



Utah Multicultural Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2025 | 1–2:30 p.m.
Highland Building | Google Meet
Approved

Members: Luna Banuri, Emmie Gardner, Tracy Gruber, Rhiana Medina, Wayne Niederhauser, Shawn Newell, Kevin Nguyen, Rich Nye, Tom Ross, Trhas Tafere

Absent: Meredith Lam, Jefferson Moss

Guests: Jenny Hor, Dustin Khong, Igor Limansky, Kat Potter, Jeremy Shinoda

Welcome – Shawn Newell, MCC Co-Chair
Shawn Newell welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Approval of Minutes – Commission Vote

MOTION: Emmie Gardner moved to approve the meeting minutes from May 27, 2025. Tom Ross seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 7-0-5 vote.

Yeas – 7

Luna Banuri
Emmie Gardner
Rhiana Medina
Shawn Newell
Kevin Nguyen
Tom Ross
Trhas Tafere

Nays – 0

Absent – 5

Tracy Gruber
Meredith Lam
Jefferson Moss
Wayne Niederhauser
Rich Nye

MOTION: Tracy Gruber moved to approve the meeting minutes from October 23, 2025. Rhiana Medina seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 7-0-5 vote.

Yeas – 7

Emmie Gardner
Tracy Gruber
Rhiana Medina
Shawn Newell
Kevin Nguyen
Tom Ross
Trhas Tafere

Nays – 0

Absent – 5

Luna Banuri
Meredith Lam
Jefferson Moss
Wayne Niederhauser
Rich Nye

Commissioner Vacancy – Commission Discussion

Eight applicants applied for the vacant seat. Shawn Newell, Luna Banuri, and Rhiana Medina will review the resumes and serve on the interview panel. The commission will submit the names of a few finalists to the Governor's Office who will then make the final appointment.

Getting to Know Each Other – Commission Discussion

Commission members discussed who inspired their work on the commission and how they can collaborate with the broader community. Community health workers, community members, and rural residents serve as inspiration for the commission's work.

In engaging the community, the commission suggested the following:

- Invite state agencies and community members to present their work
- Map who the commission serves to analyze any gaps that may exist
- Identify 2–3 items to focus on
- Plan a convening to highlight community partners and community health workers

The commission discussed how they can share and attend community events in a timely manner. Potential options included sending emails, utilizing messaging apps, adding a standing agenda item, or forming subcommittees. A concern with using emails and messaging apps is the potential violation of the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act if commission business is unintentionally discussed in a closed setting. This same concern may apply if a quorum attends a community event and discusses commission business.

Division of Multicultural Affairs Updates – Igor Limansky, MCA Director

Igor Limansky met with Lt. Gov. Deidre Henderson to learn about her priorities and update her on the commission's work. The commission will need to determine the items they want to focus on to engage the lieutenant governor at a future meeting.

The lieutenant governor expressed concerns with communities feeling less connected and not utilizing public services. Community members experiencing these challenges may not want to identify themselves due to safety concerns. Building back that trust with government agencies may require involving community leaders, meeting with lawmakers to share the community's experiences, changing communication strategies to publicize the available resources, or developing a toolkit or library of community resources for rapid dissemination. The challenge with resource lists is continuously updating the information to ensure accuracy. 211 offers this type of service but community members may not utilize the call center if they do not have access to phones or other forms of technology. The division should also be part of conversations with state agencies to help distribute timely resources and information.

Understanding Our Community & Agency Networks – Commission Discussion

The division asked commissioners to complete the community landscape survey to help identify the communities and organizations they are connected to and where gaps may exist regarding outreach efforts.

The commission considered issuing newsletters to highlight each commissioner. The individual who is featured would be responsible for distributing the newsletter to their networks. Newsletter metrics and analytics would be tracked to determine their value to the community.

Meeting Schedule for 2026 – Commission Discussion

The commission determined their next meeting will be on January 13, 2026. The meeting will be at a different location due to the conference rooms being occupied at the Highland Building.

Adjourn

MOTION: Luna Banuri moved to adjourn the meeting. Shawn Newell seconded the motion.

Action Items

- Complete the community landscape survey by November 21 – **Commissioners**
- Contact legal counsel to clarify how the Open and Public Meetings Act governs public bodies attending community events – **MCA**
- Connect with 211 to learn about their services and outreach strategies – **MCA**
- Review training archives to offer as resources to the community – **MCA**

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2026, from 1–2:30 p.m.