

Spokane Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2022, 5:30 p.m.

Call to order at 5:34 p.m.

Land Acknowledgment

Public Comment: Melissa Huggins- provided comments on Monaghan statue from an arts and culture perspective. Advocated for the removal of the statue.

Vita Schlingun (spelling)- history professor that wants to ensure that the statue is removed from public. Statue should not be on public display. It should be in a museum.

John Alder- advocated for the removal of the statue and for its replacement with a statue that represents peace.

Warren Walker- there has not been another side of the story told and does not want the statue to be removed.

Roberta Truscott (virtual)- advocated for the removal of the statue, melting it down and using those materials to rebuild something that would be more representative of peace and justice.

Pui-Yan Lam- speaking from the perspective of an educator. Students want to know the good, bad and ugly. The statue represents a false narrative that needs to be corrected.

Liz Moore (read allowed by Chair Kissler)- ED of Peace and Justice League of Spokane. Advocated for the removal of the statue in support of our AAPI community. Request the Commission to also support removal.

Commission Briefing Session:

A. Roll call

Commission Members Present: Lance Kissler, Hayley Harrison (v), Olivia Arballo-Saenz, Anwar Peace, Alex Knox, Maria Peck, Brennan Schreibman, Jac Archer

Quorum present.

City Staff Present: Council Member Zack Zappone (v), Alex Gibilisco, Jerrall Haynes (v)

B. *Motion to approve May 2022 minutes:*

****Motion****

Commissioner Peace moved to approve the May 2022 minutes.

Commissioner Harrison seconded

Discussion: None

In favor: Commissioners Harrison, Arballo-Saenz, Peace, Peck, Schreibman,
Archer, Knox

Opposed: None

Motion carries; the May 2022 meeting minutes are approved.

Standing Updates:

A. *Chair's Report*

Budget update: still at \$2,500, some expenses have yet to post including business cards and registration to various events

B. *Monaghan Statue Presentation*

Mike Piccolo, City Attorney- gave presentation on the history of the Monaghan Statue. There were a number of other locations and finally settled on that location 120 years ago. Could not find any documentation from the clerks office that discusses ownership. There was a comment for the Mayor at that time that "The City is happy to receive and accept the statue". Would presume that it is the City's responsibility to determine what happens with the statue including the fact that it is located on City right of way and the City controls the right of way.

Ivan Urnovitz, US Navy League of Spokane- Opposes the removal of the statue. Went to hear community members concerns about the statue. Everyone was friendly, warm and willing to inform. People are delivering the perspective of "The Samoan Rebels". Tells history from a US military point of view. "There's a lot of animosity toward the Samoan community... if the statue comes down, a lot of that animosity turns to hate." Advocates for a neutral facilitator if the work moves forward.

Kiana McKenna, PICA WA/Children's Advisory Council- Supports the removal of statue and that the statue is never placed in public again. Expresses the pain of community having to see the statue on one of the most high traffic roads in town. We have the opportunity to heal wounds and make people feel like a part of the larger community. Would like for the Spokane Tribal Nation to have the say in what happens with this statue and what happens to the land that it sits on.

D. *Committee Reports*

1. Civic Impact Committee Report- Commissioner Peace shared that the Civic Impact Committee is attempting to setup a training session with the Spokane Police Department for Commissioners to participate in the "Shoot/Don't Shoot" training on a future weekend.

2. Outreach Committee Report- Commissioner Schreibman reports that the committee participated in EWU's Diversity and Inclusion week and that they're also participating in Human Rights Champion Awards (November 5th). They are also working with Spokane County Community Services and Housing Development toward a potential collaboration.

3. Executive Committee Report- Chair Kissler advised that the Executive Committee met and provided an initial framework to Civic Impact regarding processes that could be explored around intake of historical landmarks in the hopes of setting a transparent formal process. Will bring proposed bylaws changes forward. Specifically a first and second reading process before passing.

Adjournment:

Chair Kissler adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.