



# BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Salt Lake City

## Human Rights Commission

*Annual Report 2023*

### **A Message from the Chair and Vice Chair**

It was an honor to serve as the Chair and Vice Chair of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) for a consecutive year. The defining characteristic of 2023 for the commission has been one of transition. The combination of several unexpected vacancies on the HRC and the end of both the Chair and Vice Chair's terms at the end of the year has put an emphasis on preparing the mostly newly appointed commissioners to take over and continue the HRC's important work. There was a focus on imparting the institutional knowledge and best practices of policies and procedures that existed before the COVID-19 pandemic, which had created drastic changes in these processes including an entirely virtual meeting format for the last two years. While getting the new commissioners up to speed, we still managed to make sure that the HRC met its obligations under city code to fill positions on other boards and commissions including the Racial Equity in Policing Commission, Accessibility and Disability Commission, and the Community Recovery Committee that distributed the federal ARPA grant funds where we provided a human rights perspective. As the commissioners got more comfortable with going back to in-person meetings, we held a commission retreat where it was determined that the HRC would like to incorporate a more proactive and public-facing effort at community engagement and outreach. This would be in addition to the continued relationship building with city departments and the Mayor's Office through our collaboration on various policy recommendations and initiatives.

This restructure will require the HRC general meeting calendar to shift to a bi-monthly schedule as well as shifting from subcommittees to a delegation of assignments to individual commissioners. Finally, initial steps were taken to form a partnership with the Westside Coalition to host a community listening forum concerning homelessness in February 2024. Looking forward, the HRC will continue to be involved with the implementation of the CEDAW ordinance and collaborating with the Equity and Inclusion Team on various projects. The HRC is grateful for Michelle Mooney, Equity Manager for her direction, guidance, and support through this transition. We are excited for the future of the commission and our ongoing commitment to advancing human rights in Salt Lake City.

Sincerely,

Jason Wessel, Chair

Esther Stowell, Vice Chair

## Commission Members

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Commissioner Jason Wessel, District 1, Chair (REP Commissioner)  
Commissioner Esther Stowell, District 2, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Olivia Jaramillo, District 3  
Commissioner Will Terry, District 4  
Commissioner Jennifer Mayer-Glenn, District 5  
Commissioner David Leta, District 6  
Commissioner Shauna Doumbia, District 7 (Ending March 2023)  
Commissioner Everette Bacon, At-Large (ADC Commissioner)  
Commissioner Pamela Silberman, At-Large

## 2023 Overview

Throughout this year of “transition,” the HRC was able to fulfill their obligations per city code on other boards and commissions to include Racial Equity in Policing Commission, Accessibility and Disability Commission, and the Community Recovery Committee to assist with the awarding of federal ARPA grant funds to community organizations. The commission met with various city departments and related community partners to discuss issues related to human rights to identify ways they can advocate or support in their efforts. In addition, they continued collaboration on policy review, recommendations, and other initiatives to include Thriving in Place, Language Access, and Refugees and New Americans. This year, the HRC coordinated and hosted another Human Rights Day celebration in honor of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights with an increasing attendance from 200 community members.

## Review of 2023 Goals & Priorities

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- **CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women)**
  - The HRC will support the Chief Equity Officer and Equity Manager in implementing the Intersectional Gender Equity Analysis, including internal data collection, and community listening session(s).
- **Homelessness**
  - Participation in Salt Lake Valley Commission to End Homelessness.
  - Request to take part in the process when policy is being taken to legislature, and draft letters of support for policy and programming.
- **Gentrification**
  - Addressing geographic inequity based on information provided in the gentrification study and transmit relevant policy recommendations to the Mayor and City Council.
- **Refugees & New Americans**
  - Create procedure for consistency on gathering ethnic/racial demographic data aligning with the federal census guidelines.
  - Receive monthly updates from the Policy Advisor for Refugees and New Americans and Language Access Coordinator.
  - Facilitate community listening sessions.
  - Review subcommittee plan and provide recommendations.
- **Children/Youth Advocacy**
  - Establish a children/youth advocacy subcommittee.
  - Establish a new at-large commissioner for a minor (under 18).

### **COMPLETE:**

- Establish a children/youth advocacy subcommittee.
- Organize an in-person commission retreat to share institutional knowledge.
- Provide input on completed Thriving in Place Study prior to transmittal process.
- Host and coordinate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Human Rights Day Celebration.

### **IN PROGRESS/ONGOING:**

- Participation in the Salt Lake Valley Coalition to End Homelessness.
- Support the Chief Equity Officer and Equity Manager in the implementation process for the CEDAW ordinance.
- Receive monthly updates from the Policy Advisor for Refugees and New Americans, Language Access Coordinator, and Title VI Coordinator.
- Collaborate with the Policy Advisor for Refugees and New Americans on a specific community resource guide for refugees.

### **INCOMPLETE:**

- Facilitate community listening sessions led by HRC members.
- Establish a new at-large commissioner for a minor (under 18).
- Create a procedure for consistency on gathering ethnic/racial demographic data aligning with the federal census guidelines.
- Transmit relevant policy recommendations to Mayor and City Council.

## **Commission Goals & Priorities for 2024**

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- Continue working on the outstanding 2023 goals and priorities.
- Restructure the commission to have individual members assigned to various human rights issues impacting Salt Lake City.
- Increase commission visibility with City departments that have a role in policymaking.
- Facilitate bi-annually or quarterly community engagement initiatives (e.g., forums, listening sessions, panel discussions).
- Serve as a liaison between the City and the community on policies impacting human rights.
- Advise policy update and work with necessary departments involved with honorary street names and historical markers project.

## Appendix:

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HRC Ordinance ([https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/saltlakecityut/latest/saltlakecity\\_ut/0-0-0-51190](https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/saltlakecityut/latest/saltlakecity_ut/0-0-0-51190))

CEDAW Ordinance  
(<https://webdme.slcgov.com/AdoptedLegislation/DocView.aspx?id=4693772&dbid=0&repo=SLC>)

Thriving in Place Study (<https://www.thrivinginplaceslc.org/>)

Refugees and New Americans Website (<https://www.slc.gov/equity/new-americans-refugees/>)

Language Access Website (<https://www.slc.gov/equity/language-access-services/>)

Community Recovery Committee (<https://www.slc.gov/boards/boards-commissions/community-recovery-committee/>)