



Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission

March Meeting Minutes

Date: April 14, 2025

Time: 2:30 pm.

In-person meeting location:

1390 Miller Street

2nd Floor Conference Rooms 1 & 2

Honolulu, HI 96813

RECORDED MEETING LINK: <https://youtu.be/JJ7MXW1gePk>

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 2:30 p.m.

I. INTRODUCTION AND ROLL CALL (0:00-5:10)

Officers (voting members)

1. Chair Kathleen O'Dell, PhD (she/her) - C&C Honolulu
2. Vice Chair Michael Golojuch Jr. (he/him) - C&C Honolulu
3. Secretary Philip Steinbacher (he/him) - Kaua'i County
4. Finance Director Shanda Brack (she/her) - SGM Working Group

Commissioners Present (voting members)

1. Sandy Harjo-Livingston, PhD (he/him/they/them)- C&C Honolulu
2. Joe Tolbe (he/him) - Maui County
3. Richard Velasquez (he/him) - C&C Honolulu
4. Joseph "Rocco" Vick – Hawai'i County

Ex-Officios or their designees (non-voting members)

1. Superintendent of Education designee Beth Schimmelfennig, Director of the Department of Education, Civil Rights Compliance Office
2. President of the University of Hawai'i System designee Dr. Camaron Miyamoto, Director, LGBTQ+ Center, UH Mānoa (he/him)

3. Director of Human Resources Development designee Signe Nakamura-Dureza, EEO Administrator
4. Director of Human Services designee Jonathan Kimura, Executive Specialist
5. Director of Health designee Thaddeus Pham (he/him), MPH, Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator, Harm Reduction Services Branch

Support Staff

1. Administrative Assistant, Devyn Goo
2. Sunshine Law Monitor, Erin Lau

Guests

1. Melissa Motelo from Commission on the Status of Women
2. Janice Poetiray
3. Roshy Hafezi
4. Marguerite Koster
5. Celine Chang
6. Randy Soriano

I. Member Shares, Concerns, and Reports (5:11-11:32)

A. Commissioners (See Board Packet)

1. Commissioner Golojuch updates on the Save Act and asks the commissioners to reach out to their senators to ask them to vote no. He also draws attention to the possible June 1st Statewide Protest from the Board Packet and asks commissioners to help advertise events should they take place. He reports that the City and County of Honolulu Charter Commission has been sworn in and states that they will need to be approached on creating an LGBTQ+ Commission for the City and County as well as addressing several deficiencies within the current charter regarding protections for the queer community and gender-neutral language. Commissioner Golojuch also mentions that there is an opening for appointment to the Board of Education and expresses that it would be wonderful for someone from the community to apply (5:11-9:37)

2. Commissioner Brack updates on Trans Day of Visibility, where she represented the commission. She reminds everyone of Gender Journey Days taking place on June 28th (9:38-10:35)
3. Commissioner Velasquez asks if anyone was able to attend the art event at the Capitol (10:36-11:03)
4. Chair O'Dell shares that she attended the Legacy Foundation Gala and congratulates Dr. Cameron Miyamoto for being honored at the event this year (11:04-11:32)

II. Ongoing Business and Updates (11:33-1:48:01)

- A. Update on Commission legislative priorities for the 2025 Legislative Session (11:33-26:40);

Commission's 2025 Legislative Tracker <https://bit.ly/2025LegHILGBTQplus>

1. Commissioner Golojuch shares that only two bills are still alive: SB 1231 with no major edits and SB 361 was amended on house side. He also shares that the task force to take out the straight language and SCR 179 has died (11:33-8:39).
2. Commissioner Velasquez brings up the bill on homeless youth shelter; he asks the commission to support the bill with the adding of appropriate funds for the initial set up of the program. Commissioner Golojuch asks him to look at the budget sheets for Commission of Youth Services so that the commission can know if they need to advocate for use of monies (8:40-23:45)
3. [HCR 86](#) - Aloha Civics Working Group; Civics Education; Department of Education; Commissioner Golojuch shares that it is still alive and commission has asked for representation on this working group (23:46-24:38).
[HCR 100](#) - Training; LGBTQ+; Culturally Specific Gender Identities is still alive (24:39-25:23).
[SCR 123](#) - Attorney General; Landlord-Tenant Code; Housing; Working Group. Commissioner Golojuch updates that the commission has asked for representation and has passed out a CPC and request was not made (25:24-26:06).

SCR 145 - DLIR; DHRD; Legislative Working Group; Labor; Paid Family and Medical Leave; Commissioner Golojuch updates that report passed unamended (26:06-26:40).

- B. Updates on Commission's website - <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/lgbtq-commission/>
1. Commissioner Golojuch mentions that a glossary page will be added, created by Commissioner Brack with extensive definitions. Mission statement will be added, press has been added. Commissioners are urged to email if they have suggestions for inclusion on the website (26:06-28:40).
- C. Update on letter to the governor requesting an Executive Order from Governor Green to turn Hawai'i into a sanctuary state for gender affirming care (see Board Packet)
2. Commissioner Golojuch updates that there has been no response, but a petition has been created. He asks commissioners to share the link for the petition to get more signatures (29:03-30:01).

Note: Commissioner Tolbe enters meeting at 28:51.

- D. Debrief of inviting Governor Josh Green to a meeting
1. Commissioner O'Dell shares that due to scheduling constraints, Governor Green is currently unable to attend a meeting (30:02-30:48).
- E. Update on letter regarding the anti-LGBTQIA+ policies for students at Maui Preparatory Academy asking Maui Preparatory Academy to reconsider their discriminatory policy targeting Mahu, Transgender, Intersex, and Nonbinary students (Vote).
1. Commissioner Golojuch highlights the importance of the commission's support. Commissioner Velasquez asks how faith-based schools limiting the rights and expression of LGBTQ+ students differ from Maui Prep. Commissioner Golojuch answers that Maui Prep deceived students by parading support for LGBTQ+ students yet showing no support. He also answers that faith-based schools have the religious exemption to decide their stance on LGBTQ+ students since they do not accept State funds (30:49-38:01).
 2. **Vote: Commissioner Golojuch moves to authorize letter be sent to Maui Prep, seconded by Commissioner Tolbe, unanimously approved 3:10 pm (38:02-38:51).**
- F. Update on from Queer leadership meeting (Vote)

1. Commissioner O'Dell shares about the meeting with great attendance. Commissioner Velasquez thanks Randy Soriano and Camaron Miyamoto as well as the commissioners who attended. Commissioner Golojuch adds that it is a wonderful start and there are many more steps that need to be taken (38:52-44:11).
2. Commissioner Golojuch adds that there are already 2 volunteers to host the meetings and that it still falls under Sunshine Law, meaning a PIG would need to be formed with a leader also belonging to another organization. Commissioner Harjo Livingston shares that they will work with Camaron Miyamoto and volunteers to be the representative/leader instead of forming a PIG (44:12-48:04).
3. **Vote: Commissioner Velasquez moves to support making meet-ups quarterly with a different host each quarter with Zoom capabilities for neighbor island participation, seconded by Commissioner Golojuch, unanimously approved 3:19 pm (48:05-48:10)**
4. Commissioner O'Dell also adds that in the meeting, a shared calendar containing LGBTQ+ events was brought up. Commissioner Velasquez asks if the Legacy Foundation has a calendar as a starting point for the commission. Randy Soriano answers that they are willing to collaborate. Commissioner Golojuch adds that there may be limits on what the admin assistant can work on, especially regarding fundraiser events and the ethics would need to be looked over to make sure that no laws are broken. Commissioner Vick asks where the calendar will be posted, Commissioner Golojuch answers that it would be posted on Legacy Foundation's website. Erin Lau cautions that there could be other issues involved, and Commissioner Golojuch states that he will check with Department of Human Resources (48:11-55:11).
5. **Vote: Commissioner Golojuch moves to authorize the Commission supporting the Legacy Foundation Community Calendar, seconded by Commissioner Tolbe, unanimously approved 3:26pm (55:12-55:41).**

Note: Commissioner Steinbacher exits meeting at 3:12 pm, commission still meeting quorum and returns 3:13 pm.

G. Update on accepting private funding

1. Erin Lau shares that she sent an email to Commissioner O'Dell regarding private funding. Commissioner O'Dell responds that she will touch base with Erin Lau after the meeting. (55:42-56:08)
- H. Update from the Permitted Interaction Group established to build a coalition of kūpuna, māhū, and LGBTQIA+ organizations to identify and address the needs of our community's kūpuna, especially māhū, trans, non-binary, and intersex. (See Board Packet)
1. Commissioner Brack updates that they are collaborating with Sexual and Gender Minority Working Group. She shares that there are monthly meetings on the same day as commission meetings and invites anyone interested to join. Commissioner Velasquez shares about the National LGBTQ+ task force and voices his support for Commissioner Brack. Commissioner Tolbe asks if that is a live group only or if it can be attended online. Commissioner Velasquez shares that SAGE is online and that they are happy to collaborate. Commissioner Golojuch says that commissioners must notify the chair if they attend so that sunshine law is not violated. Erin Lau asks commissioners to clarify who is on the PIG and what it does. Commissioner Brack shares the members and that the PIG is working two projects. Erin Lau clarifies that based on this info, this is more of a subcommittee and not a PIG. She states that she will look further into it and get back to Commissioner Brack on whether the PIG needs to stay established (56:09-1:12:41).
- I. Update of the Commission's 2025 Pride Participations – Kaua'i, Maui, Hilo, Kona, & Honolulu Prides (Vote)
1. Commissioner Steinbacher shares about the Kauai Pride event, taking place June 7th and invites the commissioners join. He shares that a table has been secured and there is no cost for the commission to participate. Commissioner Steinbacher adds that there should be a discount for hotel stays. Commissioner Golojuch shares that \$12,100 of the Commission Budget has been spent/allocated, leaving roughly \$4,500 overall and \$3,500 for travel. Commissioners O'Dell and Golojuch commit to attend Kauai Pride on June 7th (1:12:42-1:26:25).
 2. Commissioner Tolbe shares the activities taking place at Maui Pride on June 4-14th. Commissioners O'Dell, Golojuch, and Steinbacher respectively express interest in attending the Maui Pride final event on June 14th (1:26:26-1:32:14).
 3. Commissioner Vick says there is no update for Hilo pride yet as it is not finalized, but he has reached out to multiple planners for information. The commission would have a table from 11-4pm on June 28th. Commissioner Velasquez expresses interest in

attending. Commissioner Golojuch and Commissioner O'Dell mention possible deviation with spending the night in a hotel and Commissioner Golojuch adds that this would not be covered by the State (1:32:15-1:38:59).

4. Commissioner Steinbacher asks if he can donate "Swag" or items to the commission. Erin Lau clarifies that a letter to the Commission needs to be written (1:39:00-1:40:53).

5. Vote: Commissioner Golojuch moves to confirm donations, seconded by Commissioner Steinbacher, unanimously approved 4:13pm (1:40:54-1:42:30)

J. Update on the Commission's statement regarding the University of Hawai'i's response to Executive Orders attacking Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

1. Commissioner O'Dell shares that UH President Hensel did address response; it was not a top-down university directive, and it was up to departments as far as changes to websites. She adds that she will be meeting with President Hensel (1:42:30-1:44:16).

K. Update on "Queer Day" at the Hawai'i State Capitol on April 17, 2025 (see Board Packet)

1. Commissioner Golojuch adds that everything is in order for the event, taking place on April 17 at 11:00am. He asks commissioners to be there at 9:00 am for set up and adds that there are 31 exhibitors attending. Commissioner O'Dell asks for information on parking, Commissioner Golojuch responds that parking passes will be provided at the event (1:44:17-1:48:01).

V. New Business (1:48:02-2:00:21)

A. Update from Genders & Sexualities Alliances - Advisors meet-up

1. Tabled until next meeting (1:48:02-1:48:29)

B. Request for Proclamation for June 2025 - Pride Month from the Governor

2. **Vote: Commissioner Golojuch moves to authorize a request for proclamation for Pride Month for 2025, seconded by Commissioner Brack, unanimously approved 4:20pm (1:48:30-1:49:19).**

C. Issuing a statement supporting Transgender Students participating in sports (see Board Packet)

1. **Vote: Commissioner Golojuch moves to authorize statement as presented, seconded by Commissioner Brack, unanimously approved 4:21pm (1:49:20-1:50:44).**

D. Collecting Hate Crimes Data Discussion

1. Commissioner Golojuch presents the idea of collecting hate crime data like red states and how they collect their statistics. He acknowledges that although the commission

may not be the right entity to do this, he hopes that the commission can start the conversation, and another entity can take ahold of the project. He proposes that further discussion can take place in the next meeting on May 12th (1:50:45-1:54:11)

E. Update on Hawai'i Department of Education actions taken or to be taken in response to the required certification to end all Diversity Equity and Inclusion practices to receive federal funding

1. Beth Shimmelfennig updates that the DOE has extended the deadline to 4/24. There are 11 States that have declined signing the certification. She emphasizes the importance of the certification and the grave consequences of losing federal funding (1:54:12-2:00:21).

V. Adjournment (2:00:22-2:01:44)

1. Commissioner O'Dell shares final thoughts on encouraging commissioners to spread awareness of Queer Day via social media. Commissioner Golojuch thanks the administrative assistant for the social media graphics and Queer Day organization (2:00:22-2:01:16).

Vote: Commissioner Golojuch moves to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Tolbe, unanimously approved and adjourned at 4:32pm (2:01:17-2:01:44)

Future 2025 Commission meeting dates: May 12, June 9, and July 14