

Reparations Commission

SUMMARY/ACTION MINUTES

Wednesday, June 11, 2025

6:00 p.m.

Location: Alameda County Training & Education Center
Hayward/Union City Room
125 – 12th Street, 4th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Debra Gore Mann at 6:18 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members present:

1. Artavia Berry
2. Phillip S. Gardiner
3. Debra Gore Mann
4. Shenita Hurskin
5. Larry McClendon
6. Brandon Sass
7. Shadrick Small
8. Tiega Varlack

Excused: Leo Bazile, Jesse Burleson, Alan Dones, Carolyn Johnson, James Knowles, Natasha Tripplett

III. Public Comment (items not listed on the agenda)

None.

IV. Approval of Minutes - Action Item

Minutes of May 14, 2025

A motion was made by Commissioner Sass and seconded by Commissioner Berry, to approve the minutes of May 14, 2025, as submitted.

Ayes: Berry, Gardiner, Gore-Mann, Hurskin, McClendon, Sass, Small, Varlack

Noes: None

Excused: Bazile, Burleson, Dones, Johnson, Knowles, Tripplett

Motion passed 8/0

V. Debrief of Community Members: Listening Session held on Saturday, May 17, 2025; Lessons learned – Informational item

Commissioners Berry, Gardiner, Sass and Small, who are part of the Listening Sessions Work Group, gave an overview of the Community Members Listening Session held on Saturday, May 17th, at Allen Temple Baptist Church.

The Community Members Listening Session was opened with a prayer from Allen Temple Baptist church member. The Master of Ceremonies for the event was Commissioner Sass, who introduced Commission members and clarified that this was a community event.

The educational presentations were presented, including History of slavery, Jim Crow era in Alameda County, and definitions of reparations. Following the education there was a Q&A and open forum for attendees to speak.

Surveys were completed, mostly handwritten, by 19 attendees, which indicated strong support for reparations.

The preferred forms of reparations include public apology/acknowledgment, memorials or commemorations, scholarships and grants, direct compensation and funding for equity programs.

There were approximately thirty-three (33) community members in attendance, from throughout Alameda County, however most attendees were from District 4.

Listening Session Venues Suggestions: Churches, schools, coffee shops, parks, book clubs, panels, neighborhood councils.

Strengths

- Educational components were appreciated, especially by younger attendees.
- Community expressed strong interest in future sessions.

Challenges & Considerations

- Community members felt uncertain about the Commissions' prior accomplishments and structure—highlighting a need for greater transparency and communication.
- Recommendations included adding demographic questions to future surveys and refining survey questions for better data.
- Emphasize linking past harms to current-day realities to keep the sessions relevant and impactful.
- A noted gap was the lack of engagement with other marginalized communities—seen as a strategic and ethical priority.

VI. Listening Sessions Subcommittee: Finalize scope of listening sessions budget request to inform operational formalized budget request - Action Item

[Attachment](#)

Chair Gore presented the budget structure and options to finalize a budget proposal offering three tiers—low, mid-range, and high—to submit to the ad hoc committee.

Budget Structure and Options

- Three Budget Tiers:
 - Low: \$195,250
 - Mid-range: \$301,800
 - High: \$400,800

The budget was designed to accommodate 6 listening sessions, though a placeholder for 10 sessions was retained for context.

1. **Listening Sessions:** Base cost increased to ~\$18,000 per session; budget reflects six (6) sessions with placeholders for 10 sessions.

2. **Technical Assistance and Project Management:** To be handled by ECC, supporting logistics like scheduling, location, and coordination. ECC has already provided quotes and scope of work.
3. **Data Analysis:** A line item for a consultant to analyze departmental equity-related data.
4. **Online Survey:** Budget allocated for deploying surveys during and outside the listening sessions.
5. **Community Pop-ups:** Funding added for pop-up outreach efforts events like Oakland's First Fridays, running through November.
6. **Report Writing:** ECC will assist in managing and coordinating the report writing process.
7. **Social Media Content Management:** Suggested cost: ~\$5,000 for approx. 9 months of support at \$500/month. May use a professional or a stipend-supported student.
8. **Marketing and Targeted Ads:** Proposed addition: \$5,000–\$10,000.
9. **Photography and Videography:** Photographer important for social media repurposing; videographer to capture event tone.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hurskin and seconded by Commissioner Varlack, to approve the proposed budget for the listening sessions.

Ayes: Berry, Gardiner, Gore-Mann, Hurskin, McClendon, Sass, Small, Varlack

Noes: None

Excused: Bazile, Burleson, Dones, Johnson, Knowles, Tripplett

Motion passed 8/0

VII. Draft budget letter to be presented to the Ad hoc Reparations Committee to include

- **Commission facilitation from July 2025 to July 2026 with Exceptional Community Connections**
 - **Project management of listening sessions, town halls and surveys**
 - **Support with Action Plan Report drafting, organizing and completion**
- Action Item**

The Library is acting as a sponsor of the letter and budget letter to be presented to the Ad Hoc Reparations Commission. Supervisor Miley's staff has been consulted and may assist in submission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gardiner and seconded by Commissioner Berry to grant authority to the Chair and Vice Chair in collaboration with Library leadership to draft the budget letter to the Ad Hoc Reparations Committee.

Ayes: Berry, Gardiner, Gore-Mann, Hurskin, McClendon, Sass, Small, Varlack

Noes: None

Excused: Bazile, Burleson, Dones, Johnson, Knowles, Tripplett

Motion passed 8/0

VIII. Goldman School of Public Policy Harm Report Presentation Adopt Harm Report Framework for Commission Action Plan Report – Informational Item

[Attachment](#)

Commissioners viewed a video presentation of Elycia Knight, Graduate Student, Master of Public Affairs (MPA) 2025, Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California, Berkeley, presenting the Harm Report Framework.

IX. Selection of Reparations Commission logo – Action Item
[Attachment](#)

Vice Chair McClendon presented a PowerPoint presentation with ten (10) logos for the Commission to vote on, for use in future Reparations Commission events, documents and flyers.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sass and seconded by Commissioner Berry, to approve the minutes of May 14, 2025, as submitted.

Ayes: Berry, Gardiner, Gore-Mann, Hurskin, McClendon, Sass, Small, Varlack

Noes: None

Excused: Bazile, Burleson, Dones, Johnson, Knowles, Tripplett

Motion passed 8/0

X. Review website content and layout; Approve website and launch – Action Item

Vice Chair McClendon gave an update on the website content and layout.

The website is built on WordPress, using a template framework. The design elements (colors, images, layout enhancements) are not yet finalized, but the content has been uploaded. The site is currently private and viewable only internally. The draft site includes main sections:

- Home
- About
- Commissioners by District
- Meetings
- Resources
- Contact

The Homepage Includes a summary of the commission's mission and updates. Features will include a direct link to the work plan, live news feed related to reparations in California, and a section for listening sessions.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sass and seconded by Commissioner Varlack, to launch the Reparations Commission website on Saturday, June 21, 2025.

Ayes: Berry, Gardiner, Gore-Mann, Hurskin, McClendon, Sass, Small, Varlack

Noes: None

Excused: Bazile, Burleson, Dones, Johnson, Knowles, Tripplett

Motion passed 8/0

XI. Commissioners to meet with District Supervisors to update on progress and request support

Chair Gore reminded Commissioners to have a conversation with the Supervisor who appointed them, to share with them the activities to date.

XII. Reparations in the news – Informational Item

- **Tulsa City Reparations Private Fund -**
- **AB 57 Dream for All – program for housing,**
- **Berkeley housing near transit**

Chair Gore gave an update on Reparations in the news.

Tulsa City Reparations Private Fund - Tulsa City has established a \$105 million private reparations fund. Entirely privately funded—no city, county, or state money involved. To award resources based on harm and reparations reports related to the city's historic injustices. Legal challenges expected.

AB 57 – Dream for All Program - AB 57 enhances the Dream for All program, which uses statewide Cap-and-Trade funds to support homeownership. Specifically benefits first-time, first-generation African American homebuyers with zero down payment assistance. The bill has passed out of the Appropriations Committee and is moving forward in the legislative process.

Berkeley Housing Near Transit - Berkeley City Council passed a resolution giving priority to African American residents to purchase housing near BART stations. The city has experienced a decline in its African American population over the years, and this measure aims to help preserve community representation.

XIII. Working Groups Report Out - Informational Item

- Request for Qualifications (RFQ) – Near Completion
- Allies/Partnership Agreements – No updates
- Website – Actively being developed; near completion.
- Progressive movement report – no updates, no Commissioners assigned
- Data gathering and data analysis – Requires better project management and consultant support. Large datasets have been collected but need to be synthesized and analyzed
- Budget/Resources – Actively being developed

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m. on June 11, 2025.

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