

Baumb, Nelly

From: Ian Klaus <ianrklaus@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 8:04 AM
To: Council, City; PAC
Subject: On the Reduction of PAC Membership Numbers

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear City Council Members,

On May 11, the Council voted to reduce the number of Public Art Commission (PAC) members from seven to five. Council Member Tanaka proposed that the Council consult the PAC. That suggestion was not supported, so while I have served as a Commissioner on the PAC since 2018, I send along my views only as a Palo Alto resident.

The value of public spaces, and access to them and the art therein, has been again demonstrated during the Shelter-in-Place orders, during the recent protests at City Hall and subsequent public art proposals in support of Black Lives Matter, and in the campaign to enable wider access to Foothills Park.

The recent decision to suspend the "percent-for-art" program puts at risk art in public spaces that can be accessed by all. While that decision is hopefully an ongoing conversation, and one taking place in the context of larger budgetary pressures, the decision to reduce the number of PAC members threatens public art from another perspective. Just as budgetary resources are often necessary to acquire, develop or support art, a diversity of perspectives, expertises, and professional and personal backgrounds is necessary when championing art for public spaces.

Council discussion in advance of the vote to reduce the number of members referenced the difficult budgetary moment. I know this cannot be dismissed. But PAC members volunteer their time, and a reduction from seven to five will not significantly reduce the number of meetings or meeting time.

With five members, the PAC could perhaps be slightly more efficient, and it might be easier to make progress on the issues I think most pressing; but I cannot know for certain which issues will fail to be advanced by the overall reduction in perspective, nor can the Council. As such, I write to encourage the Council to reconsider the reduction as it likely means not just fewer people, but fewer perspectives.

Regards,
Ian Klaus

Baumb, Nelly

From: Ruth Robertson <rwsrobertson@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 3:23 AM
To: Council, City
Subject: Message from the City Council Home Page

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

I am asking you to NOT reduce the size of the Human Relations Commission. We need more voices, not fewer, more diversity, not less, at this critical junction in history.

Thank you,
Ruth Robertson
Palo Alto resident

Baumb, Nelly

From: E Scott <elizabeth.scott.aprn@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2020 9:09 PM
To: Council, City
Subject: Human Relations Commission Number of Members

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Dear council members,

I was disappointed to see the news that the city council had passed a resolution to reduce the number of members of the Human Relations Commission from 7 to 5.

Tackling discrimination of any kind has always been critical, but the last few weeks in particular should be an incredibly clear reminder that our failure to dismantle white supremacy and racism are directly responsible the deaths of Black people in the US.

Do not cut back the number of HRC members. We need diverse voices on the commission to build a better city that is safe, healthy and joyful for all.

Black lives depend on it.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Scott
(Midtown resident)

Baumb, Nelly

From: herb <herb_borock@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2020 6:25 PM
To: Council, City; Clerk, City
Subject: June 22, 2020 Council Meeting, Item # 29: Human Relations Commission

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Herb Borock
P. O. Box 632
Palo Alto, CA 94302

June 21, 2020

Palo Alto City Council
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

JUNE 22, 2020 CITY COUNCIL MEETING, AGENDA ITEM #29 HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Dear City Council:

I support the recommendation to reduce the number of Human Relations Commission member to five Commissioners.

I also support retaining the requirement that the members of the Human Relations Commission be Palo Alto residents.

I agree with the staff that Human Relations Commission members need to be educated about the Ralph M. Brown Act, particularly its prohibition of secret voting.

The Human Relations Commission agendas need to include an item for the Commission to approve the draft minutes prepared by staff.

The draft minutes previously on the City's website accurately reported the discussion at the February 14, 2020 HRC meeting that included an agenda item. I compared those minutes with my memory of the meeting that I attended, and I compare the draft minutes with the streaming video of the meeting that was available at the time the draft minutes were available on the City's website.

The minutes currently on the City website do not appear to include significant discussions held during the election for the Commission Chair that were included on the streaming video and in the draft minutes.

Page 18 of 43 of Draft Minutes

Commissioner Smith: First of all, the ballots are secret so, we're making an assumption of who votes where.

Chair Kralik: My ballot had my name on it.

Page 21 of 43 of Draft Minutes

Commissioner Smith: This is the one thing about voting, and this is why it's anonymous.

Brown Act Violation

The election of the HRC Chair at the Commission's February 14, 2020 meeting violated the Brown Act because the identity of how each Commissioner voted was not disclosed for each vote of the Commission before the next vote was taken, and because the identity of how each Commissioner voted on the final vote was not disclosed.

Minutes Alteration

The draft minutes were significantly changed to delete material information related to the Brown Act violation without the participation of the Commissioners in a publicly noticed and open meeting.

If the streaming video has not been altered, you can watch and listen to it to obtain an accurate account of the meeting.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Herb Borock

Baumb, Nelly

From: Jamie Hindery <nelsonhindery@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 2:30 PM
To: Council, City
Subject: June 22nd Consent Calendar

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Hey folks,

I am emailing you to request that items 21, 22, and 29 are removed from the consent calendar and are given the opportunity to discuss with and hear from the public. Instead of just approving an election of 4 new council members, the City Council could approve an election with the following changes: (A) voting rights for 16- and 17-year-olds; (B) Ranked Choice Voting (much more effective in multiple-seat elections!); (C) Semi-publicly-financed campaigns: set aside \$40,000 for each qualified candidate to campaign, to eliminate the need for fundraising and open up the candidate pool to individuals from more diverse socio-economic conditions. The private airport does not serve the public interest, and the funds being dedicated to that project could be used to keep the HRC at full strength.

Thank you for your consideration,

--

Jamie N Hindery
+1 Redacted

nelsonhindery@gmail.com

Baumb, Nelly

From: Olivia <osidow@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 11:05 AM
To: Council, City
Subject: Cutting Number of HR Commission Members

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Hello committee members,

I hope you're all having a good day so far. I am emailing about a decision that you all will be voting on today. I hope I am not too late in voicing my opinion. I, and many of my friends and family (who are PA residents) find this commission to be an integral part of the Palo Alto city government. To reduce the number of HRC members (including, if I understand correctly, the removal of Steven Lee) would be a mistake. Doing so would directly impact the diversity and representation that is so important to the Commission.

As I have read from HRC's response to the killing of George Floyd and the Black Lives Movement in general, Steven Lee in particular has been incredibly outspoken about these issues. We want that to maintain its current momentum and trajectory. And *especially* in this current climate, it would not only be a mistake to decrease diversity in a functional sense, it would also reflect poorly on the HRC / the City Council / Palo Alto as a whole.

On a more personal note, Steven Lee's activity on social media has really spurred the interest of my family/friends and myself to stay more engaged with local government. This is invaluable. You cannot cut his seat, or anyone else's from the commission.

Thank you for your time.

Best,
Olivia Sidow

Palo Alto, 94303