

Juneau Human Rights Commission (JHRC)
July 2024 – June 2025
Annual Report

- Overall

A. Commission Membership:

1. Alison Gottschlich, Treasurer
2. Haifa Foroughi, Chair
3. Lance Mitchel
4. Mary Wegner, Vice Chair/ Secretary
5. Vacant Seat
6. Staff liaison support provided by CBJ Ms. Di Cathcart

B. Commission Meetings:

1. Meetings are held on first Tuesday and third Wednesday of the month, for a total of twenty meetings annually, 5:00-6:00 pm. via Zoom.
2. In 2024-25, JHRC met 14, times, did not meet quorum 4 times, and suspended one meeting due to potential online intrusion.

C. Activities & Accomplishments:

Community Engagement Projects: designed to identify social issues in Juneau and to develop solution recommendations guiding the 2024-25 JHRC annual events. (Note: These projects addresses all five areas charged to the Commission.)

1. Town Halls to engage the community in issue-focused dialogue.

JHRC 2024-25, town hall meeting: ***Living in Marginalized***

Communities in 2025: A Panel Discussion was held on May 10, in the Valley Library.

Moderator:

Jennifer Skinner, Deputy Director at Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Panel of speakers:

*Emily Mesch, president of Southeast Alaska LGBTQ+ Alliance

*Dave Ringle, General Manager at St. Vincent de Paul, coordinator of unhoused population.

*Glen Ojard, Rapid Housing

*Shannon McCain, Mental Health programs and access.

2. Celebrating Alaska Native Heritage Month: Celebrating Alaska Native Heritage Month/Honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW), addressed by presenter Natasha Jackson, Tlingit & Haida Community Advocate and JHRC team Lance/Paige heading this initiative. A public information request was submitted through the Alaska Department of Public safety for updated information on MMIW, and The Urban Indian Health institute who provided statistics reporting 506 cases nationwide of native women, more than 1,500 unsolved cases.

*JHRC Alison Gottschlich attended the MMIW event held in February. Note: Consistent theme throughout the many sessions was affordable housing and food access.

D. Policy Recommendations:

1*Submitted a recommendation to the CBJ Assembly on **reducing JHRC membership from seven to five members** to strengthen quorum consistency while maintaining the commission's established charge

2* Draft Resolution to: Increase community participation in CBJ Committees and Commissions (ready for submission)

3* JHRC and SSRC Chairs, initiated dialogue on combined trainings and collaboration opportunities to identify discriminatory foundational policies and regulations leading to solution recommendations.

*Charge: Promote harmonious intergroup relations within CBJ by making connections and enlisting the cooperation of racial, religious and nationality groups, business, community, labor and governmental organizations, fraternal and benevolent associations, education and other groups concerned with human rights.

*Juneau Unitarian Universalist (UU) Fellowship Mr. Honesty Zahnd joined us to present information on their communities work, to identify areas of mutual focus and create partnership opportunities.

- Charge: Develop educational and informational programs designed to bring about the prevention and elimination of all forms of discrimination.

1* Strategic Plan 2023-28: JHRC 2024-25, goals are consistent with the strategies, metrics, timeline and member/s responsible for each focus area, and are guided by the implementation of the five year strategic plan.

2* Alaska State Commission for Human Rights in Juneau: JHRC members were invited to their June 7th meeting held at the Juneau Downtown Library. Haifa and Mary attended the meeting.

In conclusion, JHRC remains committed to advancing its charter, and despite the challenges, achieve meaningful progress, strengthening partnerships, amplifying underrepresented voices, and making thoughtful recommendations to CBJ leadership.

Respectfully submitted,

Juneau Human Rights Commission
City and Borough of Juneau

