



# CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

## IMMIGRANT RIGHTS COMMISSION

**San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission Meeting**  
**San Francisco City Hall, 1 Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 416**  
**July 10, 2023 at 5:30 pm PDT**

**Online:** <https://sfpublish.webex.com/sfpublish/j.php?MTID=m8ab3d91e833dcd9767381948befe716c>

**Phone:** 1-415-655-0001 / Access code: 2663 928 4107 / Password: 2023

**Overview:** Members of the Commission will attend this meeting in person. Members of the public are invited to observe the meeting in-person or remotely using Webex or by calling the phone number and entering the access code above. Everyone attending the meeting in person is encouraged to wear a mask throughout the meeting.

Each member of the public, whether attending remotely or in person, may address the Commission for up to two minutes. Public speakers using consecutive interpretation assistance will be allowed to speak for twice the amount of the time. Members of the public attending the meeting in person will have an opportunity to provide public comment on every item. In addition to in-person public comment, the Commission will hear up to 20 minutes of remote public comment on each agenda item. The Commission will hear remote public comment on each item in the order that commenters add themselves to the queue to comment on the item. Because of the 20-minute time limit, it is possible that not every person in the queue will have an opportunity to provide remote public comment. Remote public comment from people who have received an accommodation due to disability will not count toward the 20-minute limit.

### **1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Kennelly called the meeting to order at 5:51 p.m.

Present: Chair Kennelly, Commissioners Abdou, Chaudhary, Gaime, Latt, Qiu, Senghor, Souza, Wang.

Not present: Vice Chair Paz (excused), Commissioners Enssani, Obregon (excused), Rahimi, Ricarte (excused), Ruiz (excused).

OCEIA staff present: Director Rivas, Clerk Shore, Grants and Operations Administrator Chan.

### **2. Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgment**

This item is to allow the Commission Chair to acknowledge that the Commission is on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula.

Chair Kennelly read the land acknowledgment statement.

### **3. General Public Comment**

This item is to allow members of the public to address the Commission on matters that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission and that do not appear on today's

agenda.

Chair Kennelly called for general public comment.

The first speaker, a civil rights activist in the Bay Area, thanked the City for appointing Commissioner Abdou and said immigrants are the foundation of the United States. The second speaker, a resident of San Francisco, said Commissioner Abdou has been elevating other people her entire life, and today she is being elevated. The third speaker recognized Commissioner Abdou's work for the community. The fourth speaker congratulated Commissioner Abdou. The fifth speaker, who identified as Latino, said she considers Commissioner Abdou part of her community.

Chair Kennelly thanked the members of the public for their comments.

#### **4. Welcoming New Commissioners**

This item allows the Commission Chair and Secretary to welcome the two newly appointed Commissioners, and allows each new Commissioner to make very brief remarks.

- a. Commissioner Soha Abdou
- b. Commissioner Victor Qiu

Chair Kennelly welcomed new Commissioners Soha Abdou and Victor Qiu and invited them to make remarks. Commissioner Abdou said she is a mother and an immigrant, and will try to help as much as she can. Commissioner Qiu said he is a San Francisco native and the child of Chinese immigrants who is currently a student at UC College of the Law, San Francisco and said it is an honor to serve on the Commission.

#### **5. Action Item: Approval of previous minutes**

*(Discussion/Action)*

- a. Approval of May 8, 2023 Full Commission Meeting Minutes
- b. Approval of May 17, 2023 Full Commission Meeting Minutes

Discussion and possible action to approve the minutes of the Immigrant Rights Commission's Full Commission meetings of May 8 and 17, 2023. Explanatory Documents: Full Commission Meeting Minutes – [May 8, 2023](#) and [May 17, 2023](#)

Commissioner Souza motioned to approve the minutes from May 8, 2023 and May 17, 2023, seconded by Commissioner Wang. Chair Kennelly called for public comment and there was no public comment on this item. The minutes were approved unanimously by the nine Commissioners present.

**6. Invited Speaker: Potential Amendments to San Francisco’s Language Access Ordinance (Natalie Gee, Office of Supervisor Shamann Walton)**

*(Information/Discussion/Action)*

This item allows the Office of Supervisor Shamann Walton to present an overview of potential and/or proposed amendments to San Francisco’s Language Access Ordinance, and allows Commissioners to ask questions, discuss the potential/proposed amendments, and take possible action.

Natalie Gee, chief of staff for Supervisor Shamann Walton, presented an overview of the amendments to the Language Access Ordinance that her office is planning to introduce before the August recess. The amendments will be shared with the Commission and community members for feedback. Chair Kennelly thanked Chief of Staff Gee and invited Commissioners to ask questions. Chief of Staff Gee responded to questions from Commissioner Chaudhary on statistics; Commissioner Souza on strengthening the annual compliance plan, protocols for departments, and the language services bank; and Commissioner Qiu on Cantonese and Mandarin. Director Rivas responded to a question from Commissioner Abdou on the threshold languages.

Chair Kennelly called for public comment on this agenda item.

The first speaker noted that Arabic is one of the main languages in the Bay Area. The second speaker, an Arabic medical interpreter, noted that phone announcements need to be made in all languages.

Chair Kennelly thanked the members of the public for their comments.

**7. Chair’s Reports**

*(Information)*

a. Chair’s Updates

This item allows the Chair to provide an overview of the Commission’s recent and ongoing work, including the:

- 2023 Immigrant Leadership Awards held on June 12, 2023, led by Awards Committee Co-Chairs Obregon and Ricarte;
- Statement issued June 20, 2023 by the Commission in support of H1B workers, written by Commissioner Chaudhary;
- LGBTQ hearing held on May 8, 2023, led by Commissioner Latt, and an invitation to Commissioner Latt to attend the next Executive Committee meeting to

discuss follow-up actions/recommendations from the hearing;

- Planning for a special hearing on workforce development for DACA recipients and asylum seekers (tentatively scheduled for fall 2023), led by Commissioner Souza, as a follow-up action to the May 17, 2023 IRC Strategic Planning Retreat.

Chair Kennelly provided an update on the Commission's recent work. She thanked Commissioners and OCEIA staff for the June 12, 2023 Immigrant Leadership Awards event. The Commission issued a statement in support of H1B workers written by Commissioner Chaudhary. The Commission held a special hearing on LGBTQ immigrants led by Commissioner Latt, and she invited Commissioner Latt to attend the next Executive Committee meeting to discuss follow-up items from the hearing. The Commission is planning a special hearing on workforce development led by Commissioner Souza.

b. Upcoming IRC Meeting Schedule

This item allows the Chair to provide an overview of the Commission's meeting schedule over the next several months, including the:

- Cancellation of the August 14, 2023 Full Commission meeting (the next Full Commission meeting will be September 11, 2023);
- Special hearing on workforce development tentatively scheduled for fall 2023.

Chair Kennelly announced that the August 14, 2023 Full Commission meeting will be canceled for summer recess. The next Full Commission meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2023.

**8. Staff Reports**

*(Information)*

a. Director's Updates

Report on OCEIA and IRC activities and announcements. This item allows the Commission Secretary/OCEIA Director to provide brief updates on activities and announcements. If the Commission would like a full report, we can place that matter on the agenda for a future meeting.

Director Rivas welcomed new Commissioners Soha Abdou and Victor Qiu. The San Francisco Pathways to Citizenship Initiative held a workshop on July 8, 2023. The new cohort of DreamSF Fellows started on July 7, 2023.

b. Reappointment Hearings for Board-Appointed Commissioners

Six Board-appointed Commissioners are up for reappointment by the Board of Supervisors as of June 6, 2023. Commissioners are encouraged to reapply as soon as possible.

Director Rivas reminded Commissioners that six Board-appointed Commissioners are up for reappointment and to reapply as soon as possible.

**9. Action Item: Annual Officer Elections (Director Rivas)**

*(Action)*

- a. Election of Commission Chair
- b. Election of Commission Vice Chair

Director Rivas provided an overview of election procedures and the duties of the Commission chair and vice chair. Chair Kennelly called for public comment and there was no public comment on this item. OCEIA staff received one nomination for Commission Chair: Celine Kennelly. Director Rivas asked Commissioners if they would like to make any other nominations from the floor. Commissioner Souza nominated herself. Director Rivas asked the nominees if they accepted their nominations, and the nominees accepted.

In the Commission's first roll-call vote for Commission Chair, Celine Kennelly received six votes and Sarah Souza received three votes. In the Commission's second roll-call vote for Commission Chair, Celine Kennelly received six votes and Sarah Souza received three votes.

Commissioner Abdou motioned that candidates make remarks, seconded by Commissioner Chaudhary. The motion passed with eight Commissioner voting in favor, and one Commissioner (Commissioner Wang) opposed. Chair Kennelly and Commissioner Souza made brief remarks.

In the Commission's third roll-call vote for Commission Chair, Celine Kennelly received five votes and Sarah Souza received four votes. Following the third round of roll-call votes, the election was postponed.

**10. New Business**

*(Information)*

This item is to allow Commissioners to introduce new agenda items for future consideration by the Commission.

There was no new business.

**11. Adjournment**

Chair Kennelly adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.