

**AGENDA**  
**COUNTY OF SONOMA**  
**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS – REGULAR MEETING**

---

**Tuesday, June 27, 2023**

**5:00PM**

**Hybrid**

---

**First District:** Howard Sapper (Officer-at-Large), Elizabeth Escalante (Vice Chair), Sarah Kerlow

**Second District:** Yensi Jacobo, Iliana Madrigal

**Third District:** Katrina Phillips (Chair), Isabel Lopez, Liz Cruz Reyes

**Fourth District:** Trevor Merrell

**Fifth District:** Lyndsey Burcina, Nichole Warwick

**MEETING INFORMATION:**

The June 27, 2023 Commission on Human Rights Meeting will be facilitated in person. Members of the public can watch, listen, or join the meeting using one of the three following methods:

**1. JOIN IN PERSON:**

Human Resources Large Training Room

575 Administration Drive, Suite 117C, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Limited seating is available for public participants.

**2. JOIN VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM:**

Participate by computer, table, or smartphone application. Go to:

<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/99356615285?pwd=UUISNIIIDQkUvTitzTWQ5bnNkL2NBUT09>

Webinar ID: 993 5661 5285

Passcode: 575862

**3. JOIN IN ZOOM BY TELEPHONE:**

Dial +1 (669) 900 9128

Webinar ID: 993 5661 5285

Passcode: 575862

**Instructions for the Public:**

In accordance with AB 361, Governor Newsom’s March 4, 2020 State of Emergency due to COVID-19 pandemic, Sonoma County Public Health Officer’s Recommendation for Teleconference Meetings, and the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors Resolution 21-0399, the Commission on Human Rights meetings will be facilitated using a dual format with listening and participation available through Zoom and in person.

**Agendas and Materials:** Agendas and most supporting materials are available on the Commission’s website at <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Human-Rights/Calendar/> Due to legal,

copyright, privacy or policy considerations, not all materials are posted online. **NOTE: Due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation, materials that are not posted will be available directly from the Commission at [chr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:chr@sonoma-county.org).**

**Disabled Accommodation:** If you have a disability which requires an accommodation, an alternative format, or requires another person to assist you while attending this meeting, please contact the Deputy Clerk at (707) 565-1851, as soon as possible to ensure arrangements for accommodation.

**Approval of the Consent Calendar:** The Consent Calendar includes routine financial and administrative actions that are usually approved by a single majority vote. There will be no discussion on these items prior to voting on the motion unless Commission Members request specific items be discussed and/or removed from the Consent Calendar.

**Public Comment:** Any member of the audience desiring to address the Commission on a matter on the agenda: Members of the public are invited to join this meeting via Zoom teleconferencing. In order that all interested parties have an opportunity to speak, please be brief and limit your comments to the subject under discussion. Each person is usually granted three minutes to speak; time limitations are at the discretion of the Chair. While members of the public are welcome to address the Commission, under the Brown Act, Commission members may not deliberate or take any action on items not on the agenda, and generally may only listen.

**Commitment to Civil Engagement:** All are encouraged to engage in respectful dialog that supports freedom of speech and values diversity of opinion. Commissioners, Staff, and the public are encouraged to:

- Create an atmosphere of respect and civility where Commissioners, County Staff, and the Public are free to express their ideas within the time and content parameters established by the Brown Act and CHR's standard Parliamentary procedures (Robert's Rules of Order);
- Establish and maintain a cordial and respectful atmosphere during discussions;
- Foster meaningful dialogue free of attacks of a personal nature and/or attacks based on age, (dis)ability, class, education level, gender, gender identity, occupation, race and/or ethnicity, sexual orientation;
- Listen with an open mind to all information, including dissenting points of view, regarding issues presented to the Commission;
- Recognize it is sometimes difficult to speak at meetings, and out of respect for each person's perspective, allow speakers to have their say without comment or body gestures, including booing, whistling, or clapping.

**I. CALL TO ORDER – MISSION STATEMENT – ROLL CALL – PHILLIPS**

**II. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 23, 2023 MINUTES – PHILLIPS**

**III. OPENINGS & APPOINTMENTS – PHILLIPS**

1. Welcome Sarah Kerlow from the First District
2. Congratulate Elizabeth Escalante for her appointment for the First District
3. Openings – (2) in the Second District, two (2) in the Fourth District, and one (1) in the Fifth District.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS – PHILLIPS**

Public comment is limited to **two** minutes per topic or **four** minutes when using interpretation services

**V. OFFICER REPORTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES**

Officers and Staff to discuss administrative-related matters including, but not limited to, field trip ideas and speaker coordination.

1. Wednesday Night Market July 19, 2023

**VI. REGULAR CALENDAR – Discussion and possible action on items below**

**1. Community Spotlight- Escalante**

**Monthly feature guest to present on their service contributions to the community and approve resolutions.**

- Rebekah Schmitt with Sage Casey Foundation

**2. Proclamation for Health Care for All - Phillips**

Attila Nagy presents the proclamation and possible vote for support

**3. Declaring Literacy As A Human Right Resolution-Phillips**

Review and vote on the resolution

**4. Kathleen Finigan Merit Award**

Vote from the list of nominees

**5. Phase one of the strategic planning- Phillips**

Reflection and assessment

- What worked? What didn't?
- Barriers for participation
- What we should do differently for next year?
- What do you need to be successful in your role?
- Brainstorm new ad hocs and projects

**VII. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT COMMISSION MEETING – PHILLIPS**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**COUNTY OF SONOMA**  
**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS – REGULAR MEETING**

---

**Tuesday, May 25, 2023**

**5:30PM**

**Virtual**

---

**Commissioners Present:**

**First District:** Howard Sapper (Officer-at-Large)

**Second District:** Elizabeth Escalante (Vice Chair), Yensi Jacobo, Iliana Madrigal

**Third District:** Katrina Phillips (Chair), Isabel Lopez, Liz Cruz Reyes\*

**Fifth District:** Nichole Warwick

**Staff:** Meira Bowcut

**Commissioners Absent:**

**Fourth District:** Trevor Merrell

**Fifth District:** Lyndsey Burcina

**\*Commissioner Cruz Reyes arrived late at approximately at 5:41pm.**

**Meeting held virtually and in person**

**I. CALL TO ORDER – MISSION STATEMENT – ROLL CALL – PHILLIPS**

Meeting called to order by Chair Phillips at 5:31 PM. Chair Phillips read the mission statement. Roll call was taken by staff.

**II. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 25, 2023 MINUTES – PHILLIPS**

Chair Phillips asked for a motion to approve the minutes of April 25, 2023

No Public Comment

Motion: Commissioner Sapper

Ayes: 6

Noes: 0

Second: Commissioner Madrigal

Absent:3

Abstained: 1

Commissioner Burcina and Merrell were absent. Commissioner Cruz Reyes arrived late. Chair Phillips abstained as Chair. Motion passed.

**III. OPENINGS & APPOINTMENTS – PHILLIPS**

1. Chair Phillips announced two (2) openings in the First District, two (2) opening in the Second District, two (2) in the Fourth District, and one (1) in the Fifth District.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS- PHILLIPS**

Public Comment:

- Attila Nagy

## V. REGULAR CALENDAR

1. The Jr Commission presented on their unhoused population project. The project consisted of reaching out to organizations that help the homeless, gathering information, finding solutions, and they presented those findings to the BOS. The main take way from the information is that food is accounted for, weather is a concerned, and quality of living can improve with bedding. After the presentation some Commissioners thanked the Jr. Commissioners for their work on their project.

2. Nichole Warwick presented on the research of pesticides in Graton, California- Graton Pesticides (Grape) Research Project Results 2023. The presentation provided a depth analysis of data from their research in the city of Graton. The findings showed that there were no pesticides detected that exceed drinking water or health advisory levels. Estrogenic activity was observed at two sites. No action was taken due to already having the support of the BOS on Bill 99.

3. Chair Phillips reminded Commissioners to participate and to respond to emails promptly.

4. Chair Phillips led the discussion on the Kathleen Finigan Award. This award will be given to an individual from the community who works with the unsheltered community. Kathy King, Annie Falanders and Elizabeth Quiroz were nominated for this award. Chair Phillips will take more nominations via email. Voting will take place during June's monthly meeting and the award ceremony will be in July's monthly meeting.

### 5. Nominations and Elections

Chair Phillips read the qualifications and descriptions of the Officer roles.

**Chair:** Commissioner Sapper nominated Commissioner Phillips as Chair; Phillips accepted.

**Vice Chair:** Commissioner Madrigal nominated Commissioner Escalante; Escalante accepted.

**Officer-At-Large:** Commissioner Phillips nominated Commissioner Warwick; Warwick accepted.

**Officer-At-Large:** Commissioner Phillips nominated Commissioner Sapper; Sapper accepted.

Motion to close nominations and approve the slate of officers.

Public Comment:

- Attila Nagy

Motion: Commissioner Cruz Reyes

Ayes: 7

Noes: 0

Second: Commissioner Lopez

Absent:2

Abstained: 1

Commissioner Burcina and Merrell were absent. Chair Phillips abstained as Chair. Motion passed.

6. Chair Phillips led the discussion for the strategic planning meeting. Commissioners agreed on being it during their monthly meeting on June 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm at the HR Large Training Room. Staff went over the logistics of the strategic planning meeting.

#### **VI. OFFICER REPORTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES**

Officers and Staff to discuss administrative-related matters including, but not limited to, field trip ideas and speaker coordination.

1. Chair Phillips reminded everyone about Sonoma County Pride Parade on June 3, 2023. Commissioner Cruz Reyes, Vice Chair Escalante and Chair Phillips will be there. More volunteers are needed. The Wednesday Night Market is on June 21, 2023.
2. Commissioner Sapper reported on his attendance to the BOS meeting on May 16<sup>th</sup> regarding the Anti-Semitism Resolution.
3. Staff reminded that Invoices and reimbursements are due June 9<sup>th</sup>. She also reminded everyone that on June 6<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 the Pride Resolution will be presented to the Board of Supervisors.

#### **VII. AD HOC COMMITTEE AND PROJECT COMMITTEE UPDATES**

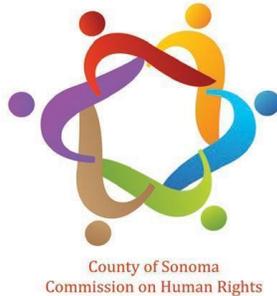
1. Outreach & Communication Ad Hoc Committee didn't have anything new to report.
2. Immigrants' Rights Ad Hoc didn't have anything new to report.
3. Indigenous People Ad Hoc is brainstorming for next years work plan. Perhaps creating a Land Acknowledgment. Staff will reach out to Marissa Montenegro to see if she can meet with the ad hoc.
4. Junior Commission on Human Rights reported that they are interviewing applicants and trying to select by showing representation in all districts. They had about 27 applicants.
5. LGBTQIA+ Ad Hoc Committee didn't have anything new to report.
6. People with Disabilities Ad Hoc Committee didn't have anything new to report.
7. Visibility Project is working on boosting the questionnaire on Instagram and Facebook. Commissioner Madrigal will work with Chair Phillips on boosting the project.

#### **VIII. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT COMMISSION MEETING – PHILLIPS**

1. Rebekah Schmitt with Sage Casey Foundation for Community Spotlight
2. Proclamation from Santa Rosa for Health Care For All Single Payer
3. Strategic Planning for June

#### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.



## RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF REBEKAH W. SCHMITT

WHEREAS, Rebekah Schmitt displays the true actions of a community leader with remarkable compassion for human rights for our marginalized communities in Sonoma County, including the youth who identify as LGBTQIA2S+ and families across the county; and

WHEREAS, Schmitt brought forward the Sage Casey Foundation which was founded in memory of Sage Casey Schmitt, who was Schmitt's 14-year-old child who identified as gender fluid and pansexual and longed to be accepted but succumbed to social pressures which led to a difficult struggle with depression and ultimately led to losing their life to suicide; and

WHEREAS, while all those who knew and loved Sage grieve the loss of their beautiful soul on our physical Earth, Schmitt continued the critical conversations of dismantling the stigma of mental health and protecting the lives of our LGBTQIA2S+ youth in honor of Sage's memory through the Sage Casey Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the Sage Casey Foundation continues to make prominent efforts in our community by sharing Sage's story to help others, sponsoring Hillcrest Middle School students for a full week-long scholarship to Cazadero Performing Arts Camp each summer, and reminding as many people as possible that they are valuable and that they matter, as well as provide crisis resources when needed; and

WHEREAS, while the Sage Casey Foundation is not limited to this work, the organization, and Schmitt are invaluable allies and champions for the LGBTQIA2S+ community and the whole community beyond; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights hereby honors Rebekah Schmitt with the utmost gratitude and recognition and conveys upon her the honorary title of Community Human Rights Champion.



## Proclamation

**WHEREAS** every person in Santa Rosa deserves high-quality healthcare, and

**WHEREAS** the ever-increasing costs of healthcare, which are further elevated due to the pandemic, challenge already strapped municipal budgets, and

**WHEREAS** the pandemic has led to record levels of unemployment and the loss of employer-sponsored health insurance—showing the folly of tying health insurance to employment, and

**WHEREAS** the vast majority of households and small businesses in Santa Rosa would save money under a single-payer healthcare system and physicians would be able to focus on efficiently providing the best care possible for all residents, and

**WHEREAS** the city of Santa Rosa spends millions annually on health insurance for current employees and retirees—much of which could be redirected to other municipal priorities if those insurance costs were covered under a federal or state single-payer system, and

**WHEREAS** single-payer initiatives at the state and federal level, such as the federal Medicare for All Act of 2021 (HR 1976), would provide health insurance that covers all necessary medical care including prescription drugs; hospital, surgical and outpatient services; primary and preventive care; emergency services; reproductive care; dental and vision care; and long-term care; and

**WHEREAS** federal and state legislation to enact single-payer universal healthcare would guarantee that all residents of Santa Rosa will be fully covered for healthcare without co-pays, deductibles, or other out-of-pocket costs, and would save millions in taxpayer dollars now spent on premiums that often provide inadequate health insurance coverage for government employees, then

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that, I, Chris Rogers, Mayor of the City of Santa Rosa, on behalf of the entire City Council, do hereby urge the U.S. Congress and the California State legislature to pass legislation to create a single-payer system that will provide all residents with universal, comprehensive, and equitable health coverage.



Mayor Chris Rogers  
December 13, 2022

# Kathleen Finigan Merit Award Nominations

## 1. Janal Reyes

Janal is from Rohnert Park and founding of a local org called Unsheltered Friends Outreach. Starting during the pandemic, Janal and her friends collected a multitude of donations to help our unsheltered population in Sonoma county stay safe as we faced COVID outbreaks. They collected thousands of dollars in donations to feed those without homes and resources and while their presence is a little scarce right now, it is because Janal is now the full time caregiver for her husband who is suffering from a rare strain of ALS that caused him to deteriorate more rapidly and dramatically than normal cases. However Janal still makes time to put together resources for those she calls her Unsheltered Friends who need a helping hand of care. Janal's drive and spirit or service is truly inspiring

## 2. Heather Jackson

We are neighbors. Sonoma County Acts of Kindness was formed in November 2019 with a simple goal: to make life a little easier for some of the 350+ unhoused people who had formed a community on the Joe Rodota Trail in Santa Rosa, CA. It has since become so much more.

What started out as an occasional delivery of pizza and water by a few women quickly turned into something so much more: housed and unhoused neighbors joining together to advocate for and provide basic necessities to those who survive without a permanent roof over their heads. What began as an informal group of community members helping others has evolved into a 501(c)3 organization with over 2,000 members. These members are everyday people who work together out of the kindness of their hearts, with a singular goal.

The mission of Sonoma County Acts of Kindness is to provide basic necessities, resources, and advocacy to enrich the well-being of the homeless and financially underprivileged in our community.

Since late 2019, we have become one of the largest volunteer-run mutual aid networks in the Bay Area and one of the most vocal proponents of rights for the unsheltered in Sonoma County. Our ultimate objective is for every person in our community to have safe and stable housing, though we know through experience that this is a difficult task. Towards that end, we are on the streets every single day delivering food, water, tents, tarps, sleeping bags, clothing, wellness and harm reduction supplies, and more. We believe that basic necessities and kindness are absolutely necessary for people to have the chance to get to where they want to be in life.

## 3. Kathy Kelly

While she may not be royalty, Kathy King lives up to her name.

Thanks to her work at Sonoma Overnight Support (SOS) and her involvement in a variety of community initiatives, Kathy does indeed have a regal reputation. But it wasn't always that way.

Kathy came to Sonoma full-time in 2011 where she started out as a consultant for SOS. Soon after, she became the executive director and under her leadership, what started as a small overnight shelter has expanded and diversified to address the valley's growing homelessness problem. Just this year, SOS has served more than 200 unique individuals, providing over 7000 meals, 700 showers, and 200 bus passes along with thousands of meetings with case managers for those who need them.

To Kathy, these numbers represent more than just "clients." She knows most of our houseless neighbors by name and often goes far out of her way to ensure they can get the resources they need. Compassion, in her view, is key.

#### **4. Elizabeth Quiroz**

Elizabeth Quiroz is a survivor of human trafficking, a former Foster youth, and a formerly incarcerated student. Quiroz spent most of her youth in adverse circumstances from forced child prostitution, substance abuse, and incarceration. With what seemed to be an insurmountable amount of trauma, Quiroz was able to grow from all of her experiences to become a human rights champion. She is the co-founder of the Redemption House of the Bay Area along with Lisa Diaz-McQuaid, a nonprofit organization to assist human trafficking victims by providing them with a safe place to live while recovering and healing from their traumatic past. Much of Quiroz's work is not limited to this, however. She continues to serve human trafficking victims as an advocate and Drug and Alcohol Counselor. Quiroz has also recently graduated with a Master's degree in Social Justice and Human Rights.

#### **5. Annie Falanders**

Annie has raised over 2.2M and has just completed building 18 tiny Homes in Sonoma Ca. This program will offer job training, life skills training, drug and mental health counseling and a sense of respect and independence. Annie has a BA in Social Sciences, is a retired United Airlines pilot, and spent nine years facilitating Art Wednesday for Sonoma Teen Services. She has been a homeless advocate for the last 3 years and founded Homeless Action Sonoma in 2020. Annie is the heart and visionary of HAS and is passionately committed to ending homelessness in Sonoma.