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City of Bend Statement on March 27 Human Rights & Equity Commission Meeting

At the Wednesday, March 27 City of Bend Human Rights and Equity Commission (HREC) meeting, anonymous commentators used the remote public comment opportunity to disrupt the meeting with escalating racist rhetoric and hateful slurs. The HREC is a community advisory committee for the Bend City Council, and is composed of volunteer community members, many of whom identify with communities and groups that have been marginalized and underrepresented in local government in Bend.

The commenters presented an attack on basic concepts of equity and inclusion, denigrated people of color and Jewish people, and clearly intended to cause chaos and disruption. The comments had no connection to the meeting agenda. The disruption required the HREC to temporarily adjourn before it was able to resume its business.

Racist slurs and hate speech have no place in civic discourse and are inherently disruptive to the work of the City, including the work of volunteer boards and commissions. The City will continue to evaluate tools and practices for managing public comment in a way that allows public business and public input to occur in a meaningful, productive way consistent with the law. The City of Bend is committed more strongly than ever to principles of equity and inclusion, and the safety and respect all our community members deserve.



Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc. please contact Makayla Oliver at 541-323-8571 or moliver@bendoregon.gov.

