



Commission on the
Status of Women

Commission on the Status of Women
Wednesday, March 19, 2025 – 7:00pm
North Berkeley Senior Center
1901 Hearst Ave, Berkeley, CA 94709

AGENDA

Mayor Adena Ishii:

Rashi Kersarwani:

Terry Taplin:
Mercy Gray

Ben Bartlett:
Kameka Goodwin

Igor Tregub
Shirley Posey

Shoshana O'Keefe
Kera Binns

Brent Blackaby:
Dianna Mullins

Cecilia Lunaparra:
Najuna Kiggundu

Mark Humbert
Peggy Scott

All items are for discussion and possible action.

1. Roll Call.
2. Reading of Land Acknowledgment.
3. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda.
4. Approval of the Agenda. Discussion Only.
5. Approval of the February 19, 2025 minutes. Discussion and Action.
6. Presentation: 1st Round Council Recommendation related to Intimate Partner, Domestic, and Gender-based Violence by Sasha Gayle-Schneider. Discussion Only.
7. Chair Report. Discussion Only.
8. Discussion and Action on the 2025 COSOW Work Plan.
9. Leaders Provide Update on the Work Plan Focus Areas and Goals. Discussion Only.
10. Formally Create Sub-Committee Groups per the Work Plan. Discussion and Possible Action.

 **ADA Disclaimer** “This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services Specialist at 981-6418 (V) or 981-6347 (TDD) at least five business days before the meeting date. Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.”

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SB 343 Disclaimer

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the City Manager's Office located at 2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor.

Commission Contact Information

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Commission on the Status of Women

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Commission on the Status of Women

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February 19, 2025

DRAFT MINUTES

The meeting convened at 7:00 pm with Kera Binns (Chair) presiding. Okeya Vance-Dozier, Secretary.

SECTION A. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1. **Roll Call**

Present: Binns, Goodwin, Mullins, Kiggundu, Posey, Scott, Gray

Absent:

Excused:

Leave of Absence:

2. **Announcements**

None

3. **Comments from the Public**

Public Attendance: 0

Public Comments: 0

4. **Review and approval of meeting minutes**

Approved minutes from 01/15/25.

M/S/C: Scott, Chegundo

Ayes: Binns, Goodwin, Mullins, Kiggundu, Posey, Gray, Goodwin

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

Excused:

5. **Commission Updates & Chairperson's Report (No Action Taken):**

6. **Secretary's Report (No Action Taken)**

SECTION B. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

4. Chair Election. Discussion and Action.

Commissioner Binns has been elected as Chair for the Commission on the Status of Women.

M/S/C: Scott, Mullins

Ayes: Binns, Goodwin, Mullins, Kiggundu, Posey, Scott, Gray

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

Excused:

5. Vice-Chair Election. Discussion and Action.

Goodwin nominates Commissioner Posey which is declined by Commissioner Posey.

Commissioner Goodwin has been elected as Vice-Chair for the Commission on the Status of Women.

M/S/C: Mullins, Binns

Ayes: Binns, Goodwin, Mullins, Kiggundu, Posey, Scott, Gray

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

Excused:

6. Further Development of Work Plan. Discussion and Possible Action.

No action taken, commissioners will continue edits.

M/S/C:

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

Excused:

7. Discussion and Possible Action on Mayor Ishii's Agenda that we should be Aware of to Support her in the Initiatives we Prioritize.

No action taken.

M/S/C:

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

Excused:

8. **Discussion and Possible Action Around Cease and Desist Orders that have come down from the Federal Government that Directly Impact Women.**

No action taken.

M/S/C:

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

Excused:

SECTION C. COMMUNICATIONS

9. **No communications received prior to meeting.**

SECTION D. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

M/S/C: Binns, Goodwin

Ayes: Binns, Goodwin, Mullins, Kiggundu, Posey, Scott, Gray

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

Excused:

Respectfully Submitted,

Okeya Vance-Dozier, Secretary
Peace and Justice Commission

Land Acknowledgement Statement

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley's residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.

INFORMATION CALENDAR

March 19, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Commission on the Status of Women (COSOW)

Submitted by: Kera Binns, Chair, COSOW

Subject: Commission on the Status of Women 2025 Work Plan

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Commission on the Status of Women (COSOW) exists to advocate for gender equity and eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against women. Its purpose includes identifying and addressing systemic barriers in areas such as employment, education, housing, healthcare, and public policy. The Commission evaluates city policies affecting women, makes recommendations to City Council, and promotes initiatives that advance equal opportunities and safety for all women in Berkeley. By engaging with the community, monitoring local issues, and advising on policies, COSOW works to foster an inclusive and just environment where women can thrive free from oppression and inequality.

This document serves as a guide to the work the COSOW plans to take on in 2025. As additional items or issues arise, or are referred to the Commission from Council, the COSOW will adjust this plan accordingly.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The COSOW has a broad scope and a responsibility to support and investigate. To organize our work, we propose to establish three subcommittees, each with at least two focus areas, as indicated in the table below.

Our 2025 subcommittees and projects include:

Subcommittee: Student Safety <i>Najuna, Mercy, Peggy</i>		
Focus Area	Description	Lead
Digital and	Expand education on women's safety, with a	Najuna

School Safety for Young Women	focus on online and school settings. Assess the availability and effectiveness of safety education programs, and make recommendations to Council on strategies to ensure young women receive comprehensive and accessible safety information.	
Gender-Based Violence in BUSD Schools	Assess the ability of BUSD female, transgender, and gender-expansive students to report gender-based violence and receive support, identify gaps in reporting mechanisms and response systems, and make recommendations to Council on strengthening protections and resources.	Mercy
Addressing Sexual Misconduct by Adults on Children in Berkeley	Investigate the current city policies and programs related to sexual misconduct directed at children and youth by adults in Berkeley. Identify opportunities to compel investigation and resolution in every instance.	Peggy
Subcommittee: Equity & Opportunity Subcommittee <i>Kera, Kameka, and Dianna</i>		
Focus Area	Description	Lead
The State of Childcare in Berkeley: Addressing Barriers for Women and Families	Investigate the availability, affordability, and quality of childcare for children aged 0-12 in Berkeley, with a focus on how gaps in the system disproportionately impact women as both caregivers and childcare providers. Assess the economic and social consequences of limited childcare access, identify key constraints such as staffing, funding, and space, and develop policy recommendations to enhance support for working families. Provide insights to the City Council and relevant stakeholders to drive strategic action toward a more equitable childcare system.	Kera
Addressing Barriers to	Identify and address systemic barriers to school attendance faced by Berkeley families,	Dianna

Consistent School Attendance	particularly single mothers, families experiencing homelessness, and those affected by domestic violence. Examine gaps in transportation, aftercare, and school placement policies that contribute to absenteeism, and recommend policy changes to Council.	
Supporting the African-American Holistic Resource Center to Meet the Needs of Black Women	Monitor the development and implementation of the African-American Holistic Resource Center (AARC) to ensure it effectively serves the needs of Black women in Berkeley. Assess progress following the Commission's letter of support for full funding, which was approved on 5/17/23, and incorporate insights from past presentations by AARC. Identify any gaps in services and recommend policy or funding adjustments to enhance the center's impact.	Kameka
Supporting Women Small Business Owners	Research women-owned businesses and micro-enterprises (including self-employed women and gig workers) to gain an understanding of how women-owned enterprises are faring in Berkeley and develop recommendations to City Council as needed.	Kameka
Proposed Subcommittee: Women's Safety & Justice <i>Mercy and Shirley</i>		
Focus Area	Description	Lead
Human Trafficking Response	Conduct a comprehensive analysis of human trafficking identification and response in Berkeley, evaluate current policies and services, and recommend improvements to Council to enhance victim support and prevention efforts.	Mercy
Protecting Elderly Women from Crime	Continue to advocate to the City Council to increase the prioritization of the existing budget line item 55 on this topic towards funding and implementation.	Shirley

At the March 19, 2025 meeting the COSOW approved the work plan to send to the City Council as follows: **Motion/second to approve the 2025 Work Plan.**

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Future action items that the COSOW may send to City Council could require staff time to develop, finalize, and/or implement. The COSOW strives to ensure proposals provide significant net triple bottom line benefits to the City when evaluating total costs and benefits across areas of impact.

CONTACT PERSON

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