

**PIERCE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES
COMMISSION ON REFUGEE & IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS MEETING**

5:00 – 6:34 p.m.

May 1, 2023

Members: Alice Fong, Representing Pierce County Council District 6 – present
 Diana Bullen, Representing Pierce County Council District 2 - present
 Erasmo Ruiz, Representing Pierce County Council District 3 - excused
 George Conzuelo, Pierce County Council Representing Youth – present
 Gloria Rodriguez, Pierce County Council Representing District 1 – present
 Jennifer Li Dotson, Pierce County Council Representing District 4 – excused
 Lara Cooper, Representing Pierce County Council District 7 – absent
 Thierry Ruboneka, At Large Member – absent

Guests: Jaclyn Kirby, PCHS Intern

Staff: Anika Moran, Special Advisor to the Director, Pierce County Human Services
 Becki Foutz, Administrative Assistant, Pierce County Human Services

MINUTES

TOPIC/ WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Call to Order Anika Moran	The meeting was called to order at 5:06 p.m. Attendance per above; a quorum was not present.	Wel- come, all!
Approval of April Minutes Anika Moran	Approval of April minutes will be tabled until the next meeting when hopefully a quorum will be present.	The April minutes will be ap- proved at the next meeting.
Public Comment & Good of the Order Alice Fong	None.	
Update on District 5 Candidates Anika Moran	Camila Maturana, an immigration lawyer, seems to be a great fit for the Board to represent District 5. Her appointment process is in progress. If our new member hasn't joined by the June meeting, George felt it would be a good idea for George and Alice to meet with them and answer their questions.	More to come.

TOPIC/WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month Alice Fong</p>	<p>Last meeting Jennifer asked what would be done in honor of Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month. On behalf of the Commission, Alice would like to do something; a social media post would be good. Alice suggested that we calendar the other cultural heritage months so they may be observed as well. Diana agreed that we need to be inclusive and honor each heritage the same way. Gloria asked if there's a month for Eastern European or former Russian country heritage. She Googled and provided a list of Heritage months (link at right).</p> <p>If we would like a table at Latinx Heritage Month, Gloria can help us get one. It was held at the Tacoma Armory the past two years; no information yet about this year's event. Diana offered to work on that with Gloria. There are many themes in one month, so Gloria suggested narrowing it down to types of heritage, like Black History, Jewish American, etc.</p>	<p>Thank you, Gloria and Diana!</p> <p>Heritage and History Months</p>
<p>Leadership for the Next Six Months Alice Fong</p>	<p>Erasmio nominated George as Chair, and George is willing to serve! Is anyone interested in serving as Vice Chair? Diana volunteered.</p>	<p>Thank you, Diana! Nominations and bios will be shared with the full group.</p>
<p>Vision Statement Alice Fong</p>	<p>Alice noted that the Commission needs to work on the Vision statement further, with everyone participating in person. Diana agreed and suggested that we plan this far enough in advance so that everyone can attend in person. Gloria is leaning more towards September but said that August could work as well.</p> <p>Becki will Doodle poll Commissioners for all the Mondays in August and September to see which one works for everyone for an in-person meeting.</p>	<p>An in-person meeting will be planned, for August or September, per Doodle Poll results.</p>

TOPIC/WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>By-Laws Alice Fong</p>	<p>Alice will send the draft By-Laws to the group for review and comment.</p>	<p>By-Laws will be reviewed at the next meeting.</p>
<p>Three Areas of Focus Alice Fong</p>	<p>Core values of the Commission are: interconnectedness, equity, compassion, and open-mindedness. The group needs to select three areas of focus. Alice added that Anika reminded her that the Council also wants this group to work on E-Verify.</p> <p>Perhaps one of them could be Employment, which would encompass E-Verify. Gloria likes Employment; she noted that oftentimes employers are not informed about the refugee process. Individuals can be waiting for a social security card that’s already been issued for a month – that’s an important barrier to note. When employing someone who’s been resettled, employers don’t have to pay to sponsor individuals. Many employers assume they’ll have to do that.</p> <p>Citizenship doesn’t officially fall under the Commission’s jurisdiction, but we can help with education and directing people to appropriate resources. Gloria said that school enrollment is often a struggle. Diana suggested Education as a broad category with School Enrollment, Process to Citizenship, DACA, and Dreamers beneath it.</p> <p>Protection of Civil Rights was listed by multiple commissioners. George doesn’t know of any threats to civil rights to our immigrants here in Pierce County; he was thinking of merging it with Promote Civic Engagement. The NW Detention Center comes to mind; however, we can’t really do much about that. Alice’s dream is for neighbors to come together and be civically engaged. We need leaders to step up and help us move forward and engage our new neighbors to feel welcome to do that. George agreed. He likes the quote, “We want to braid them into the fabric of our reality.” We want to create unity within our community. There’s something special about Pierce County and we want to be intentional about making it even better. We need to help heal and restore relationships for communities who have chosen Pierce County as their home.</p> <p>Gloria liked how at the last meeting it was discussed that Pierce County leadership demographics should ideally match up with the population’s demographics. How do we encourage people of under-represented groups to run for office?</p>	<p>Members present selected Employment, Education and Promoting Civic Engagement as the three areas of focus. Final voting will take place via email.</p>

TOPIC/WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>Three Areas of Focus Alice Fong</p>	<p>Members not present tonight will be contacted and explained that the group landed on Employment, Education, and Promoting Civic Engagement. Each member present was assigned a buddy to contact.</p> <p>George – Lara. Gloria – Thierry. Diana – Jennifer. Alice – Erasmo.</p>	<p>Final voting will be conducted via email.</p>
<p>Guest Speakers at Future Meetings Alice Fong</p>	<p>Are there specific things Commissioners would like to hear more about on the topics of Employment, Education and Promote Civic Engagement?</p> <p>George feels that Employment would be the hardest one. Diana agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone who understands the laws affecting employment of immigrants would be ideal; it would be good to get multiple perspectives on that. • Someone in education who could talk about the citizenship process. • Someone who could explain the financial services available. • Gloria asked if there’s someone who could come explain what the government sees on the back end of E-Verify. Councilmember Mello’s the one who brought up E-Verify, so we can probably ask him. Anika offered to be intermediary with the Council. 	<p>Brainstorming!</p>
<p>King County Immigrant & Refugee Commission Alice Fong</p>	<p>Alice met her counterpart from King County! The King County Immigrant & Refugee Commission was formed in 2018. Currently they’re looking into ICE going to the King County Airport, and are writing letters to Councilmembers, etc.</p>	<p>Informational</p>
<p>Appreciation & Adjourn</p>	<p>Alice appreciates the Commission for stepping up, being part of this, and helping to make Pierce County an inclusive society.</p> <p>Diana thanked Alice for everything she does. George offered his appreciation to Alice as well.</p> <p>Anika thanked Diana for stepping up to the Vice Chair role.</p> <p>George thanked Anika for facilitating since Stefanie’s sick.</p> <p>Alice thanked Becki for taking notes, and Anika for facilitating.</p>	<p>Thanks to all!</p>

The next CRIA meeting is Monday, June 5 at 5:00 via Zoom and in the SV Muckleshoot Conference Room. Respectfully submitted, Becki Foutz, Administrative Assistant

Chat from 5/1/23 Commission on Refugee & Immigrant Affairs Meeting

From Gloria Rodriguez to Everyone 05:04 PM

hello

From Alice Fong to All Panelists 05:09 PM

Gloria?

From Gloria Rodriguez to Everyone 05:10 PM

Thierry says he is it works and can join as a listener

From Alice Fong to All Panelists 05:15 PM

Thank you Gloria! :)

Jaclyn Would you like to share?

From Gloria Rodriguez to Everyone 05:28 PM

<https://www.state.gov/state-department-celebrates-heritage-and-history-months/>

From Anika Moran to All Panelists 05:30 PM

Congratulations!!!!

From Diana Bullen to Everyone 05:31 PM

Thank you :)

From Anika Moran to All Panelists 05:39 PM

Ha!!!

Glad you made it!!!

From George Conzuelo to All Panelists 05:51 PM

Thanks Anika!!

From George Conzuelo to All Panelists 06:17 PM

Thank you Alice!

From Alice Fong to All Panelists 06:18 PM



From Anika Moran to All Panelists 06:23 PM

Perhaps the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project?

Awesome :)

From Jaclyn Kirby to Everyone 06:32 PM

I always appreciate what I learn from you all!