



Utah Multicultural Commission Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2025 | 1–2:30 p.m.
Highland Building | Google Meet

Approved

Members: Luna Banuri, Tracy Gruber, Meredith Lam, Rhiana Medina, Shawn Newell, Rich Nye, Trhas Tafere

Absent: Emmie Gardner, Jefferson Moss, Wayne Niederhauser, Kevin Nguyen, Tom Ross

Guests: Maegan Castleton, Elliott Clark, Jenny Hor, Dustin Khong, Igor Limansky, Daniel Strong

Welcome – Shawn Newell, MCC Co-Chair

Shawn Newell welcomed attendees to the meeting and invited each participant to introduce themselves. He also announced the vacancy of a community-at-large seat on the commission and encouraged commissioners to invite interested community members to apply through the [Boards and Commissions website](#).

Open and Public Meetings Act Training – Elliott Clark, Assistant Attorney General

The Attorney General's Office provided the annual [Open and Public Meetings Act \(OPMA\)](#) training. OPMA provides requirements for conducting meetings of public officials and requires a notice and an open deliberative process before a public body votes on matters under its jurisdiction. All votes are taken in public.

A meeting is the convening of a public body, with a quorum present, for the purpose of acting as a public body to receive comment about, deliberate about, or take action upon a relevant matter. A relevant matter is a matter within the scope of the authority of a public body or specified body. A quorum is a simple majority of the membership of a public body, unless otherwise defined by applicable law.

A public notice of the meeting must be posted 24 hours in advance on the Utah Public Notice website and the public body's official website. A public body that schedules meetings in advance over the course of a year shall give public notice at least once a year of its annual meeting schedule. An agenda must be posted with the public notice and be reasonably specific.

Written minutes and audio recordings shall be maintained. Even though an audio recording is required, the approved written minutes will be the official record. An audio recording must be posted on the website within three business days after the meeting. The pending meeting minutes must be made available to the public within 30 days after the meeting. Approved minutes are posted on the Utah Public Notice website within three business days of the public body's approval. The written minutes must include the following:

- Date, time and place of the meeting
- Names of the members present and absent
- Substance of all matters proposed, discussed, or decided by the public body
- Record, by individual member, of each vote taken by the public body
- Name of each person who makes a public comment and the substance of the comment
- Any other information that is a record of the proceedings of the meeting that any member requests be entered in the meetings or recording

An electronic meeting occurs when at least one member of the public body attends electronically (video or audio), even if most people attend in person. A physical anchor location is not required if all members of the public body attend electronically.

OPMA does not restrict members of a public body from transmitting an electronic message to other members of the public body when the body is not in an open meeting. Quorum discussions, however, must be held in an open meeting.

Emergency meetings are allowed under OPMA due to unforeseen circumstances and if the matter cannot wait for a 24-hour meeting notice.

A public body can close meetings under certain circumstances. A quorum must be present at the open meeting. A motion to close the meeting must be made, naming the specific statutory reason for closure. Then a roll call vote must be taken. Two-thirds of the body must approve the closed meeting. [Utah Code 52-4-205](#) lists the reasons a meeting may be closed. In most cases, a recording shall be made. Written minutes are optional. If the closed meeting is held to discuss character, competence, or physical or mental health of an individual, no recording is required. No votes are taken in closed meetings. Final votes must be open and on the record.

A court can void any action in violation of OPMA. Sometimes a violation can be cured by discussing and taking a public vote in a subsequent meeting. A member of the public body who intentionally violates a closed meeting provision may be guilty of a Class B misdemeanor. Someone can file an action in court to void a final action, but it must be within 90 days of the action. The Attorney General's Office and county attorneys can enforce OPMA. Any person denied a right by the action taken may sue to compel compliance. If an aggrieved party is successful, they may recover attorney's fees.

A public body may remove any person from a meeting if the person willfully disrupts the meeting to the extent that orderly conduct is seriously compromised.

The presiding officer of a public body shall ensure that the body receives OPMA training on an annual basis.

A designee attending a meeting on behalf of an official commission member does not have the authority to vote or take action, nor does the designee count towards a quorum, unless statute specifies otherwise. A designee, however, is welcome to attend any meetings, as they are open to the public.

Common violations of OPMA include:

- Closing meetings without members of the public body voting first in an open meeting
- Conducting a closed meeting for impermissible purposes other than those allowed by OPMA
- Taking official or final action in a closed meeting
- Failing to post a notice of the meeting 24 hours in advance
- Failing to post the written minutes or audio recordings in a timely manner

The Attorney General's Office shared the following tips in ensuring OPMA compliance:

- Post a notice of the meeting 24 hours in advance
- Be reasonably specific with the agenda items
- Close meetings only for allowed statutory purposes and follow the process

- Err on the side of transparency
- When in doubt, consult the public body's legal counsel

Introduction and Update – Igor Limansky, MCA Director

Igor Limansky is the new director of the Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs. As part of an icebreaker activity, the commission shared a cultural value or practice from their family or community that has shaped who they are. Common values included sharing a meal, being a trusted voice in the community, and upholding cultural traditions.

Commission Work-to-Date and Feedback – Commission Discussion

Three commissioners completed the agency tour survey. Commission members who have yet to complete the form received additional time to submit responses. The collected information will inform the recommendations in the annual report to the lieutenant governor regarding the needs of multicultural communities. Commissioners do not need to respond to each question if they do not recall the meetings with state agencies or have no recommendations to share.

Next Steps for Commission Work – Commission Discussion

The commission discussed the following priorities for future meetings:

- Healthcare and housing for urban Native Americans
- Food security for low-income, immigrant, and refugee families
- Immigration policies and enforcement
- Public safety and hate crimes
- Language interpretation training and certification
- State administrative rules and purposeful implementation of state policies
- Community-wide dissemination of state resources and changes in policies
- K-3 reading proficiencies, including for English Language Learners

The meeting recap newsletters summarized discussions and resources from commission meetings with state agency leads. To share state resources and information widely, Luna Banuri suggested highlighting a commission member in each newsletter and assigning that member to distribute it to their respective audiences. In addition to spotlighting commissioners, the newsletter would feature community members.

Before the commission commits to this approach, it was suggested that the commission understand the newsletters' click-through rates and whether the populations served by the commission find value in the content. The newsletters are posted on the website, but their overall reach may be minimal. The newsletters were initially issued to commission members, presenters, and a few additional guests. Commissioners may also explore how to share the newsletters through digital formats or platforms other than the website.

Another opportunity for commissioners to connect and share resources with the community is by highlighting interfaith holidays. In the past, Gov. Spencer Cox and Lt. Gov. Deidre Henderson have acknowledged cultural celebrations.

Meeting Schedule for 2025-2026 – Commission Discussion

The commission considered different schedules to increase engagement and continuity. The proposals included meeting once a month for the next six months, then meeting every other month thereafter, or continuing with the current meeting schedule of every other month. Monthly meetings are intended to create momentum and build upon

past work. Concerns with monthly meetings include potential lack of commissioner availability and not reaching a quorum. Having clear objectives for monthly meetings, and potentially reducing their duration to one hour, will make the best use of schedules.

Hosting a retreat can help the commission define goals and objectives and become better acquainted with each other. An obstacle, however, is coordinating a time for the retreat.

Approval of Minutes – Commission Vote

The commission did not receive the required votes to approve the May 27, 2025 meeting minutes.

Adjourn

MOTION: Tracy Gruber moved to adjourn the meeting. Luna Banuri seconded the motion.

Action Items

- Invite community members to [apply for the vacant seat](#) on the commission – **Commissioners**
- Complete the agency tour survey – **Commissioners**
- Review [Utah Code 9-21-3](#) to determine the required number of meetings – **Luna Banuri, Shawn Newell, and Igor Limansky**
- Determine the engagement level of the commission newsletters – **Maegan Castleton**

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2025, from 1–2:30 p.m.