



COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Human Rights Commission

Recommendation Number 20200824-002a: Recommendation to Require the Mayor of Austin Appoint a Democratically Elected Chief of Police

WHEREAS, the current structure of policing has been well-documented to be a problematic and racist institution which was initially organized as slave patrols; and,

WHEREAS, One of the most common feedback comments this commission is offered by the community is the restructuring of policing and community safety; and,

WHEREAS, The City Council of Austin has recently reallocated funds for the police in an effort to redress community needs; and,

WHEREAS, The current Chief of Police is complicit in the violation of Austin Residents' Human Rights according to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Articles 18, 19, 20); and,

WHEREAS, The right to freely chosen leadership is enshrined in Article 21 of The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and,

WHEREAS, There is no logical, sound argument made to justify that the federal executor of laws is democratically elected and the local executor is not; and,

WHEREAS, Austin Police Department, like many others, has a known reputation for unfair and racially biased practices, which has been verified by a recent report demonstrating for a number of years the only people the police killed were Black or Brown; and,

WHEREAS, The current appointment process lends a distorted amount of power to representatives.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Human Rights Commission recommends the Austin City Council pass an ordinance with the effect of committing the Mayor of Austin to appoint a Chief of Police that has won a local election for that position, either through a formal special-called election, or an informal, city-funded and administered process, or in the renegotiation of the police contract.

Date of Approval: August 24, 2020

Record of the vote: 6-1-1; Commissioner White motion, Commissioner Griffith second. Voting in favor were Chair Davis, Commissioner Breckenridge, Commissioner Caballero, Commissioner Griffith, Commissioner Santana, and Commissioner White. Voting against was Commissioner Garry Brown. Vice Chair Jamarr Brown abstained. Commissioner Casas, Commissioner Museitif, and Commissioner Weigel were absent.

Attest: Jonathan Babiak

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Staff Liaison, Human Rights Commission