



***JOINT INCLUSION COMMITTEE (JIC)***  
***REGULAR MEETING MINUTES***  
***WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28th, 2023***

The JOINT INCLUSION COMMITTEE convened in a REGULAR meeting on WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28th, 2023, at AUSTIN CITY HALL - BOARDS & COMMISSIONS ROOM, 301 W. 2ND STREET in AUSTIN, TEXAS.

Chair AMANDA AFIFI called the JOINT INCLUSION COMMITTEE MEETING to order at 3:05pm CST.

**Commissioners in Attendance:**

***Hispanic/Latino Quality-of-Life-Resource Advisory Commission: Amanda Afifi (Chair)***

**Commissioners in Attendance Remotely:**

***African American Resource Advisory Commission: Serita Fontanesi***

***Asian American Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission: Hanna Huang***

***Commission for Women: Rebecca Austen***

***Commission on Aging: Richard Bondi***

***Commission on Immigrant Affairs: Miriam Dorantes & Melissa Ortega***

***Human Rights Commission: Kimberly Brienzi & Morgan Davis***

**Commissioners Absent:**

***Early Childhood Council: Leonor Vargas & Eliza Gordon***

***LGBTQ+ Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission: VACANT***

***Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities: Jennifer Powell & Elizabeth Meyer***

**Staff in Attendance:**

***Jeremy Garza, Business Process Consultant – Equity Office***

**MEETING MINUTES**

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: GENERAL**

The first ten speakers signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will each be allowed a three-minute allotment to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

**Whitney Holt: City of Austin APH employe speaking independently as community member on the equity impacts of the city’s repeal of telework.**

**Ben Suddaby: Presendet of AFSCME LOCAL 1624 and Travis County employee on how withdrawing the telework policy would negatively impacts the communitis represented by the commission members of the Joint Inclusion Committee.**

**Jose Perez: City of Austin worker speaking indepdently as a life-long Austinite with 14 years tenure working in th City on the personal effects of removing telework and the business benefits of maintaining telework employee benefits.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Approve the minutes of the COMMITTEE’s REGULAR MEETING on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**The minutes from the meeting of APRIL 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, were approved on COMMISSIONER REBECCA AUSTEN’s motion, COMMISSIONER HANNA HUANG’s second on a 6 – 0 vote. (Off the Dais: LGBTQ Quality-of-Life Resource Advisory Commission. Absent: Early Childhood Council, Leonor Vargas/Eliza Gordan AND the Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities, Jennifer Powell & Elizabeth Meyer.**

**STAFF BRIEFING**

2. Whitney Holt, Austin Public Health Social Services Funding Specialist – on the equity impacts of the city’s repeal of telework.

**The motion to indefinitely table agenda item #2 because it was incorrectly placed on the agenda as a “Staff Briefing” instead of a “Community Briefing” was approved on COMMISSIONER RICHARD BONDI’s motion, COMMISSIONER KYMBERLY BRIENZI’s second on a 6 – 0 vote. (Off the Dais: LGBTQ Quality-of-Life Resource Advisory Commission. Absent: Early Childhood Council, Leonor Vargas/Eliza Gordan AND the Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities, Jennifer Powell & Elizabeth Meyer.**

3. Budget Office staff briefing on changes to the budget process this year.

**Item tabled to next month at the request of the Budget Office.**

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#### **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

4. Discussion on the FY23-24 Financial Forecast and Equity Action's Community Investment Budget with possible action to recommend City Council take action to fund the items that are not currently included in the FY24 budget.

**Information was provided by Commissioner Daniela Silva, from the Hispanic/Latino Quality-of-Life Resource Advisory Commission, about the work of Equity Action in building a coalition of over 45 community organizations in Austin in support of the Community Investment Budget.**

5. Discussion on FY24-25 Community Townhalls on the Budget with possible action to affirm the dates & times, including: Town Hall #1 EVENING/NIGHT on Wednesday October 18th, 2023; Town Hall #2 DAYTIME on Thursday October 26th, 2023; and Town Hall #3 WEEKEND on Saturday, November 4th, 2023.

**The motion to agree with the recommendation of these three town hall dates, with the modification that the town hall #2 be moved to a virtual format only and requesting the staff liaison to inquire to the budget office about if a fourth town hall (hosted virtually only) be added to this FY24-25 community engagement schedule was approved on COMMISSIONER KIMBERLY BRIENZE's motion, COMMISSIONER REBECCA AUSTEN's second on a 6 – 0 vote. (Off the Dais: LGBTQ Quality-of-Life Resource Advisory Commission. Absent: Early Childhood Council, Leonor Vargas/Eliza Gordan AND the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities, Jennifer Powell & Elizabeth Meyer.**

6. Discussion on Interim City Manager Jesus Garza's recommendation to hold off bonds until 2026, affecting the cultural centers (including MACC, AARC, & Dougherty Arts) with possible action to recommend City Council take action on this issue.

**This recommendation to delay the bond election comes from the Finance Department and City Manager's Office, who say capital funds need to be spent down from bonds passed in previous elections. The City Manager created the Capital Delivery Services office to ensure that previous bond money gets spent since delays in spending those funds as become a chronic issue city-wide. The high amount of bond funds that have yet to be spent affects the city's credit rating.**

**The recommendation to delay the bond election until 2026, which will significantly delay renovations and expansion of the Asian American Resource Center (AARC), the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC), and the Dougherty Arts Center (DAC), the later of which is in a critical state of decline that is unsustainable without bond funding for a new building. It takes two years for funds from a bond election to be allocated, so a funds from a bond election in 2024 would get allocated in 2026, but if that election gets delayed till 2026, then funds will not be available until near the end of the decade, in 2028 at the earliest.**

**How do things get on a bond election? In two ways: the department nominates certain items they have already studied and determined can move forward. Or, the will of the public can push an item to a bond election. In 2018, community organizing and the will of the people successfully advocated for the Bond Committee and City Council members to add cultural centers to the 2018 bond election. Unfortunately, the construction cost in 2018 is not what it is today, it has doubled! Therefore, the 2018 bonds provide insufficient funding for cultural centers due to exploding construction costs.**

**There are concerns about capacity at all the current cultural centers, the effect of displacement of staff, programming, and artists from the MACC which is currently closed for renovations. There is a desire on behalf of the committee to advocate for the activation of the Joint Cultural Committee to help advocate for all the cultural centers in Austin, including and beyond the debates for the 2024 bond measures.**

**Paths of action for the Commission: It is ultimately up to City Council to decide whether to delay or hold a 2024 Bond Election. Commissioners Hanna Huang and the Asian American Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission will work on drafting and passing a resolution/recommendation to City Council that seeks support for a Bond Election in 2024 for cultural centers, which have historically been underprioritized in bond elections. The Asian American Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission will bring this recommendation to the JIC regular meeting in July for joint endorsement.**

7. Discussion and possible action on endorsing the LGBTQ Commission & Human Rights Commission resolution on Transgender Rights.

**The motion to jointly endorse the Human Rights Commission's recommendation to City Council on supporting Transgender Rights was approved on COMMISSIONER REBECCA AUSTEN's motion, COMMISSIONER RICHARD BONDI's second on a 5 – 1–0 vote. (Abstain: Human Rights Commission, Kimberly Brienzi. Off the Dais: LGBTQ Quality-of-Life Resource Advisory Commission. Absent: Early Childhood Council, Leonor Vargas/Eliza Gordan AND the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities, Jennifer Powell & Elizabeth Meyer.**

8. Discussion on future goals and priorities for the Committee.

**Tabled to next month at the request of Commissioner Rebecca Austen so missing representatives from the Early Childhood Council, the LGBTQ+ Quality-of-Life Resource Advisory Commission, and the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities can be present for this discussion.**

9. Discussion on workgroups with possible action on dissolving, establishing, or altering the membership of any workgroups, as needed by the Committee.

**No Action Taken.**

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

10. Call for items from Committee Members:

**Staff presentation on Community Health Workers from Austin Public Health.**

**Discussion and possible action to pass a recommendation to City Council urging them to maintain the open Telework Policy for City of Austin staff.**

**Discussion on future goals and priorities for the Committee.**

**Discussion on workgroups with possible action on dissolving, establishing, or altering the membership of any workgroups, as needed by the Committee.**

**Community Briefing from Chris Hayes regarding the Community Investment Budget**

**Discussion and possible action on changing the regular meeting time of the Joint Inclusion Committee.**

**Staff Briefing from Diana Gray and Charles Lucen from the Homeless Strategy Response Team from the City of Austin.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

11. The meeting adjourned at: **5:15 pm**

**The motion to *adjourn the meeting* was approved without objection.**

**JOINT INCLUSION COMMITTEE (JIC)  
MEETING MINUTES**

**JUNE 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

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The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. Meeting locations are planned with wheelchair access. If requiring Sign Language Interpreters or alternative formats, please give notice at least 2 days (48 hours) before the meeting date. For additional information please call the Equity Office's Business Process Consultant at (512) 987-1797 or email at [jeremy.garza@austintexas.gov](mailto:jeremy.garza@austintexas.gov). TTY users route through Relay Texas at 711.

For more information on the **Joint Inclusion Committee**, please contact Jeremy Garza via phone at (512) 987-1797 or (preferably) via email at [jeremy.garza@austintexas.gov](mailto:jeremy.garza@austintexas.gov).

**\*\*These meeting minutes were approved at the Commission's REGULAR MEETING on JULY 26th, 2023, on COMMISSIONER SERITA FONTANESI's motion, COMMISSIONER JENNIFER POWELL's second on a 9 – 0 vote.**