



Commission Chair Will Hausa
Representing Pierce County

Commission Vice-Chair Sara Franklin
Representing South King County

Commissioner De'Sean Quinn
Representing South King County

Commissioner Dorian Waller
Representing Pierce County

Commissioner Andrea Caupain
Representing King County

Commissioner Rev. Walter Kendricks
Representing Eastern Washington

Executive Director Edward O. Prince

Commission on African American Affairs Public Meeting Minutes Friday, November 19, 2021 | 3:30 pm - 5:30 p.m. via Zoom

Members present: Chair Hausa, Vice-chair Franklin-Phillips, Caupain, Kendricks, Waller, Quinn, Executive Director Edward Prince, Executive Assistant Charlotte Kerney

Absent: None

3:30 pm – Meeting called to order by Chair Hausa

3:31 pm – Roll call by Executive Assistant Charlotte Kerney

3:31 pm – Quorum Established

3:33 pm – Motion to approve previous meeting minutes by Chair Hausa

Point of order by Commissioner Kendricks - Motion seconded to correct and accept minutes by Commissioner Kendricks.

Chair Hausa called for vote

Voice vote – no objections. Motion carried. September 2021 commission meeting minutes approved

3:35 pm – 2022 Legislative Update by Washington state Representatives Entenman and Johnson

Police Accountability

- Rep. Entenman will bring back her independent prosecution bill – creating an independent prosecutor in Washington State. This will change how we prosecute cases with police who use deadly force.

Foster Care Pay Equalization

- In partnership with Representative Ortiz-Self to bring equal pay to those that provide foster care regardless of their relation to the child.
- Currently, relatives who foster children are receiving two times less pay than non-relative care providers
- Pay equalization could lead to better family reconciliation rates.

House Bills 1054 and 1310

- Both bills are focused on police accountability; HB 1054 has to do with police tactics while HB 1310 focuses on police use of deadly force.
- HB 1054 clarifies legislative intent since adopted in the 2021 legislative session, regarding behavioral health calls and vehicular pursuits.

Black Studies - creates an endorsement for black history based on a recommendation from the AA task force. Working directly with the Professional Educators Standards Board (PESB) to develop a black studies endorsement option for those students seeking a history degree. This endorsement would be an added option to the existing endorsements for those studying history.

Catalytic Converter Theft -Addresses scrap metal yards that are accepting materials without identification which has caused a rise in the theft of these materials for selling purposes. There is very little regulation of this industry

Behavioral Health in Schools - Rep. Johnson has been working with Rep. Callan to expand the definition of behavioral health to include undiagnosed behavioral health issues. Currently, behavioral health is identified as an official diagnosis from a doctor, and without these students are unable to get excused absences for hardship.

Host Homes for Un-homed and Un-sheltered Youth - Creates a property tax exemption for private property owners who are serving as transitional housing for a young person.

Commissioner Quinn: Rep. Johnson - what do you use as the next steps in making sure that law enforcement recognizes their role and responsibility?

Representative Johnson: Three main concerns have been brought by the officers: use of lethal force, response to behavioral health calls, and vehicular pursuits. Each concern is legitimate, and we want to address them.

Community Block Grant Funds:

Community Block Grant Funds are funds distributed to community organizations across the state that have human services as a part of their work. The money is distributed by the cities that those organizations are located through the distribution of state funds to those cities. The problem that is being seen with these funds is that inability to accurately track how these funds are being used within the community. There is a lack of accountability and transparency when it comes to the money is going once it is received. The Department of Commerce is tasked with tracking this information but never clear how they are tracking this data. Call to action to get into our communities to see if we can determine how these funds are being used.

Commissioner Quinn: Representatives - do you believe this is the time to begin the statewide conversation around the social safety net and how it plays a part in homelessness?

Rep. Entenman and Rep. Johnson: The lack of behavioral health institutions leaves non-profits and churches to fill the gap, but they do not always have the needed resources. There needs to be more government services for people to get the help that they need. If easily accessible this could lead to less pressures out on law enforcement to handle the behavioral health crisis. This problem isn't so much the need for more funding as much as it is the need for more coordination between elected officials and county and city members. Right now, the problem is approached city-by-city or county-by-county when really it is a state issue.

COVID-19 has not helped in the progression of these issues: it has created an even larger housing crisis, low-income families have been struggling finding housing but now those that had found a stable living situation are back to uncertainty, Section 8 vouchers have stopped assisting those who have lost housing over the past couple years because landlords say that they do not pay enough. There are over 500 households where the landlords are refusing to take the rent relief fund money because they disagree with some of the eviction stipulations.

4:16 – Michael Bailey, Assistant Director at the Department of Revenue for the Working Family Tax Credit.

- An opportunity to help people improve their financial situation. Asking CAAA to partner to help give light to the issue.
- Program scheduled to go into effect in 2023; currently in the rule making process. Public meetings are scheduled to gather input.

4:50pm- Ted Keller, Managing Director for the Hunger Assistance Program at the Washington State Dept. of Commerce, Rent Assistance.

This assistance program helps once federal funding runs out in WA. There are still about 9% of renters who are behind on rent and 3.6% of renters are at risk of being evicted in the coming months. This program will be available to those with less than 80% of the median income set for WA State and can help to pay up to 18 months of rent. The tenant will be the one applying for this grant, but the payments will go directly to the landlord.

5:15pm – Executive Director Ed Prince announces the terms for Commissioners Franklin and Quinn’s are extended by the Governor until new commissioners are appointed.

5:17pm – Executive Ed Prince opens the floor to begin the election of CAAA officers for the year of 2022.

Discussion

5:40pm – Commissioner Waller elected commission Chairperson in voice vote. No objections or abstentions

5:53pm – Commissioner Caupain elected commission Vice-Chair by voice vote. No objections or abstentions

5:56pm - Public Comment

Two individuals in the Zoom audience. No public comment

5:57pm – Meeting adjourned