



Commissioner Dorian Waller, Chair  
Representing Pierce County

Commissioner Rev. Walter Kendricks,  
Vice Chair  
Representing Eastern Washington

Commissioner Andrea Caupain  
Representing King County

Commissioner Michael Bailey  
Representing King County

Commissioner LeRoy Laney III  
Representing King County

Commissioner Joseph Todd  
Representing South King County

Commissioner Zellynda Perkins  
Representing Pierce County

Commissioner Dr. Yolanda Geolingo  
Representing Thurston County

Commissioner Sheila Stanton  
Representing King County

Executive Director Edward O. Prince

## Commission on African American Affairs Public Meeting Minutes Friday, September 16, 2022 | 1:00 pm - 4:00 p.m. In Person – 14675 Interurban Ave S. Suite 303 Tukwila, WA 98168

**Members present:** Chair Waller, Vice-chair Kendricks, Bailey, Perkins, Todd, Laney, Geolingo, Stanton, Executive Director Edward Prince, Program Manager Charlotte Kerney, Executive Assistant Keahna Umpstead

**Absent:** Caupain-Sanderson. Quorum established

**1:00pm** – Meeting called to order by Chairperson Waller

**1:02pm** – Roll Call

**1:04pm** - Motion to accept meeting minutes by Vice-Chair Kendricks – Motion seconded by Commissioner Laney.

**Chairperson Waller called for vote to accept May 2022 Meeting Minutes**

**Voice vote** – no objections. Motion carried. May 2022 commission meeting minutes approved.

**1:10pm – Committee Chairs – Presenting Commission on African American Affairs Committee Updates**

- Commissioner Todd – Education Committee
  - With school back in session the committee is now able to begin planning to have in depth conversations around the two bills they will be focusing on for this upcoming legislative session. [HB 1336](#) which is about the broadband digital divide that heavily affects black students and [HB 5299](#) which is about STEM and high school credit.
  - Focused on pushing for an amendment in this upcoming session on HB 1336 to remove the service providers, such as Comcast, Lumen, etc., from being able to write a refusal to proposals made by the cities, municipalities, and districts to start their own ISPs.
- Commissioner Geolingo – Reimagining Public Safety/Public Health Committee
  - Focus is on holistic care for black women re-integrating into society.

- First step in this process has been having individuals and organizations come speak with the committee about overall needs and how to best assist with those needs moving forward. The Committee has currently met with three individuals or organizations with a goal of six total meetings. Once meetings have been completed the committee will share their findings and begin to develop an action plan.
- Chair Waller – Economic Development Committee
  - No Update. Have not had the chance to meet.

### **1:15pm – Representative Hackney – Legislative Update**

- Originally elected in 2020 and currently representing the 11th Legislative District which includes 100% of Tukwila, 90% of Renton, and 10% of Kent. Rep. Hackney will be running for re-election this fall.
  - The 11<sup>th</sup> Legislative District is a majority minority and immigrant district and has a lower average median income. Rep. Hackney sees his role as needing to focus on the vulnerable communities within his district.
- Legislative mission on environmental justice
  - The 11<sup>th</sup> Legislative district is nestled between the port of Tacoma and the port of Seattle, immediately adjacent to SeaTac airfield and the Boeing airfield. Along with being nestled in between three major highways, I-5, 405, and 167. All of this leads to the worst air quality in the State.
    - Children in South King County have a higher risk of respiratory disease.
    - UW tells us that the lifespan of adults in South King County are shorter than adults in other parts of King County.
  - What investments need to be made in South King County to clean up the air quality, air pollution and impact of climate change here in South King County.
    - Rep. Hackney was the lead sponsor on the capitol budget committee’s proposal for \$47 million budget proviso for low-income weatherization of housing, because lack of weatherization leads to mold and disease.
  - Rep. Hackney sponsoring a Legislative bill that prohibits Homeowners Associations (HOA) or condominium associations from making unreasonable restrictions on electric charging stations
  - Working with Department of transportation (DOT) with the E-zip grants. These same grants last term was at \$10 million to siphon electric vehicle charging stations in areas where in general the market would not allow them to go. But Rep. Haney’s belief is that the market isn’t there because the ability to use these vehicles is not possible in these areas due to the lack of charging stations.
    - Asking that this year the stipend be increased to \$40 million and for them to focus on low-income communities and predominantly minority communities as well.
- Focus on Public Health Initiatives
  - Public Safety Focus
    - The Representative was a part of a team that brought legislation in 2021, banning chokeholds, the use of tear gas except for in certain situations, redefined “use of force”, and brought the certification of police officers to the state level so that they could not bounce from department to department.

- Income Equality
  - Working with the Insurance Commission office on consumer protection issues around prohibiting the use of credit scores in determining how car insurance is provided to an individual. A credit score should only determine one's ability to pay not how safely they can drive.
  - Rep. Hackney has plans to put forward legislation that allows insured individuals who have car insurance who have an accident to get a third-party assessment done of the damages and if that assessment is higher than the one the insurance company did then the insurance company must pay the higher assessment along with the cost for the customer to receive that third party assessment.
    - When Oregon adopted a similar statute, consumers won 90% of the cases.

**1:35pm – Commissioner Todd** – There were roll backs that happened in the last Legislative session on the police reform bills that were passed in the 2021 Legislative session due to backlash. The needle was moved far with the legislation that was passed in 2021 and it feels to me like the changes that were made to these bills in the last legislative session almost put us all the way back to where we started. Do you think that legislators will make any more amendments to that bill to put some teeth back into those laws?

**Rep. Hackney** – I respectfully disagree, I do not think there was a rollback. I do think that there was a clarification when we were trying to identify how police use force. In the old model police were allowed to use as much force as they saw necessary to accomplish a legal objective. We changed that to say, your legal objective is to find the least violent manner to accomplish the objective and then move up from there. In making this clarification it indicated that there should be no use of force unless the police officer had probable cause that the individual committed a crime. Probable cause needs to be recognized because it is a high legal standard. It is the level of evidence needed to conduct a search warrant in someone's home. It requires articulable facts that someone committed a crime but also be able to identify the authenticity of those facts. You need to know the source of those facts and the reliability of those sources. The terry stop is what allows an officer to arrive on a scene and temporarily detain someone so they may investigate a scene to obtain probable cause.

The way the bill was articulated meant that suspects were walking away from the crime scene and officers were unable to use physical force to stop them. Also, interesting that officers themselves also interpreted the new reform bill as saying that if they did not have probable cause of a crime being committed by the suspect upon arrival that they also could not engage with someone who was having a mental health crisis. This session we clarified that if an individual is posing a threat to themselves or members of the community that officers were allowed to physically intervene.

This did not mean that police were not and are not being held accountable. There was a lot of work around police accountability as well.

- Developed a central system at the [Criminal Justice Training Commission](#) and now the Commission can take anyone's license to be a police officer in the State of

Washington. If your license is revoked as an officer, you cannot be hired as a police officer anywhere in Washington State.

- License can be revoked if there is indication that an officer used any excessive use of force when accomplishing a stop.

The idea that by making these amendments we took anything away from the officers' accountability, the Representative thinks is not accurate. He doesn't believe that limiting police ability to do their legit job of investigating and arresting people made his community any safer.

There has been a spike in crime. But it had nothing to do with what the legislature did over the past two legislative sessions. The spike in crime is based on the pandemic, and economic issues. We do need police, but I don't think that police reduce crime, I believe that they respond to it. Organizations like choose 180 and peer group work with folks that have been through the system reduce crime.

**1:30pm** – Hackney shares with the Commission two bills he is presenting in this coming legislative session around juvenile justice.

1. Second Chance Bill

- Gives juveniles that were convicted of serious crimes the opportunity to go before the inditement sentencing review board after 15 years. A lot can change for these young people in that time and people's lives are being thrown away due to a trauma to prison pipeline. Many of these convicted young people are victims themselves and it isn't until they are convicted that they get the attention of the county and state, and this is the first time they have access to help. Access to peer counselors, therapy and medical, and education and since their conviction now have had the ability completely turn their lives around because of their ability to now access these resources.

2. Juvenile Points Bill

- Prohibits prosecutors in adult court from using criminal history points earned as a juvenile, because the juvenile system is not a criminal justice system. In juvenile court you are not found guilty or not guilty, you are found involved and often juveniles are pushed into plea deals to get shorter sentences and they also don't get the same access to lawyers.

**1:32pm – Discussion** - Police budget and how funds are allocated to police and within municipalities. The reminder that at the State level there is no control on management of funds from the legislature on police budgets. Police departments are issued funds by their municipalities as they see fit. None of the amendments that were made in clarifying an officer's ability to engage a crime scene or distress call removed a municipalities ability to allocate funds to their respective departments. Or their ability to allow for them to allocate more of that funding over to other professionals who may be better equipped to handle calls less related to crime, such as mental health distress calls.

**1:36pm – Director Prince** – One thing I am hearing is that there is going to be a push to do away with the revisions that were made on high-speed chases. Can you talk about that push that may be made to re-instating pursuits?

**Rep. Hackney** – I do not know if it is about whether to reinstate high speed chases or not but rather how to find the grey area in what we can do to work together for a solution that

works for both sides. I believe that the solution is technology and taking account time of day. It is important to note that many police districts have already self-regulated themselves when it comes to high-speed chases. Many of those regulations being even more stringent than the ones the legislature passed.

**1:48pm- Chair Waller** – The idea and push to add and put charging stations for electric vehicles is great, but what about affordability of those vehicles? How can we achieve both new stations and affordability of electric vehicles?

**Rep. Hackney** – Initially there was a push to try and develop an incentive program to purchase Electric Vehicles for low-income people. But it ran into some legal concern around private benefit to citizens. Since then, we have been looking into the possibility of ride share programs and we will see what comes of continued brainstorming.

**1:57pm – Commissioner Bailey** – California is taking steps to ban the sale of gas-powered vehicles. Is Washington State going to take a similar stance or be more aggressive?

**Rep. Hackney** – I do not think we will be more aggressive than California, but we will have a ban in this state on gas powered vehicles, if there isn't a federal one first.

**2:00pm – Commissioner Bailey** – Is there an opportunity to support Legislation for universal income?

**Rep. Hackney** – There is a bill being brought to the legislature this session by Representative Liz Berry from the 36<sup>th</sup> district around universal income.

- Universal income studies have shown that a standard minimum income makes a big impact on crime, family security, and the health of children. Studies have also shown that when people who do not have a lot get money they spend it on essentials, things to make life easier, appliances, food security and necessities that spur the economy.

**2:15pm – Presentation by Director Richardson – King County Adult Services Overview**

- Adult Services is a part of King County Department of Community and Human Services. The division is one of five within DCHS. Director Richardson holds responsibility of all adult services for individuals 18 and older in King County.

**2:16pm** – Since being director the division has pioneered the Veteran, Senior and Human Services levy which is currently a \$366 million levy that focuses on those three primary populations.

- Veterans Services
  - Partnered with the federal government with a first in the nation pilot that gets the service division access to the unclaimed housing vouchers that are then reallocated to those who wouldn't have otherwise qualified for housing assistance. Because of this, within the last year to year and a half the division has been able to house an additional 145 veterans or their families.
  - In the past 4 years there has also been a reduction in veterans' homelessness in King County by 40%.
- Senior Services

- For individuals who are 55+ rather than the usual 65+ found at the federal levels to qualify for senior services assistance.
- Funds over 35 senior centers throughout the region.
- Human Services
  - Focuses on a large span of items in this bucket broadly categorized as human services. From civil legal aid, eviction protection efforts, immigrant, and refugee initiatives, to gender-based violence initiatives, and more.
  - Each one of the programs within this division receives about \$20 million in annual funds per year.
  - Making a more conscious effort to reach out to community-based organizations that are representative of the communities the division is looking to serve and trying to remove some of the barriers to better allow those organizations to access government funds.
    - Simplifying contracts and providing technical assistance are two steps we have taken to accomplish this.
    - Currently 150 contracted partners throughout King County. More than 50% of them are now small organizations leading to a greater impact on personal lives and individuals within these communities.

**2:23pm – Chair Waller** – Where do you feel your work, not from a quality standpoint, but from an ability standpoint, where is the work falling short for people especially for the African American community?

**Director Richardson** – The biggest opportunities being seen right now are twofold.

1. Wage inequality:
  - People are showing up and doing the hardest work but making the least amount of money. Causing these professionals to, especially service professionals like social workers, to step away because they are working 60 hours a week and getting paid for only 40 hours and with inflation, they can go make the same amount of money working at chick-fil-a.
2. Simplifying complex government systems.
  - While there are many resources out there, it is hard for individuals to navigate these systems to find those resources. We need to figure out a way to be more responsive from a resource navigation perspective to get people the help and resources that they need.

**2:28pm – Commissioner Perkins** – Going off the issues you just mentioned how are you gathering ideas for next steps to put things in place to create solutions to these problems?

**Director Richardson** – We have held 40-50 community conversations throughout King County and held public meetings. Holding conversations with community organizations, coalitions, and alliances to garner feedback to help inform decisions being made to make sure that the impact we are making is in align with community needs.

**2:32pm- Commissioner Laney** – Are wrap around services being put in place?

**Director Richardson** – We are doing a lot of this work in housing due to inflation. One of those wraparound services that we have put into place has had to do with housing vouchers.

So, once someone receives a housing voucher, they can now get help to find a place that they can afford to live within the area they want to be in.

**2:35pm – Commissioner Bailey** - What is the County's approach to cost-of-living increases?

**Director Richardson** – Not going to speak for the County but within my division we are looking at how we can build inflation into our contracts. Looking at 3% year over year increase to be added to allocate money to try and allocate for that increase.

**2:39pm – Commissioner Todd** – What programs do you have that are just focused on black folks?

**Director Richardson** – We do not have programs like this. What we do have are programs that are focused on people and disproportionately impacted people. How we do that is by seeking out strategies that focus on larger demographic perspectives and say, "resource navigations for people of color". Historically speaking people of color have experienced disproportionate access to resources, so what the question then, is what we can do to narrow that gap.

From a contracting perspective being a government agency, we can't say we are going to put a contract out and we are only going to serve black people, Asian people, etc. What we can look at is a geographic area and put a contract out to only focus on that area and the specific services needed to assist that community in that area.

**2:41pm- Commissioner Todd** – When organizations are trying to apply for those programs that you all have, they typically get settled with a bunch of technical stuff they must do to provide to you that they are meeting the requirements to have received that grant. Does your agency provide technical assistance to those organizations to help them accomplish those steps?

**Director Richardson** – We do have this kind of support for small organizations. Through the providing of technical assistance and capacity building money to share with them to help them get the capacity they need for them to complete the needed additional work on their own in the future.

**2:44pm – LJ Jones – Training for Commissioners on TEAMS and OneDrive**

**Discussion** – How the commission will use these resources to better communicate between their three-member committee groups. The ways in which to share documents within those group through OneDrive and the Teams application.

**3:40pm – Public Comment** – 2 individuals in audience, 1 left public comment.

**3:53pm – Meeting Adjourned**