

**Albany Human Relations Commission
Annual Report (January – December 2015)**

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) was established in 2007 “to promote harmonious relations among the 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 2015 is set forth below. A history of Commission membership and attendance is attached to this report.

January 2015

- Graham Kislingbury joined the Commission, replacing Nancy Greenman.
- Commission members hosted and participated in reading Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech at City Hall on January 15, 2015.
- The Commission introduced and passed a Limited English Proficiency Plan to assist community members who have limited English when visiting and doing business with the City.
- The Commission explored the viability of a Latino Business Economic Impact Study given the rise in Latino owned- and minority-owned businesses in Albany.
- The Commission examined the results of the failed Measure 88 proposal, which would have granted driving privileges to undocumented residents of Oregon and Albany.

February 2015

- The Commission began the process of electing a new chair for the HRC. Postponed until more commissioners could attend.
- The Commission heard testimony of a community member who was the victim of graffiti in the form of a swastika spray painted at their residence. Commission suggested the creation of community policing and a community watch program.
- The Commission examined updates of the Sunrise Park project. It had run into a wetlands issue that needed to be studied. Commissioner Dodge Vera requested the issue of making the viability of making the park “smoke free.”
- Commissioners Dodge Vera and Cervantes in tandem with the Hispanic Advisory Committee met with the Corvallis Chamber of Commerce to discuss acquiring an internship to conduct a survey on the economic impact of minority businesses.
- Commissioner Cervantes attended the Linn-Benton Community College Unity Celebration on February 25. During the event, the LBCC Poetry Club performed spoken-word poetry and honored recipients of the Analee Fuentes Diversity and Social Justice Award as well as the Gary Westford Community Connections Award.

March 2015

- The Commission took the recommendation of City Councilman Rich Kellem that the HRC Award be expanded to include private businesses in addition to nonprofit agencies and the individual recognitions.
- Commissioner Kislingbury researched and documented how the HRC came to be as a commission. It was recommended that the history be added to the HRC website.
- Commissioner Kislingbury commented that he attended the Black-Jew Dialogues hosted at Linn-Benton Community College. He noted the program as very useful and “well done”!
- Commissioners Berg and Equinoa made the 2014 Human Relations Award presentations at the March 11 City Council meeting. Commissioners Whitley and Cervantes also attended the presentation. The recipients were: **Individual Category: Winner**: Jim Lawrence; **Nonprofit Category: Winner** – Linn-Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee ; **Runner-up** – Albany Historic Carousel and Museum.

April 2015

- The Commission's 2014 Annual Report was received by the Albany City Council on April 8.
- Javier Cervantes was elected as the new HRC Chair.
- Testimony was heard regarding the eviction of two residents from the New Heritage Apartments. The Commission, via Wes Hare, offered to facilitate connecting the residents to community resources.

May 2015

- Data was shared by Wes Hare regarding minority-owned business and their impact on Albany. The data was taken from the 2007 Economic Census Survey. It also showed that 272 minority-owned businesses are located in the city of Albany.
- Commissioners Whitley and Berg represented the HRC at the HEART to Heart Resource Fair on May 14.
- Wes Hare attended the Coffee with a Cop event on May 21.
- Commissioner Kislingbury attended the LBCC OneVibe Diversity Day event at the college on May 13 on behalf of the HRC.

June 2015

- No meeting due to lack of a quorum.
- Commissioners Cervantes and Equinoa attended the Community Forum – Educational Equity for Latino Families on June 4.

July 2015

- Denise Hughes-Tafen joined the Commission, replacing Debbie Berg, who resigned.
- Commissioners Equinoa and Kislingbury attended and volunteered at the River Rhythms concert series as greeters and donation collectors.

August 2015

- August meeting was canceled.
- Commissioner Equinoa volunteered at a River Rhythms concert as a greeter and donation collector.

September 2015

- The Commission endorsed the Mental Health Awareness Week Proclamation scheduled to be read at the September 23 City Council meeting put forth by the Linn County Mental Health Program Manager.
- Commissioners Dodge Vera, Kislingbury, and Equinoa participated in Festival Latino on September 20.
- The Commission discussed a misunderstanding between the APD and a Corvallis motorist that escalated into accusations of possible discrimination due to racial difference. During the discussion, it was revealed that not every car driven on patrol by APD is equipped with dashboard cameras. This unfortunate incident happened to involve a patrol car that did not have a dashboard camera in this unfortunate interaction. The Commission further discussed body cameras as a protective measure for both APD officers and the public.

October 2015

- The Commission held its annual joint meeting with the Hispanic Advisory Committee (HAC) of Linn and Benton Counties. The groups discussed how the City and the HAC could support each other's mission moving forward. The meeting also featured discussions about expanding the support of the Festival Latino, the relationship with Albany Parks and Recreation Department. The HRC and HAC decided that it would be beneficial to have semiannual joint meetings instead of just one.
- Community members brought forth an issue related to the lack of valid identification for many members of the community, particularly undocumented residents of Albany. The residents described living in fear, not being able to volunteer for their children's school, nor give blood due to the lack of ID.
- The Commission began planning for the fourth reading for honoring MLK in January. It was offered that the speech would be MLK's Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech.
- The Commission began the process of seeking nominations for the 2015 Human Relations Awards.
- The Commission cosponsored the film showing of Tim Wise's *White Like Me*. Commission Chair Cervantes facilitated the discussion after the screening. Approximately 60 community members were in attendance.
- Members of the Commission, Parks & Recreation, Albany Police Department, LBCC, and the public attended a public lecture from author, essayist, and antiracist advocate Tim Wise held at LBCC. Approximately 400 people were in attendance.

November 2015

- Commissioner Cervantes attended the November 2 Coffee with a Cop event.
- Commissioners Whitley, Equinoa, Kislingbury, and Cervantes attended the Annual Summit on Homelessness on November 4.
- Captain Eric Carter (Albany Police Department), Dr. Don Nelson (Linn County Sheriff's Office), and Captain Todd Vian (Linn County Sheriff's Office) described how their agencies engage individuals with mental illness including the process of going through jail, community access to services, and stigmas.
- The Commission discussed exploring municipal identification cards and if it was a feasible alternative for vulnerable members of the Albany public. The lack of I.D. issue was raised by public attendees at the Summit on Homelessness. The issue was raised that homeless people sometimes do not have valid I.D. which poses a difficult problem for them. One person at the summit even noted that he got out of jail and had no I.D. and used his prison-issued I.D. to identify himself. Further discussion was to be scheduled.
- The MLK commemoration speech was to be the acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize.

December 2015

- Commissioner Kislingbury volunteered for the Annual Mental Health Association Christmas Dinner on December 7.
- Commissioner Cervantes attended the OSU Extension Services holiday potluck on December 16.
- Commissioners Kislingbury and Equinoa attended the Homeless Persons' Memorial Day observance on December 21.
- The Commission recommended that for the January 13, 2016, City Council meeting the City Council consider removing the term limit for HRC members.

Conclusion: As members of the Human Relations Commission, it is a pleasure to continue to promote harmonious relations among the citizens of Albany through our recommendations and support for activities that serve the goal of maintaining respectful interactions within our community. We have met that goal to the best of our ability and feel our output is commendable, considering limited resources. The Commission members believe the commission is still needed and valued and there is still a lot of work to do. We thank the City Council for your support.

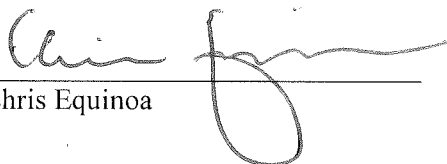
Respectfully submitted,



Javier Cervantes, Chair



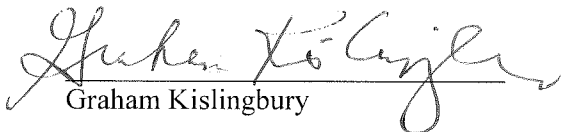
Tina Dodge Vera



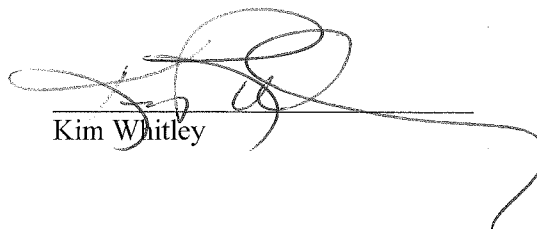
Chris Equinoa



Denise Hughes-Tafen



Graham Kislingbury



Kim Whitley

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].

Council adopted Ordinance No. 5866, January 13, 2016, amending AMC 2.25.030, Term of office and initial appointment, removing the following restriction: *Members may not serve more than six consecutive years on the Commission. After serving six consecutive years, a member must leave the Commission for one year before being eligible for reappointment.*

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
Delia 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

First Meeting/First Officers

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 term 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 term 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 term expiring 12-31-2014.
- Nancy Greenman was reappointed 01-11-2012 by Councilor Olsen; new term expires 12-31-2014.
- Julius Jones resigned 7-11-2012; vacant term expires 12-31-2013. Councilor Collins appointed Javier Cervantes on 8-22-2012 as his replacement for the term expiring 12-31-2013.
- 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.
- Javier Cervantes was reappointed 1-08-2014 by Councilor Collins; new term expires 12-31-2016.
- Chris Equinoa was appointed 1-08-2014 by Mayor Konopa replacing Michael Thomson, whose term expired 12-31-2013. Chris' three-year term expires 12-31-2016.
- Rob Duncan resigned 6-11-2014; vacant term expires 12-31-2014. Councilor Kopezynski appointed Debbie Berg 6-25-2014 as his replacement for the term expiring 12-31-2014.
- Debbie Berg was reappointed 1-14-2015 by Councilor Kopezynski; Debbie's three-year term expires 12-31-2017.
- Graham Kislingsbury was appointed 1-14-2015 by Councilor Olsen replacing Nancy Greenman, whose term expired 12-31-2014; Graham's three-year term expires 12-31-2017.

- Denise Hughes-Tafen was appointed 7-22-2015 by Councilor Kopczynski replacing Debbie Berg, who resigned; term expires 12-31-2017.
- Tina Dodge Vera was reappointed 2-24-2016 by Councilor Coburn; Tina's three-year term expires 12-31-2018.
- Kim Whitley was reappointed 2-24-2015 by Councilor Johnson; Kim's three-year term expires 12-31-2018.
- Jay Sluiter's term expired 12-31-2015; he did not want to be considered for reappointment. This vacant position is Councilor Kellum's to fill; the three-year term expires 12-31-2018.

Current HRC Roster (as of March 18, 2016)

Name	Appointment By	Term Expiration Date
Javier Cervantes	Councilor Floyd Collins	12-31-2016
Chris Equinoa	Mayor Sharon Konopa	12-31-2016
Debbie Berg	Councilor Ray Kopezynski	12-31-2017
Graham Kislingbury	Councilor Dick Olsen	12-31-2017
Tina Dodge Vera	Councilor Bill Coburn	12-31-2018
Kim Whitley	Councilor Bessie Johnson	12-31-2018
<i>Vacant</i>	Councilor Rich Kellum	12-31-2018

Visitors who 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 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 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 attended an HRC meeting in 2012

Frank Moore, Linn County Mental Health
Clifford Hartman, Linn County Mental Health
Kathryn 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 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

Visitors who attended an HRC meeting in 2014

Tony Howell, Linn County Mental Health
Tonja Everest, Greater Albany Public Schools
Lisa Shogren, Greater Albany Public Schools
Dan Stone, LBCC Theatre Director
Sandy Roberts, Community Education Specialist, City of Albany Police Department
Casey Dorland, Lieutenant, City of Albany Police Department
Ed Hodney, Director, City of Albany Parks & Recreation Department
Danette Killinger, Prevention Coordinator, Linn County Alcohol & Drug
Kathryn Henderson, Prevention Specialist, Linn County Alcohol & Drug
Todd Noble, Program Manager, Linn County Mental Health
Denise Hughes-Tafen, representing Community Action for Racial Equality (CARE)
Franz Schneider, representing Community Action for Racial Equality (CARE)
Sue Goodman, representing Community Action for Racial Equality (CARE)
Zoe Kellett, representing Community Action for Racial Equality (CARE)
Peter Goodman, representing Community Action for Racial Equality (CARE)
Jasper Smith, MLK Commission Chair & Program Manager for Benton County Developmental Disabilities Program

Visitors who attended an HRC meeting in 2015

Peter Goodman, representing Community Action for Racial Equality (C.A.R.E.)
Sue Goodman, representing Community Action for Racial Equality (C.A.R.E.)
Catherine Miller, representing Community Action for Racial Equality (C.A.R.E.)
Carmen Moody, representing Community Action for Racial Equality (C.A.R.E.)
Rich Kellum, City Councilor
Tony Howell, Linn County Alcohol & Drug Program Manager
Todd Noble, Linn County Mental Health Program Manager
Jeff Blackford, CHANCE Executive Director
Leonor Rodriguez, Hispanic Advisory Committee
Captain Eric Carter, Albany Police Department
Dr. Don Nelson, Psychologist, Linn County Sheriff's Office/Linn County Mental Health
Captain Todd Vian, Linn County Sheriff's Office
Kalin Salinas