

**Albany Human Relations Commission**  
**Annual Report (January – December 2013)**  
**Date: December 29, 2013**

The Human Relations Commission was established in 2007 “to promote harmonious relations among citizens of Albany” through recommendations of “programs, activities, ordinances, expenditures and other appropriate governmental activities which will serve the goal of maintaining respectful interactions within our community.” (Ord. 5671 § 1, 2007; Ord. 5665 § 1, 2007).

A brief review of Commission activities during 2013 is set forth below. A history of Commission membership and attendance is attached to this report.

**January 2013:**

Presented the second annual Albany Human Relations Award to Miao Zhao at the City Council Meeting. The award was created to recognize individuals, organizations, or businesses in Albany that have worked to promote harmonious relations among the citizens of Albany. Selection will be based on a demonstrated commitment to promoting human relations, diversity, and/or equality through community programs and activities. Zhao was recognized for her work with the InReach Clinic and other community work.

Members participated in the reading of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s, Letter from Birmingham Jail at Linn-Benton Community College in observance of MLK Jr.’s Birthday.

**February 2013:**

Members met with Jennifer Sanders, Chief Operations Officer for Linn-Benton Housing Authority (LBHA). Jennifer Sanders explained how the LBHA runs the Section 8 program and various other housing projects. She said statistics show that their programs are not helping the minority groups in proportion to the population.

**March 2013:**

Members attended a “Continue the Dream” event in which Albany students in grades 3 and 6-8 and their teachers presented art and writing students had created to reflect the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**May 2013:**

Participated in the HEART to Heart Resource Fair. Members invited Fair participants to complete a survey focused on access to community resources. The survey listed 19 public and nonprofit resources and asked respondents about their comfort level in accessing each. Twenty-one participants completed the survey.

**July 2013:**

Members acted as greeters at the July 4 River Rhythms concert, welcoming concert-goers and handing out programs.

**August 2013:**

Members attended the August 1 River Rhythms concert, welcoming concert-goers and handing out information about future events.

**September 2013:**

Participated in Festival Latino. HRC members served as Festival greeters, welcoming people as they arrived and urging them to participate in the Festival raffle.

**October 2013:**

Distributed and publicized information and nomination forms for the Annual Human Relations Award.

Three members visited the Cornelius Multicultural Center and met with staff to hear about Center history, focus, and programs. These members shared the information they had gathered with the full Commission at the October joint meeting with the Hispanic Advisory Council.

Met jointly with the Hispanic Advisory Council to discuss progress since the last meeting in 2012, current work of each group, and issues or concerns for focus in the coming year. After the presentation on the Cornelius Center (above), members discussed the desirability of reaching out to the community through a needs assessment. HRC members voted to take advantage of the availability of an OSU graduate student and preceptorship to recommend that focus groups be held to gather input from the Latino community about community experience, needs, and strengths. Other HAC/HRC discussion focused on how to assure accessible resources and information to the community year-round. Members of both groups expressed great satisfaction with the meeting and the information shared.

**November 2013:**

Members participated in the Annual Summit on Homelessness. Members met with Frank Moore and Clifford Hartman from the Linn County Mental Health Department; and Tony Howell from the Linn County Alcohol and Drug Program, to begin preliminary discussion about possible activities to observe Mental Health Awareness Month in May. Members also met with Tara Dixon, GAPS McKinney-Vento (homeless student) Liaison; Monica Lorence, Linn County Outreach Coordinator of Jackson Street Youth Shelter, and Andrea Myhre, Grant Officer with the Jackson Street Youth Shelter; and Cristie Lynch, Marketing & Communications Manager for Samaritan Health; who shared data and information about children and youth in Albany who do not have homes, the services available, and the gaps in services and resources. Ms. Lorence also shared information about the planned opening of a youth shelter in Linn County.

**December 2013:**

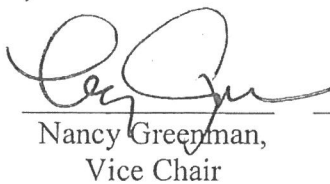
Members attended the City's annual memorials for unhoused people who had died during the past year.

The Commission HR Award Subcommittee selected the recipients of the third annual Human Relations Award to be presented in January 2013. This year's awards include both an individual and a nonprofit organization recipient.

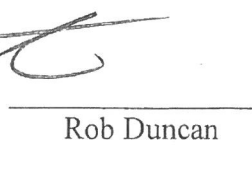
**Conclusion:** Looking back, the Commission is grateful for the opportunities available to further its purpose. It is especially grateful for the support and assistance of City of Albany staff, including City Manager Wes Hare, City Public Information Officer Marilyn Smith, and Administrative Assistants Diana Eilers and Gina Burrese; and of its collaborative partners, including Linn County Mental Health, Linn Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee, and Oregon State University. It is also grateful to City, County, and community partner staff members who attended meetings to share information and answer questions, including Jennifer Sanders of the Linn Benton Housing Authority; Greg Roe of the United Way; Chief Mario Lattanzio of the Albany Police Department; Katie Nooshazar, Debbi Richards, and Rose Lacey of the Albany Parks & Recreation Department; Anne Catlin of the Community Development Department; Frank Moore, Clifford Hartman, and Tony Howell of the Linn County Mental Health Department and Mental Health Advisory Board; Tara Dixson of GAPS; and Monica Lorence of Jackson Street Youth Shelter; and to Executive Assistant Laura Hyde for her work on preparing the Commission history that is attached to this report. We look forward to continuing these and other positive activities in the future.

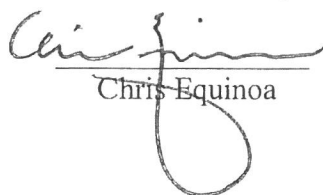
Respectfully submitted,

  
Kim Whitley, Chair

  
Nancy Greenman,  
Vice Chair

  
Javier Cervantes

  
Rob Duncan

  
Chris Equinoa

Jay Sluiter

Tina Dodge Vera

## Human Relations Commission

### Commission Established

Council adopted Ordinance No. 5665, March 28, 2007, creating Albany Municipal Code Chapter 2.25, establishing the Human Relations Commission (HRC).

Council adopted Ordinance No. 5671, May 9, 2007, amending AMC 2.25.020 [commissioners must reside within the Albany city limits] and 2.25.030 [initial terms to be staggered according to the appointee's surname beginning with three-year terms for those closest to the beginning of the alphabet].

Purpose: The Human Relations Commission was established by the Albany City Council to promote harmonious relations among the citizens of Albany. It is created to recommend programs, activities, ordinances, expenditures, and other appropriate governmental activities which will serve the goal of maintaining respectful interactions within our community.

### First Commissioners

Name	Appointed By	Appointment Date	Term Expiration Date	Comments
Rafael Palacios	Mayor Doug Killin	07-25-2007	12-31-2007	Resigned 08-08-2007; he relocated to California; Blanca Ruckert appointed as replacement.
Blanca Ruckert	Mayor Doug Killin	08-08-2007	12-31-2007	none
Jodi Nelson	Councilor Dan Bedore	07-25-2007	12-31-2007	none
Rick Hammel, Jr.	Councilor Dick Olsen	07-25-2007	12-31-2008	none
DeJia Guillen	Councilor Ralph Reid, Jr.	07-25-2007	12-31-2008	none
C. Jeffery Evans	Councilor Sharon Konopa	07-25-2007	12-31-2009	none
Marian Anderson	Councilor Jeff Christman	07-25-2007	12-31-2009	none
Anna Anderson	Councilor Bessie Johnson	08-08-2007	12-31-2009	none

HRC's first meeting was Tuesday, September 25, 2007. At the second meeting [October 23, 2007], the first Chair and Vice Chair were elected. C. Jeffery Evans was elected Chair and Blanca Ruckert as Vice Chair.

Subsequent Commissioners

Resignations/Reappointments/New Appointments

- Blanca Ruckert was reappointed 01-07-2008 by Mayor Killin; new term expires 12-31-2010.
- Jodi Nelson was reappointed 01-09-2008 by Councilor Bedore; new term expires 12-31-2010.
- Anna Anderson resigned 08-13-2008; Councilor Johnson appointed Kim Whitley on 08-27-2008, as her replacement for the term expiring 12-31-2009.
- Delia Guillen resigned 09-09-2008; Councilor Reid appointed John Hartman on 10-22-2008, as her replacement for the term expiring 12-31-2008.
- Margaret Martinez was appointed 01-14-2009 by Councilor Reid replacing John Hartman, whose term expired 12-31-2008. Margaret's three-year term expires 12-31-2011.
- Nancy Greenman was appointed 01-14-2009 by Councilor Olsen replacing Rick Hammel, Jr., whose term expired 12-31-2008. Nancy's three-year term expires 12-31-2011.
- Blanca Ruckert resigned 04-22-2009; Mayor Konopa appointed Michael Thompson on 06-24-2009, as her replacement for the term expiring 12-31-2010.
- C. Jeffery Evans resigned 06-24-2009; vacant term expired 12-31-2009. Councilor Coburn appointed Linda Hart on 06-23-10, for a new three-year expiring 12-31-2012.
- Marian Anderson resigned 09-09-2009; vacant term expired 12-31-2009. Councilor Christman appointed Tina Dodge Vera on 02-10-2010, for a new three-year expiring 12-31-2012.
- Kim Whitley was reappointed 01-13-2010 by Councilor Johnson; new term expires 12-31-2012.
- Jodi Nelson resigned 06-10-10; vacant term expires 12-31-2010. Councilor Collins appointed Julie Jones on 07-14-2010, as her replacement for the term expiring 12-31-2010.
- Julie Jones was reappointed 01-12-2011 by Councilor Collins; new term expires 12-31-2013.
- Michael Thomson was reappointed 01-12-2011 by Mayor Konopa; new term expires 12-31-2013.
- Margaret Martinez completed her three-year term that expired 12-31-2011. Council Kopezynski appointed Leonor Rodriguez on 01-11-2012 for a new three-year expiring 12-31-2014.
- Nancy Greenman was reappointed 01-11-2012 by Councilor Olsen; new term expires 12-31-2014.
- Kim Whitley was reappointed 01-09-2013 by Councilor Johnson; new term expires 12-31-2015.
- Tina Dodge Vera was reappointed 02-13-13 by Councilor Coburn; new term expires 12-31-2015.
- Jay Sluiter was appointed 02-13-13 by Councilor Kellum; new term expires 12-31-2015.
- Leonor Rodriguez resigned 09-10-13; vacant term expires 12-31-2014. Councilor Kopezynski appointed Rob Duncan on 09-25-2013, as her replacement for the term expiring 12-31-2014.

Current HRC Roster (as of January 17, 2014)

Name	Appointment By	Term Expiration Date
Nancy Greenman	Councilor Dick Olsen	12-31-2014
Rob Duncan	Councilor Ray Kopczyński	12-31-2014
Tina Dodge Vera	Councilor Bill Coburn	12-31-2015
Jay Sluiter	Councilor Rich Kellum	12-31-2015
Kim Whitley	Councilor Bessie Johnson	12-31-2015
Javier Cervantes	Councilor Floyd Collins	12-31-2016
Chris Equinoa	Mayor Sharon Konopa	12-31-2016

Visitors who have attended an HRC meeting in 2009

Sharon Gisler  
Michael Thomson  
Mayor Sharon Konopa  
Gerald Gisler  
John Phillips  
Margo Coleman  
Alice Fitzpatrick  
Donna Copeland  
Bill Root  
June Hemmingson  
Larry Eby  
Penny Miltenberger  
Dan Miltenberger  
Phillipa Meehan  
Dick Owen  
Rosa Plascencia  
Tina Dodge Vera

Visitors who have attended an HRC meeting in 2010

Clifford Hartman, Linn County Mental Health  
Jim Bell, LBCC  
Mary Zelinka, CARDV  
Linda Hart  
Frank Moore, Linn County Mental Health  
Catherine Henderson, Mental Health Advisory

Visitors who have attended an HRC meeting in 2011

Sue McGuire-Thompson, Community Services Consortium  
Debbie Little, Community Services Consortium  
Vawna Shepherd  
Ora Mowdy  
Shawn Smith  
Westen Hoover  
Ramos Pacheco  
Andy Phillips  
Jamie Lavery  
Anna Benson, Linn-Benton Housing Authority  
Jeanette Emerson, LBCC student  
Chelsea Baker, LBCC student  
Daniel Trinidad, LBCC student  
Jodie Nelson, OSU

Students attending classes at Community Services Consortium.

Visitors who have attended an HRC meeting in 2012

Frank Moore, Linn County Mental Health  
Clifford Hartman, Linn County Mental Health  
Kathym Henderson, Linn County Mental Health Advisory Board  
Jim Clausen  
Doug Finegan  
Dick Knowles, Linn County Mental Health Advisory Board  
Dede Burns-McLay, CARDV

Visitors who have attended an HRC meeting in 2013

Jennifer Sanders, Chief Operations Officer for Linn-Benton Housing Authority  
Albany Mayor Sharon Konopa  
Greg Roe, United Way of Linn County Executive Director  
Katie Nooshazar, Recreation Programs Manager, City of Albany Parks & Recreation  
Debbi Richards, Recreation Programs Supervisor, City of Albany Parks & Recreation  
Rose Lacey, Recreation Programs Specialist, City of Albany Parks & Recreation  
Anne Catlin, Planner III, City of Albany Community Development  
Frank Moore, Linn County Mental Health  
Clifford Hartman, Linn County Mental Health  
Tony Howell, Linn County Alcohol & Drug Program  
Cristie Lynch, Samaritan Health Marketing & Communications Manager  
Tara Dixon, GAPS McKinney-Vento (homeless student) Liaison  
Monica Lorence, Linn County Outreach Coordinator of Jackson Street Youth Shelter  
Andrea Myhre, Grant Officer with the Jackson Street Youth Shelter