining a Subcommittee
 - Processing IAB Applications
 - Specifically appointment timelines and the roster
 - Missing meetings
 - Appointing alternate members
 - Creating meeting agendas
 - Term expirations
 - Appointments to the IAB
 - Ordinance revisions

The Committee updated the Board on the status of applications they have received for open seats. They stated that they are recommending the following applicants:

- Senaida Perez Villegas
- Gabriela Montenegro
- Daniel Cruz
- Jian He
- Imanat Kang

Liz Darrow moved to recommend appointment of the above listed five applicants to the Mayor. Sophia Rey seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

It was announced that Sophia would be leaving the board, as she will be attending university out of state. Sophia spoke to the board about her experience, stated that she would be attending the August meeting, and spoke positively about board applicant Jian He.

The Committee inquired about former Deputy Administrator Brian Heinrich's recent departure and what the process is for hiring a replacement. Janice Keller reported that the Mayor has asked her to take on the Deputy Administrator role and that community involvement in hiring decisions depends heavily on the role.

Communications Subcommittee:

The workplan for this subcommittee had not yet been completed.

Von Ochoa spoke about literacy rates in the U.S, including the 4th grade cliff wherein the literacy gap gets wider as children move forward after 4th grade. He reported that 45% of US adults are functionally illiterate.



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Von Ochoa explained an idea to create a Community Land Trust cooperative.

Federal Contact Data Subcommittee: The Committee reported that their workplan includes:

- Work with the City Council to enhance IAB access to the development of legislation and policies potentially impacting immigrant communities. Promote best practices to ensure timely awareness of and opportunity for community response to proposed legislation, policies, and resource allocations.
- Work with City Administration to develop an internal system to monitor City compliance with the Keep Washington Working Act (KWW) across Whatcom County. Work with the Mayor's Office and the Police Department to assess how countywide participants in What-COMM 911 referral service, as well as courts, schools and other agencies identified in the KWW, have actively addressed requirements for policy review, training, and best practices.
- Review other city policies and departmental programs and procedures for alignment with existing City goals and priorities to support immigrant communities. (See BMC 2.25 and Ordinance 2017-02-008)

Committee members and others discussed the Federal Contact Data document that is distributed each month. They reported that it is difficult to find information on what happens after an event that is detailed in the report.

Holly Pai informed the group that there is an Enforcement and Removal Operations Center located in Ferndale now, which means that folks will not have to drive to Tukwila, but it also means that there is more communication locally with immigration enforcement.

Adjourn 8:35 PM



City of Bellingham
Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
March 21st, 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Monika Cassidy, Liz Darrow, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Von Ochoa, Holly Pai, Ada Rumford, Christian Sanchez Alvarez, Australia Tobon, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members excused: Sophia Rey

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

City Communications Director: Janice Keller

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

Russian, Spanish, and Punjabi Interpreters

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Holly Pai called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM

Language Justice Process [00:00:27] Australia Tobon instructed members and attendees on how to access the provided interpreters. Interpreters introduced themselves.

Roll Call [00:02:18]

Review and Approval of January Meeting Minutes [00:03:23] *Von Ochoa moved to approve the January meeting minutes. Tara Villalba seconded the motion. Motion carried with no opposition.*

Announcements [00:03:50]

- Justice in sentencing policies: Holly Pai brought forward the idea of the IAB looking at justice in sentencing policies. Having a formal policy would require prosecutors to take immigration status into account when recommending sentences. Councilmember Kristina Michele Martens recommended that Pai or another member reach out to the Whatcom Democrats for a possible partnership.
- Housing legislation: Tara Villalba summarized the status of housing related policy measures:



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March 21st, 2023, 6:30 PM

- A rent stabilization bill is not moving forward this in the State Legislature this legislative session.
- There are two additional bills moving their way through the legislature: one concerns security deposits and one requires the State to set aside money for housing in the State budget. Those interested in supporting the bills should contact the Bellingham Tenants' Union.
- At the city level, seven organizations representing Bellingham renters recently met and put together a list of tenant protections measures that they would like the City to focus on. They will be presenting that to the City soon.
- City language access updates: Janice Keller, City of Bellingham Communications Director, gave an overview of city-wide language access programs:
 - City staff are currently being trained on the Language Line system. This service allows for live interpretation via an app, telephone, or via Zoom. Staff who interact with the public the most are being prioritized for training before being rolled out city-wide.
 - Advances in technology have allowed high quality website translation and the City website now has translation options in over 30 languages. There are still limitations, for example certain forms, documents, PDFs, and sites hosted by third parties are not translated.
 - Keller answered questions from members on topics including prioritizing the untranslated website sections, replacing PDFs with live pages, ASL translation and accessibility.

Public Comment/Community Report [00:32:24]

- A community member asked a question about the IAB's relationship with Whatcom Community College. She said that she has heard that the school is desperate for Spanish speakers to help students with homework. Ada Rumford explained that the college is a state institution and is separate from the City. Members discussed this issue and language justice as a systemic issue.
- Von Ochoa stated that several of his students' parents take classes at the college through Whatcom Literacy Council. He also stated that he attended a webinar from Workforce GPS in which the importance of sector-specific language tutoring was emphasized. He summarized what other jurisdictions around the country are doing which he learned about at the webinar.



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Subcommittee Reports [00:41:22]

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee: Lelo Juarez Zeferino read the Request for Proposals (RFP) cover letter that his subcommittee crafted. Australia Tobon presented a diagram explaining the process of the RFP and how it would lead to an Immigrant Resource Center (IRC). Homero Jose Garrido shared a draft scope of work document that the subcommittee had created. He read through the document and explained their reasoning for each proposed item. Garrido also went over the subcommittee's suggestions for evaluation criteria for RFP respondents. Members discussed, asked questions, and made changes to the documents presented.

Rumford moved and Tobon seconded to change the suggested evaluation criteria by removing five points from the "Demonstration of Experiences" category and adding five points to "References". Motion failed with 6 opposed, 1 in favor, and 3 abstentions.

Pai moved and Tobon seconded that they approve the changes as discussed and forward the documents as recommendations to the Mayor's office. Motion carried with no opposition.

New subcommittee proposal: Christian Sanchez presented on his idea for a new Subcommittee for the Prevention of the Criminalization of Latin American Migrant Youth. He described the problem and possible solutions.

Sanchez moved and Darrow seconded to create the new subcommittee. After discussion, the motion was tabled until the work of the committee can be refined and membership can be established.

Process Subcommittee: Darrow presented the responses to the subcommittee's search for facilitators for the board retreat. The subcommittee decided that the most qualified respondent was Victor Rodriguez. Darrow shared Rodriguez's response letter.

Darrow moved and Pai seconded to proceed with Victor Rodriguez as the suggested facilitator for the Board retreat. Motion carried with no opposition.

Federal Contact Data Subcommittee: Pai informed the board about an interlocal agreement recently signed between the Bellingham Police Department and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in which HSI agreed to provide reimbursements to the City for Police overtime related to retail theft investigations. Councilmember Kristina Michele Martens further explained the interlocal agreement and why HSI is involved in local retail theft issues. Members discussed and asked questions.

Pai introduced Scott Powell, a community member working with the subcommittee, who gave a short presentation on the Keep Washington Working Act.



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Communications Subcommittee: Tobon stated that they are working on coordinating several things, such as the website and outreach to invite people to meetings. She also reminded members and the public about an upcoming Know Your Rights Workshop on April 12th at 1295 E. Bakerview in Bellingham. There will also be an IAB table at a Western Washington University event on April 4th from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

Old and New Business *Pai moved and Tobon seconded to recommend reappointment of Homero Israel Jose Garrido and Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino to the board. Motion carried with no opposition.*

Adjourn 8:50 PM



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May 16th, 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Monika Cassidy, Liz Darrow, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Von Ochoa, Holly Pai, Sophia Rey, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

City Communications Director: Janice Keller

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

Russian and Spanish Interpreters

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 view the recording.

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Liz Darrow called the meeting to order at 633 PM

Language Justice Process [00:00:25] Tara Villalba went over best practices for speaking while interpretation is occurring.

Roll Call [00:03:05]

Review and Approval of April Meeting Minutes [00:04:00] *Von Ochoa moved to approve the April minutes. Liz Darrow seconded. Motion passed with no opposition.*

Announcements [00:04:30] Tara Villalba announced that the City Council voted to approve an ordinance criminalizing public drug use. She stated that the Board did not have an opportunity to review the ordinance or gather community input. Members gave their feedback about the ordinance:

- Homero Israel Jose Garrido stated that it was a complex problem and that he felt that the City's boards were ignored because the ordinance was not put before them. He added that there is not a single answer and that the ordinance affects those without homes.
- Holly Pai said that she believes it would have been appropriate for this ordinance to come before the board because simple possession of controlled substances has severe repercussions to those without immigration status.
- Lelo Juarez Zeferino said that the Board represents a big community and asked why they



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didn't get a say in the ordinance.

- Sophia Rey asked if there was a formal action that they could take as a board, such as establishing a new Policy Subcommittee. She said that there should be a process to hold the City accountable.
- Tara Villalba said that they did not receive information on what would happen if someone without secure status is arrested under this new law.
- City Staff and Councilmember Martens gave input on how IAB members can be notified about upcoming legislation.
- Tara Villalba said that none of the options presented by staff were viable options for the immigrant community. She said that the burden lies with the City to seek counsel from the Board, not the other way around.
- Kristina Michele Martens volunteered to meet with members before each Council meeting to go over the items that were up before Council.
- Members and staff discussed the ordinance that was brought forward and the process that it followed.
- Tara Villalba pointed out that there are other items, such as the Consolidated Plan, that are not brought before the Board.
- Members and staff spoke about the Consolidated Plan and the Comprehensive Plan

Holly Pai announced that there are currently four vacancies on the Board and gave information on how to apply.

Sophia's reported that the Whatcom County Sheriff's Annual Report reflects that there were no Hispanic inmates in the Whatcom County jail because the Federal Government has changed the way it collects data, moving the category of "Hispanic" from race to ethnicity. She spoke about anti-Blackness and stated that folks will not select Black when they don't have the option to select Hispanic. This will cause more people to select white and leads to inaccuracies in data.

Retreat Report [00:49:00] Tara Villalba reported that the Board had held a retreat the previous week alongside several members of City Government and facilitated by Victor Rodriguez, who the Board chose. They had four goals:

- Build trust and collaboration
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Orient new board members
- Set a workplan for the future



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The original purpose of the board retreat was to set a work plan for the next 18 months, however, there was not time to address this goal at the retreat.

She asked Board members to share what was most significant to them from the retreat. Each member present shared at least one takeaway.

Public Comment [01:36:28]: Community member Scott Powell, said that it may be appropriate for the Board to ask the City for more information on the drug criminalization ordinance and how it will be implemented.

Subcommittee Reports [1:39:04]

Tara Villalba stated that each sub-committee is asked to work-plan for the next 18 months at each of their next meetings. Each sub-committee will then report on their plan at the next meeting.

Communications Subcommittee [01:40:58]: Sophia reported for the Subcommittee. She said that they have fliers giving information on the IAB, and asked for members to tell her what languages they would want the fliers to be printed in.

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee [01:46:28]: Homero Israel Jose Garrido reported that they have agreement with the City on the Request for Proposals (RFP) and it will be posted on the City's website in the next few days. Lelo Juarez Zeferino added that he feels it is very important to have the chosen respondent attend all IAB meetings. Liz Darrow added that there were two things that the Mayor's office chose not to use two of the Board's suggested changes to the RFP. The subcommittee decided that they should move forward with the RFP anyway because the work is important and they wanted to get started on the process.

Process Subcommittee [01:51:40]: Liz said that Australia Tobon sent a letter to the Board prior to her resignation. Members agreed that Liz would read the letter at the next meeting.

Old and New Business [01:52:35]: Von shared that the Steering Committee for the Whatcom County Coalition to End Homelessness will be talking about incarceration at their June meeting. August will have a focus on employment. He is hoping to have an organization called the Block Project out of Seattle come present to the group. He explained the organization's goals and methods of addressing homelessness. He encouraged members to attend the meetings.

A member of the public named MB shared a quote regarding confrontation and said that it shouldn't be assumed that everyone wants what's best.

A community member reported on an incident that occurred on April 17th at La Gloria, a Mexican grocery store in Everson. A family contacted this community member and told her that



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ICE was at the store at 6 AM and took several families away. These families are worried because this is the store that is used by the people in the community. C2C dispersed brochures informing people of their rights and letting them know that ICE needs an official order to pick anyone up. In this case, ICE had orders on only one person who was fleeing from Seattle, but they picked up several people. Now the community members are afraid to go to the store, so they would like the City to make more information available on their rights.

Adjourn 8:35 PM



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November 21st 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Daniel Cruz, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Imanat Kang, Gabriela Montenegro, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members absent: Jian He, Holly Pai

Staff and Others Present:

City Communications Director and Interim Deputy Administrator: Janice Keller

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

Russian, Punjabi, and Spanish Interpreters

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Tara Villalba called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM

Equity Reminders

Tara Villalba made a land and border statement, acknowledging the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe, and that the border between the US and Canada is not part of the traditional peoples who were here prior to colonization. She stated that Lummi Nation and the Nooksack Tribe have ongoing events that the immigrant community can attend including an upcoming holiday bazaar.

Tara went over best practices for speaking while interpretation is occurring.

Roll Call

Approval of minutes

Homero Israel Jose Garrido moved to approve the October minutes. Daniel Cruz seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Announcements

Liz Darrow announced the results of the November general election, highlighting certain measures and races.



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Public Comment

A community member asked how homeless people can find out about shelter services offered. Tara pointed out services offered by the County and Lummi Nation. The community member said that we need an Immigrant Resource Center so that folks can have somewhere to go to get information in their own language. The community member and board members discussed various issues regarding housing and other systemic inequities.

Lelo Juarez Zeferino shared that he and his family have stayed in housing provided by farm owners before, and the housing is not fit for winter weather or hot summer weather, as they don't have adequate heat or air conditioning. He said that we need an immigrant resource center for that reason.

Daniel Cruz said that historically farm workers have been seasonal, but now people are staying longer and need to be vocal about their needs. He said that the Board needs to convince people to come to speak and put pressure on politicians.

Tara said that in order for people to get involved, they need access: first of all language access, and also access to information on where and when the Board meets. She said a resource center is a very clear place for people to come and be received in a dignified way.

Community member Brenda Bentley said that the Board has been waiting for answers on appointments and reappointments to the board. She said that now that we will be getting a new Mayor, she would like to know how appointments are going to be addressed in the future.

Daniel added that he and other board members have not gotten an answer to e-mails. He said he hopes the new Mayor will come to IAB meetings.

Gabriela Montenegro said that she is excited that there are so many people involved with the difficulties of the community and that we all have the same mission. She added that the thing that worries her about opening the Immigrant Resource Center is that it wouldn't have all the resources to help all the people accessing it. She expressed a hope that a Resource Center could partner with other organizations.

Members discussed homeless shelter services and how an Immigrant Resource Center could help.

City of Bellingham Updates

Janice Keller offered apologies for not getting the Immigrant Resource Center RFP reviewers back together yet. She hopes to get everyone together in December.



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Janice said that the Comprehensive Plan team was seeking to form a workgroup whose feedback will help inform the Bellingham Plan.

Janice shared a letter from Mayor Fleetwood explaining reasoning behind not re-appointing Liz Darrow. The letter explained that a majority of Council Members would not have supported her re-appointment and would not have been confirmable.

Board members and community members discussed the letter and general relations between the Board and the City.

County Community Updates

This item was not discussed.

Community Updates

Nobody had any community updates to share.

Subcommittee Reports:

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee:

Homero reported that he did not have an update on the RFP process.

Homero nominated Imanat Kang to be a member of the subcommittee. All members agreed.

Lelo stated that they have met twice to talk about the RFP candidates and that they have scored the candidates. He would like an update on scoring and would like an additional meeting before the December IAB meeting.

Scott Powell added that the City should be straight forward with the committee about their understanding of the process between now and January 1st when the new Mayor comes on board. He said he did not think it was likely to reach a contract before the new Mayor takes office and would like more information on what that transition may look like.

Liz Darrow said that the sub-committee had reached out to the incoming Mayor to offer orientation.

Process Subcommittee:

Tara said that it has been difficult to get information about the appointment of Suneida. She went on to explain that a board member had made a public records request for emails and communications regarding re-appointment. They received e-mails between City staff communicating about appointments.



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Federal Contact Data Subcommittee:

Scott reported that he and Holly had met with a coalition that is trying to monitor the implementation of the Keep Washington Working Act.

Outreach Subcommittee:

Daniel discussed the flyer.

Daniel moved to add Imanat Kang to the Outreach Subcommittee. There was no opposition.

Old and New Business

Review Action Items:

This item was not discussed.

City's Response to Re-appointment Questions:

This item was not discussed.

Process subcommittee meeting with Mayor's office:

This item was not discussed.

Retreat: Tara asked if people would have availability to do a full day retreat on January 16. She and Liz asked them to send a response as to their availability via e-mail.

Adjourn 8:41 PM



City of Bellingham
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October 17th 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Jian He, Imanat Kang, Gabriela Montenegro, Holly Pai, Tara Villalba

Board members absent: Daniel Cruz, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Staff and Others Present:

City Communications Director and Interim Deputy Administrator: Janice Keller

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

**City Council Liaison Kristina Michele Martens was absent*

Russian, Punjabi, and Spanish Interpreters

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Tara Villalba called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM

Equity Reminders

Tara Villalba reported that interpreters are available at IAB meeting. She went over best practices for speaking while interpretation is occurring.

Tara made a land and border statement, acknowledging the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe, and that the border between the US and Canada is not part of the traditional peoples who were here prior to colonization. She stated that the Point Elliot Treaty is the supreme law of the land.

Roll Call

Approval of minutes

Tara moved to approve the September minutes. Holly Pai seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Announcements

Tara announced that general election ballots would be mailed October 18th and are only available in English. If anyone in the community is unable to read their ballot, they could contact the League of Women Voters for assistance.

Holly Pai announced that there are two upcoming immigration legal clinics. One will take place on November 2nd from 4PM – 7 PM at the Mt. Vernon Goodwill. It is sponsored by Skagit Legal



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Aid and Immigrant Resources & Immediate Support (IRIS). Volunteer attorneys will be available for consultations on immigration-related questions. The second clinic will be held on November 4th from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM at Western Washington University. It will be a [citizenship clinic](#) to aid community members in filling out citizenship applications. Both events will have interpreters available.

Public Comment

No members of the public wished to speak during public comment.

Tara Villalba asked for an update to the questions that they had asked at previous meetings. Janice Keller stated that she did not have any updates, but hopes that the Mayor will be able to attend the next meeting.

County Community Updates

Tara asked how the Board can find out what is going on with EDI funds that are allocated by the County. Jackie Lassiter suggested contacting the County Executive's office.

Community Updates

Tara said that the Process subcommittee decided to add this agenda item as a way for information to be shared by and for community members. This would also be a space for presentations from non-profit or other organizations that serve the immigrant community. Board members agreed it would be a good item to add on a monthly basis.

Subcommittee Reports:

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee:

Homero Israel Jose Garrido reported that the City has set up interviews with both respondents to the Request for Proposals (RFP). Board and committee members discussed the RFP process and the general credentials of each of the applicants.

Tara asked if there was an update on creating a list of local resources. Homero said that they are still working on that, but want to put together a document that could be posted on the IAB website.

Board members and staff discussed various repositories for resources, such as 211, Opportunity Council, Washington Asset Building Coalition, and the Western Washington Blue Group Student Organization. Casa Latina of Seattle was also suggested as a model for Whatcom County to use for immigrant job seekers.



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Members and community members discussed the safety of immigrants while job searching with regards to the risk of deportation.

Process Subcommittee:

Tara moved to add Daniel to the Subcommittee. Holly seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Tara moved to add Daniel to the Outreach Subcommittee. Holly seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Tara asked Janice Keller, Interim Deputy Administrator, about appointments. Janice responded that she would like to meet with Process subcommittee about appointments but has been focused on the Immigrant Resource Center RFP process.

Tara asked why the Mayor suggested that members of the Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force be able to extend their terms but did not allow for re-appointment of Liz Darrow at the end of her first full term. Staff stated that the IPRTF is a board under a different jurisdiction and that the question about the Mayor's comments during the meeting would need to be directed to him.

Holly and Tara asked Janice about communication with the Mayor. Holly stated that she sees a lot of disrespect from the City when her e-mails go unacknowledged and that the break down of communication has led to a dissolution of trust that was built up after the retreat.

Board members and staff discussed the reasoning behind new board members being appointed to fill the remainder of a previous Board member's term. This is outlined in the originating ordinance for the Board, but can lead to confusion about who will be appointed to which term. This means that members appointed at the same time will have different term end dates. Tara suggested that the Mayor could assign shorter initial partial terms to members that he favored less than others. Janice assured that that was not the case and encouraged them to suggest a slot to fill when they make their recommendations.

Tara brought up the subject of planning for a Board retreat sometime this winter. Board members and staff discussed timing, with most members seeming to favor a January date, and logistics. Staff requested that this could either occur as part of the regular January meeting or as a special meeting, and asked that Tara or another Process subcommittee member get back to them with an outline of what the agenda might include and/or what the goals would be.

Federal Contact Data Subcommittee:



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Holly Pai stated that they had a productive meeting last week. They are working with the Keep Washington Working Implementation Table group to discuss implementation of the Act. Holly and Scott will be attending those meetings moving forward. The minutes from the last meeting state that the Attorney General's office is interested in following up on the contacts in Whatcom County. The volume of contacts has drawn the attention of the AG's office as well as others.

Tara and Holly will be approaching the City Attorney's office about a City wide policy that takes immigration status into consideration when creating plea deals with the City.

The committee has been looking at interlocal agreements between the City and Federal Immigration Enforcement. One is for the Stonegarden project and one is between the Bellingham Police Department and Homeland Security Investigations. Both contracts contain language stating that they will not share immigration related information, however the committee is looking at ways in which they could be strengthened. They would also like to work with a Councilmember to change the way that interlocal agreements and other legislation are approved. They would like to put a system in place in which the IAB is consulted on certain legislation or agreements.

Outreach Subcommittee:

This item was not discussed.

Old and New Business

Janice brought up the topic of bringing in the Planning Director to give a presentation on housing, explaining that at the last meeting there was conversation about housing and it sounded like there was a desire to have City staff with knowledge of the topic provide more information and answer questions. She stated that Planning Director Blake Lyon can give a presentation at a future meeting and that she can coordinate other department staff to come present on other topics as needed and wanted. Board members and staff discussed the best manner to go about this and ensure that any potential presentations are relevant to the group.

Review Action Items:

- Review Casa Latina's model of aiding immigrants in employment in a safe manner
- Find date for Process Subcommittee and Janice to meet regarding appointment issues
- Date for retreat

City's Response to Re-appointment Questions This item was addressed earlier in the agenda.



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Adjourn 8:52 PM



City of Bellingham Immigration Advisory Board Meeting Minutes September 19th 2023, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Daniel Cruz, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Jian He, Imanat Kang, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members absent: Gabriela Montenegro, Holly Pai

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Liaison: Kristina Michele Martens

City Communications Director and Interim Deputy Administrator: Janice Keller

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

Russian, Punjabi, and Spanish Interpreters

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Tara Villalba called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM

Equity Reminders

Tara Villalba did a land and border acknowledgment.

Tara Villalba acknowledged that not everyone's first language is English, and the City's practice of conducting business in English makes City government inaccessible to many community members. At IAB meetings, interpreters are available. She went over best practices for speaking while interpretation is occurring.

Roll Call

Approval of minutes

Liz Darrow moved to approve the August minutes. Tara Villalba seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Announcements

Welcome and Introduction of New Members - Jian He and Imanat Kang: Jian (Jim) He and Imanat Kang introduced themselves, saying a bit about why they joined the board.

Dignity Dialogues Coming Up: Liz Darrow stated that there will be a Dignity Dialogues event on October 2nd at 6:30 PM hosted by Community to Community Development. They will provide an



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update on Federal Immigration Policy as well as an update on what is happening locally at the event. The address is 1295 E. Bakerview Road, Bellingham 98226

Homero Israel Jose Garrido announced that a Lutheran church in Bellingham is closing down and selling the property. He said it would be a good location for an Immigrant Resource Center.

Public Comment

Community member Brenda Bentley stated that she had heard that the board had voted to recommend an appointment and a re-appointment and asked for an update.

Former board member, Sophia Rey said that she sent out an email to Mayor Seth Fleetwood and the Council members regarding reappointment of Liz Darrow and hasn't received a response. Homero said the same.

City of Bellingham Updates

Janice Keller stated that Mayor Fleetwood had planned to come to the meeting today to talk about the appointment and re-appointment items, but was unfortunately too sick to attend.

Janice announced that Climate Action week is coming up at the end of September with several events, including a Climate Action survey to ask community members what action items should come next from the City.

Janice reminded members about the Bellingham Plan (Comprehensive Plan), adding that there are two meetings coming up this month at which feedback will be taken.

Tara asked if the Climate survey would be available in other languages. Janice replied that it wasn't at this time. Tara asked Board members to weigh in on what languages they should ask for in a survey. They discussed the survey, its format, and who it is targeted towards. They agreed that the survey should be translated into Spanish, Russian, and Punjabi. Janice agreed to let the Board know if the contractor in charge of conducting the survey is able to translate the survey.

Tara asked if the Bellingham Plan meeting would have interpreters available. Janice said that Spanish language interpretation would be available at the in-person meeting and that information about the plan is available in five different languages.

Daniel Cruz asked how the City determines what opportunities for engagement offer interpretation or translation services. Janice spoke about the City's ongoing efforts to provide language access.



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Lelo Juarez Zeferino stated that he had hosted a meeting with farmworkers and other immigrant community members during which they compiled a list of the most important issues to them. The top items were rent control, health care, childcare, wages, climate, and immigration. A question that came up during that meeting was how to make their voices heard by the government. Janice said that bringing it to this meeting was a good start to that.

Daniel Cruz asked what the City was doing about the high cost of housing. Janice and City Council Liaison Kristina Michele Martens gave a summary of the City's efforts. Janice offered to invite other City staff to come to the meeting with more details on various City initiatives. Kristina said that she sees solutions in increasing staff in the Planning department or re-considering their current priorities.

Tara added that as part of her work with the Bellingham Tenant's Union, they have been working with the Planning Department and that keeping rent stable or lowering rent is not a possibility. Publicly owned affordable housing is affordable according to the income of the person, but the public-private partnerships tie affordability to the area median income, which means that those on fixed incomes can experience a rent raise when the area median income goes up. Those who are experiencing these challenges often face difficulties in accessing City government and making their voices heard.

Homero asked what the process would be for someone who needs help with housing. Imanat Kang said that it was also important that non-English speakers had access to the people who can help with these issues.

Tara stated that we cannot use our IAB meetings to field service calls, which is why it is very important to establish the Immigrant Resource Center

County Community Updates - Presentation on Community First Whatcom Mini Initiatives

Jace Cotton of Community First Whatcom presented to the group. He stated that mini-initiatives are a way to get issues in front of the County Council. His group has developed a seven part initiative and he gave a brief overview of each section. Once signatures are submitted, the County Council will consider it, however they are still at the beginning stages. More information can be received by emailing info@communityfirstwhatcom.org.

Subcommittee Reports:

Immigrant Resource Center Subcommittee:

Proposal for new member – Jian He: Jian summarized why he is interested in joining the subcommittee. Liz Darrow moved to approve Jian as a subcommittee member. Homero seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.



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Local Resource Update: This item was not discussed, as mentions of various resources had been made throughout the meeting.

Request for Proposals (RFP) Update: Lelo reported that the subcommittee met with City staff in late August to discuss the two respondents to the RFP. They had more questions for both applicants, so Janice is now tasked with getting those questions to the applicants via e-mail and via interviews with the subcommittee.

Process Subcommittee:

Appointment Update: This item was covered during public comment. Janice stated that she does not have answers about the specific appointments, however a conversation needs to take place about the appointment process as a whole. Janice, Tara, and Liz discussed how best to move forward on both the specific appointments and the overall appointment process.

Subcommittee Openings: Tara said that there are openings on the Process Subcommittee. Daniel Cruz expressed interest in joining.

Federal Contact Data Subcommittee:

Proposal for New Member – Jian He: Jian summarized why he is interested in joining the subcommittee. Tara moved to approve Jian as a subcommittee member. Homero seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Outreach Subcommittee:

Feedback for City on translation services: Board members, Jackie Lassiter, City Council Legislative Assistant, and Janice Keller discussed interpretation services for IAB meetings and throughout City services. Jian He reported on commonly spoken languages across the state.

Old and New Business

Review Action Items:

Tara and Liz will reach out to Daniel about his interest in the Process and Outreach Subcommittees.

Janice will reach out to other City staff to give a presentation on housing.

Janice will look into having the Mayor join an upcoming meeting.

Janice and the Process Subcommittee will meet regarding the appointment process.



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Lelo will follow up with Jace Cotton for more information about the mini-initiatives and gathering feedback from the immigrant community.

Lelo expressed interest in joining the Outreach Subcommittee.

Janice will look into language access for the Climate Survey and the Comprehensive Plan and will report back.

Lelo asked a question about having an acquaintance of his do interpretation for meetings.

Jackie and Janice suggested that the person contact The Language Exchange to become an interpreter with them, as that is the vendor that we use.

City's Response to Re-appointment Questions: This item was discussed earlier in the agenda.

Liz Darrow briefly talked about the RCW prohibiting political activities during City meetings.

Adjourn 8:23 PM



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January 16th 2024, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board members present: Daniel Cruz, Homero Israel Jose Garrido, Jian He, Imanat Kang, Tara Villalba, Alfredo (Lelo) Juarez Zeferino

Board members absent: Gabriela Montenegro, Holly Pai

Staff and Others Present:

City Council Liaison: Jace Cotton

City of Bellingham Mayor: Kim Lund

City Council Legislative Staff: Jackie Lassiter

City Council Member: Hannah Stone

City Council Member: Skip Williams

Russian, Punjabi, and Spanish Interpreters

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

Tara Villalba called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM

Equity Reminders

Tara made a land and border statement, acknowledging the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe, and that the border between the US and Canada is not part of the traditional lands of the peoples who were here prior to colonization.

Tara announced that January 22nd is Treaty Day and that there will be a Treaty Day film festival at the Pickford Movie theater.

Tara went over best practices for speaking while interpretation is occurring.

Roll Call

Approval of minutes

Homero Israel Jose Garrido moved to approve the December minutes. Lelo Juarez Zeferino seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.



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Public Comment

Members discussed the importance of public comment and at what point during IAB meetings members of the public should be able to speak.

Four members of the public gave comments:

Ashley D. Moncorro read a statement from Vamos Outdoor project board members opposing the proposed ordinance to suspend the IAB.

Candice stated that she hopes that a compromise can be found and that she feels that the voices of immigrants are important. She also sees that the ordinance has fair points as well.

Maya stated that she does not think the Board's work should be paused and, as someone who works with immigrants, she appreciates the work of the Board and wants to see it continue without stoppage.

Edgar Franks of Familias unidas por la Justicia stated that their union has taken a strong position to support the work of the IAB, which is one of the only places that community members can go to have their voices heard.

City of Bellingham Updates

Council Member Hannah Stone thanked members of the public for being at the meeting and for all the e-mailed comments as well. She went on to offer explanation for her ordinance proposing a suspension of the Board, highlighting:

- Her intention is not to end the IAB or silence the voices of immigrants.
- She feels a pause is necessary to determine what the differences in perspective between the Board and the City are and to outline a path forward
- The City's immediate concerns are centered around the issues over which it has purview to address.
- The City has failed to meet some of the expectations of the Board as well.

Council Member Stone acknowledged Council Members Jace Cotton and Skip Williams and Mayor Lund, who were all in attendance. Council Member Cotton introduced himself as the new liaison to the Board.

Community Updates

Each Board member in attendance spoke in opposition to the proposed ordinance suspending the IAB. Each member emphasized the importance of the work and their wish to continue without a pause.



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- Lelo Juarez Zeferino said that members have been asking for clear next steps and the office of the previous Mayor did not follow through with their commitments. He summarized the Request for Proposals process that they have been working through.
- Daniel Cruz said that he's been here for a few months and that nobody from the City ever approached board members to say that they were out of line. He said that being a Board member feels like a waste of time because of the lack of communication from the City. He thanked the Mayor and Council Members for being at the meeting.
- Imanant Kang said that when she joined in September, the same concerns were coming up. She said the biggest thing that needs to be worked on is communication. She was looking forward to the retreat to find out more about where the tensions were coming from.
- Homero Israel Jose Garrido said that communication is key, but if you do not speak the language, it is difficult to bring your ideas forward. He pointed out that the ordinance didn't reflect any of the work that they had accomplished. He said that outreach work was essential in order to gather ideas and to know what the community needs. He emphasized the importance of involvement from City elected officials and staff.
- Jian He expressed appreciation for all who were present. He acknowledged that yesterday was MLK day and that today in Bellingham we are still trying to make people's lives better. He said that the Board can set an example for other jurisdictions on how to establish communication between underrepresented community members and elected officials. He wants to bridge the gap between the Board and the City. He pointed out that no specific actions are stated in the ordinance and no accountability is built in. How can they ensure that community members can keep an eye on the happenings of the City, that they can have their voices heard, and that the ordinance will not be a de facto shut down of the Board?
- A [statement from Holly Pai](#) was read out loud.
- Tara Villalba passed out printed information to Board members and elected officials. She read a letter aloud expressing opposition to the ordinance and proposed to members that they officially send it to the City Council and Mayor.

Lelo moved to adopt the letter and deliver to the Mayor's office, City Council, and to have it posted on the website. Homero seconded the motion. Motion passed with no opposition.

Summary of Asks from the Immigration Advisory Board to City of Bellingham

Tara asked what the next steps would be if the Board is suspended. Mayor Kim Lund responded that the work of the Whatcom Racial Equity Commission would have representation from the immigrant community. She added that the City will be spending a significant amount of money on that group and she wants to make sure that members of the IAB are a part of that work.



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Council Member Stone said that she felt that the narrative that the pause is due to disfunction is inaccurate. She said that there is responsibility on all sides – she has witnessed the City’s lack of response and engagement. She said the work the IAB has been taking on has great value to the community, but there hasn’t been a City component to the work. She also envisioned having a working group to examine what is needed and resolidify the commitment to the work.

Tara opened the meeting up public comment again. Six members of the public spoke:

- Eduardo said that the ordinance lacked substance and showed that the City didn’t know enough about the work of the IAB. He said that an investigation in to the accusation of the ordinance should be made, but it lacks foundation for a suspension.
- Joel Johnson, organizing director of OneAmerica, said he was here in support of Board members and in solidarity with Community to Community Development. He said they are all in opposition to the ordinance. He highlighted that the intent of the ordinance is different than the impact it will have.
- Malia said that she was opposed to the suspension and said that the IAB is a direct tie to the immigrant community. It is a beautiful opportunity to sit with discomfort and ask how we can all show up and create a new and better version.
- Tally Jones said that she appreciates all the work of the Board members and their sacrifice. She sees the suspension as disregarding the work.
- Sunida said that she is disappointed because the ordinance would also shut down the talks of the Immigrant Resource Center. She said that the IAB is the only place for her to come and gather information to bring back to her community, such as information in Spanish about winter shelter options.
- Von Ochoa, former IAB Board member, said that language about this being a shutdown or a halt is a misrepresentation of what the ordinance said. He spoke to a culture of contempt in the Board and said that when he was a board member and tried to recruit other members, he would encounter hesitancy from community members when they found out who comprised the Board. He said that they are all in favor of migrant rights, but the space has devolved into insults and accusations. He said he was in support of a pause in the work.

Lelo thanked everyone for attending. He stated that he wants the Immigrant Resource Center to be for everyone, not just farm workers. He said that the IRC would not represent overlapping work, but would be a new establishment that reflects what the community wants.

He went on to say that the statement regarding the conflict at meetings was not true, as evidence by the number of people who were attending the meeting tonight.

Tara opened the meeting up to public comment again. Three members of the public spoke:



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- Dena Jensen thanked Board members for their work. She said that it is difficult to believe the City when they say they do not intend to dissolve the board or replace it entirely because it seems that the City does not know the work that has been done.
- Ian thanked members for their service and said that they fill a unique roll that wouldn't be filled by the Whatcom Racial Equity Commission.
- Michael said that he has been following the work of the IAB since before its official creation. He said that he felt the Ordinance was insulting.

Adjourn 8:46 PM