City of Sunnyvale

Excerpt Meeting Minutes - Draft Human Relations Commission

Thursday, December 12, 2024 **7:00 PM** **Online and Bay Conference Room (Room 145), City Hall, 456 W. Olive Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Syquia called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 4 - Chair Nenuca Syquia
Vice Chair Venkata Siva Ramisetty
Commissioner Esther Rosenfeld
Commissioner Maria Paulina Zapata

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Claudia Camacho

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

3 24-1146 Annual Review of City Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials and Opportunity to Recommend Changes to the City Council

Equity, Access & Inclusion Manager Fernanda Perdomo Arciniegas commented on the annual review of the Code of Ethics and Conduct. Commissioners were provided an opportunity to review and make recommendations to Council. Staff makes no recommendation.

Commissioner Rosenfeld suggested that the Code of Ethics should outline specific consequences for violations. They proposed a warning for the first violation, a suspension from the next meeting for a second violation, and removal from the City Council after a third violation.

The Commission took a recess at 8:11 p.m. to allow Commissioners time to review the Code of Ethics.

The Commission reconvened at 8:16 p.m. with all Commissioners present.

Council Liaison Sell read Section C, Sanctions: Members' Behavior and Conduct,

specifically the second paragraph of the Code of Ethics, which outlines the consequences for failing to adhere to proper conduct.

Commissioner Rosenfeld raised concerns that the paragraph, as currently written, lacks enforceability and clear consequences. They stressed the importance of adopting a more explicit and direct approach, where specific actions (e.g., A) result in defined outcomes (e.g., B). They recommended changing the language in the Code from discretionary to mandatory. Additionally, they suggested that ideally the Code should be evaluated comprehensively and include a clear, graduated series of consequences.

Public Hearing opened at 8:21 p.m.
No speakers.
Public Hearing closed at 8:21 p.m.

Commissioner Rosenfeld moved to modify the Code of Ethics as follows:
“City Councilmembers who intentionally and repeatedly do not follow proper conduct SHALL be reprimanded or formally censured by the Council, lose seniority and/or committee assignments (both internal and inter-governmental) and/or have official travel restricted. Serious infractions SHALL lead to other sanctions as deemed appropriate by Council.”

Vice Chair Ramisetty seconded the motion.

Council Liaison Sell, speaking in her personal capacity, expressed her support and gratitude to the Commissioners for their efforts.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Chair Syquia
Vice Chair Ramisetty
Commissioner Rosenfeld
Commissioner Zapata

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Camacho