

May 15, 2025

Subject: Racial Equity Commission Implementation and Technical Assistance Committee May 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Reporting Period: November 2024 - May 2025

Prepared By: Toya Davis, Operations Manager

Reviewed By: Larissa Estes, Executive Director, Racial Equity Commission

Recommended Action

Approval of the May 15, 2025, Racial Equity Commission Implementation and Technical Assistance Committee Meeting Minutes.

Racial Equity Commission Implementation and Technical Assistance Committee May 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item #1: Welcome

A. CALL TO ORDER: Per the bylaws of the Racial Equity Commission, Committee Lead, Commissioner John Kim called the meeting to order at 3:02 PM.

B. REVIEW OF THE AGENDA

C. ROLL CALL: Quorum Met*; 3/3 Committee Members Present

Commissioners Present:

1. Commissioner John Kim (Virtually)
2. Commissioner Virginia Hedrick (Virtually)
3. Commissioner Angelica Salas (Virtually)

*Quorum is met using teleconference rules for advisory bodies outlined under California Government Code § 1123.5, which allows Commissioners to participate remotely and the Committee to vote on proposed actions to bring to the June 25, 2025, Commission Meeting.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

Public Comment

No public comment on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #2: Public Comment on matters not on the agenda

No public comment on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #3: ACTION: Approval of the November 21, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2024, committee meeting minutes

Motion to approve the November 21, 2024, minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Salas and seconded by Commissioner Hedrick.

Motion passes (3-0-0*). *Marks abstention or absence from vote.

Agenda Item #4: Implementation and Technical Assistance Best Practices Discussion

Joyce Chaio, Facilitator

Facilitator Chaio: Primary focus of this agenda item is to continue working toward discussion of concrete strategies that the committee would like to bring before the Commission. Asset Analysis Highlights were reviewed and shared the following highlights:

- 92% of respondents reported having put organizational infrastructure in place to support their equity work. The most common is “building people capacity”
- 75% of respondents have staff dedicated to equity work
- 71% of respondents have an equity workgroup or committee
- 96% of respondents indicated their organization encouraged staff involvement in equity initiatives
- 70% of respondents reported their organization had spaces for staff to learn about and discuss their work

A recap of the December 19, 2024, Commission meeting discussion included topics of accountability, using incentive and/or punitive measures. Change Management will become a large component of the Commission’s work after the Racial Equity Framework is adopted. For Change Management work, the Commission will be working with the Possibility Lab at UC Berkeley on developing and implementing strategy following the creation of the Framework. Scope of Work: To support organizational change in the Racial Equity Framework implementation, develop and implement a change management strategy that includes: 1. Inform and prepare state agencies and departments, 2. Develop a vision and plan for change, 3. Strategies to implement change, 4. Opportunities to embed change within existing culture and practices, 5. Methods for reviewing progress and analyzing results using data and quality improvement tools.

Deliverables include: 1. Literature review of change management research and implementing work culture shifts, 2. Implementation metrics and success measures, 3. Government-wide implementation strategy.

Commissioner Kim: Discussed the report received and review from the Possibility Lab responding to questions the committee and Commission had regarding pre-existing efforts around equity, what they looked like, what were the challenges, and opportunities. This discussion is being held in a tough political environment and budget situation for the State. The energy in and around the Commission is that we do not stop the work. What are steps we can

take now in the context of the mandated timeframe to get a Framework together? What are very concrete ways to set things up for the long-term? Where might the core capacities and demands play out?

Commissioner Salas: Context was different when we had our initial conversations. We need to note those changes and advances in racial equity. We should be timely and recognize how these recommendations will be seen.

Executive Director Estes: Additional background was provided regarding the contract with Possibility Lab. The contract is active through December 2026. The deliverables around the literature review for best practices and cultural shifts in change management will be complete around October 2025. They will look around measures and metrics around implementation, which should be completed around April 2026. The Implementation Strategy/Plan will be developed by November 2026.

Commissioner Kim: Several elements of their scope of work will be after the publication of the Framework?

Executive Director Estes: Staff is currently working with Possibility Lab with the idea that there should be elements of research that will be done that can be implemented into the Framework. There will be a roll-out strategy that includes institutionalizing what will come out of the Framework. Made note of Commissioner Salas' acknowledging the evolving environment.

Commissioner Kim: Several elements of their scope of work will be after the publication of the first framework?

Executive Director Estes: We are actively working with them {Possibility Lab} now, with the idea that there are elements that we can pull from conversations and research that we are doing now to add to the framework. But if you think of change management, it isn't a publication that gets released and implemented the next day. There is a rollout strategy that you have to think about in terms of institutionalizing anything that were to come out of the framework...what would that look like in terms of policy systems change. Making sure that that we are still having those ongoing engagements and conversations behind actually executing in a plan. Commissioner Salas, acknowledging the evolving environment that we are in, also plays to that advantage of rolling something out in a way that makes sense and is incorporating the shifts that we may be seeing.

Commissioner Kim: Having some access to some of their deliverables and their content as they are developing it as we will into the writing of the framework would be great. Commissioner Hedricks, anything from you in terms of questions on the contract around change management? Also, we could start opening up conversations around our thinking and reactions to the Possibility Lab research on the asset analysis.

Commissioner Hedrick: No questions on the contract, but questions on the report.

Questions/comments on Implementation- pg. 8, Figure 2, “What key areas is your organization currently prioritizing?” Tribal Relations is at the top. Two Executive Orders support this, one under Governor Brown, and reaffirmed by Governor Newsome in 2018. These Executive Orders requiring State agencies to do Tribal consultations, and they must fulfill that order. The Racial Equity Commission Framework must include clear implementation strategies if we are going to see any other of the list and figure to move higher as well.

Commissioner Kim: This cannot just be about “goodwill”, there must be a mandate. Long term for the Commission, and for the Community, how do we advocate for there to be mandates? Whether they be from Executive or Legislature because as a Commission, we don’t have that power? How do we get into a different kind of discourse with the Community around this Commission? To really move those mandates would be critical. Unless there is a mandate, it is just going to be “Let’s hope some people adopt this.”

Kim: As a Commission and as a committee, we have to be very clear about what we need to prioritize, in terms of being ready to support that implementation. We don’t have endless capacity as a Commission. We must be ready to prioritize the top ways to support and things we need to support. I found the Possibility Labs research to be very helpful in terms of thinking about what we should prepare, how we need to prepare for it, and what needs to be prepared. I wanted to get this committee’s reaction to this. These surveys that were done by government institutions for the State: do that have enough infrastructure? A lot of them noted that they have been building infrastructure. Whether or not that has changed, given the political environment, or how well that infrastructure has been operating. Ninety-six percent stated they [Agencies/Departments] had infrastructure built. Community engagement has also received high marks on the survey. Areas where I feel have a clear call in what the Commission could support are: Data (whether there was sufficient capacity to utilize data) with only one-third of respondents saying they actively used data; Budget Equity had few respondents with 22% actively utilizing budget tools; and Planning- in terms of Racial Equity action plans with 58% of respondents responding to having a plan. Do these survey results mean the Implementation Committee prioritize Data Budget and support strategies on action planning? This aligns well with the current committee structure of the Commission. Are those the right three priorities and then we can switch to the “how”?

Salas: First, affirming that, but also thinking of one addition, from pg. 10 of the report, the interviewees noted they were the staff tasked with this work, but that they also lacked necessary authority to implement the change. That is important. We deal with this a lot when we’re talking about racial equity or inclusion of certain communities is that you have a lot of recommendations, but you really do not have the decision-making power or authority to implement that change. That is important. That also has to do with the level these Staff are situated-at what level of government.

Executive Director Estes: Acknowledged that the committee may want to think about carving-out an infrastructure section within the Framework that addresses what the Commission's recommendations are about i.e. an Executive Order? What should be the Executive Order be on "authority for implementation" in that certain position within the structure of an agency or department. As a public advisory body, to structure this in a way that is supportive of the other elements of the Framework.

Kim: Under Dr. Estes' leadership, there has been solid staffing capacity, under this Commission, but this is a long-haul conversation and demands there being a more permanently established Office of Racial Equity. This is more a matter of capacity as Executive Orders and mandates or departments determine their best interest to lean into equity measures that are going to need real support. The survey results clearly show that you can't just show up with only tools, we're going to have to show up with real support and capacity. The idea of building a roadmap toward a more permanent infrastructure might be something we need to consider.

Executive Director Estes: That is a key charge of the Commission to provide technical assistance to agencies and departments as well as local government. What does that technical assistance look like? The challenge is we have 11 submit matter experts on our Commission, but all are also full-time family members, and leaders within your own right, and what would that duality look like in being able to tap into your Commission's subject matter expertise, but also find the subject matter expertise that already exists within agencies and departments and across the country to make sure that we're feeding in and creating the spaces and the learning communities for people to be able to tap into that knowledge and support.

Commissioner Kim: Getting clarity about the "what" in terms of data, planning, and budget. To Commissioner Salas' point, also making sure we are clear about authority and leadership buy-in on some of this. To Dr. Estes' point about having infrastructure to help it implement this...those are some really good directions for this committee to lean into as we integrate our part of the final framework. Looking at the survey results, points some direction about "the how", are there any reactions about "the what"?

Commissioner Hedricks: Appreciate Commissioner Kim's comments.

Commissioner Kim: Seems as though the Commission, meeting conversation around mandates and accountability aligned very much with how people inside of state systems also thought about accountability. There was a big push in the survey results- that accountability is going to be critical, and how to do that in a way when we don't have mandating power as a unit. That would be something that we need to support them on. If we're going to support them with data, budget and planning, how do we hold them accountable? The second "how" was it seemed as though a lot of these efforts inside of departments/agencies are kind of little islands unto themselves. They need and desire cross agency support and coordination and training, so they can see and learn from one another; cross agency engagement and support seemed to be critical. The third "how" that I was from the survey and report around best practices and tools is

being able to see “where else was what we want to do, done? And how was it done? And how can we learn from that?” The fourth element that I would lift from the report was as they develop strategies, to have experts, review them and give them feedback, and to kind of go back and forth with them to solidify those things.

Commissioner Salas: I align with those recommendations, Commissioner Kim.

Commissioner Hedrick: I do not have any more to add, but can you (Commissioner Kim) say more about the “how”?

Commissioner Kim: What I saw in the report was not only what departments and agencies might have done around equity, but also the kind of support they need moving forward. Of all the things they have requested in terms of support from The Commission for racial equity or an office, there were multiple things mentioned. Of the four that really caught my eye or seemed like there was more data around in terms of accountability pieces, the cross agency supports best practices and supporting strategy. “How” do we show up in support? I am asking this question about “what” we might prioritize is because we have limited capacity and we want to “hit the ground running” after the Framework is done.

Commissioner Hedrick: I asked this question because I am thinking about how community shows up, even though that is a different committee. As it related to implementation, we have the Commission. We all have subject matter expertise, but there are still other communities, perspectives within our own communities that could be a resource to the State in either counseling roles on the implementation piece to get to the “how”.

Commissioner Kim: There was a slide from the last Commission meeting that had people talking about experts from different communities and engagement with community-based organizations that I did not see in the Asset Analysis.

Executive Director Estes: Two things to acknowledge, the report is not public yet, however, the data was shared at the December 19th meeting. You may go to the {California Racial Equity Commission} website and either review the recording which you will hear Dr. Amy Lerman talk about the Asset Analysis and present slides on it, and the slides are posted as well. The final report itself is not posted but will be shared at a later date. Commissioner Hedrick’s comments around community and community engagement. The other charge of the Commission is to continue (what is called- in the Executive Order “stakeholder engagement”) and what I think we really hold true to is community engagement. Part of what we will be doing this summer is going back to the communities we visited and sharing key items we are seeking to percolate up, for the Framework; this is what we heard, and this is what the Framework may impact. It is never going to be a direct one-to-one, or cause and effect, but it’s an opportunity for them to see how their voice has been heard and how it can be further integrated into the racial equity framework. This on-going dialogue is going to be necessary with community as they are subject matter experts in their lived experience and making sure that we are capturing that, but also, if

certain things are to be implemented through this framework or an advice of this framework, how is community seeing/experiencing that? That is an important quality control check that the Commission, given its role as a public advisory body, can receive that information and do to communities to be part of those kinds of conversations.

Commissioner Kim: We have some community members here with us, and I would like to hear feedback from the community on this discussion. I would also like to talk a little bit about the “what” on the data, budget equity strategies and action plans. We have talked about the “hows” with best practices and tools, accountability cross agency support and review support for strategies. For community engagement as Commissioner Hedrick lifted up. When we think about the Framework, and this committee’s contribution to that framework, Dr. Estes, what is the vision for what the implementation section of that Framework would look like, and how do we get prepared as a committee to populate that section?

Executive Director Estes: I am envisioning this with elements in sections like data or budget or community engagement, probably with implementation guidance there. We just do not want to say something like “establish a community advisory body”, but there must be guidance within. There is some initial implementation guidance and some of that comes from the subject matter expertise within the committees as well as what we hear from the deliberations of the Commissions. I do think that a section for the Framework around more explicit implementation is exactly what you are talking about around “what are the accountability structures what need to be in place? What is the infrastructure that agencies and departments or does the State need to have, so those that are doing something like a community advisory body-should that be the recommendation, are able to execute?” What is the foundational- going back to Commissioner Hedrick’s comments, if you need an Executive Order, which the executive order we do have is great or equity is great. But what is the next executive order that needs to be released? Is there a next executive order or is there legislation that is necessary to help institutionalize but also keep it moving forward and further the need for the systems change. I do see that section as if you need actual requirements, on what we have heard, and that may have been shared (I cannot remember if it was shared) in the data behind the asset analysis, but equity being embedded into duty statements. That is a very simple systems change item. There would be labor negotiations, you would have to figure out, what does that look like in each agency/department. It is a light lift that could have a tremendous impact. It is a foundational impact, and we know one agency that has been able to do that.

Commissioner Kim: I am wondering from Commissioners about other thoughts on how this committee needs to be prepared to offer up our element of the Framework. Remind us, we are here to advise on both implementation and technical assistance. If there are other components that we need to be prepared to add to the Framework as we get close to the end of the year.

Commissioner Salas: We had a coalition of advocates that pushed forward externally for this to move forward. It is important that we also think about implementation is what our community

partners and how there is an existing coalition that has been very diligent in consistently engaging in this process. What is their role? It is important for tracking and ensuring what is said will get done. If there's any course correction that needs to happen, happens. I would just add that element. I think it is important to add.

Commissioner Kim: Adding a section about how to best partner and encourage accountability that might come from ongoing engagement of external capacities would be good. For Technical Assistance, beyond from providing guidance to departments and agencies about implementing recommendations from the Framework, should we propose, from this committee, the capacities the Commission should build-up in order to provide ongoing technical assistance to these departments? Whatever the Data Committee recommends, how do we translate that into something we can provide real time technical assistance, for budget equity and community engagement? How do we take what the committees are doing elsewhere in the Commission and turn that into real capacity to support? Is that something that is in the purview of the committee or something we can build into the final Framework?

Executive Director Estes: The Racial Equity Commission Staff includes five full-time staff to support 200 Departments plus Agencies, Boards and Commissions. That is a lot of spread and scale. Part of the thinking in what the next iteration is "How can we convene a comprehensive learning community that is statewide? How do we engage our local equity leaders? Some of their work and their best practices could be shared-up. "Is there a need to create, an internal state and internal and external subject matter expert pool which you can call on your colleague in specific area and get guidance and expertise?" - and you tailor that for what you need for your Agency/Department. We are entering into tough budget years, and the idea of full-time employees (FTEs) is not realistic, so there will have to be contracting and opportunities.

Commissioner Kim: Whether or not FTEs are available or not, if you have convened the experts that we have convened and have the community engagement that we have been having, we can at least put to paper, "here are the best capacities" that we should be building out whether or not it happens right away or over time.

Executive Director Estes: Absolutely, we can think in terms of the two to three immediate things that we need to happen versus that is something that happens in three to five or ten plus? The idea you (Commissioner Kim) had of a roadmap, that gets into the institutionalization of racial equity into our systems.

Executive Director Estes: Role clarity is important, especially knowing the charge of the Commission, and the FTEs that were designed to support the development of the Framework implementation, technical assistance and community engagement. There is not necessarily staffing and the subject matter expertise to do the data piece and the budget equity piece. We are learning just as much as everyone else, so those are just the kinds of gaps that I am starting to see. For example, if we were asked, I would have to tap in several other subject matter experts from different places and spaces.

Commissioner Kim: If we had the information on community engagement in “this” type of community in “this” part of the State, “here are some experts in data for the “thing” you are looking at, understanding disparities according to data so that (one) could redesign service delivery. Here are experts that we could have ready as opposed to hiring, we could have them ready, because California is full of those experts. We could have that ready for Departments?

Executive Director Estes: We have a compendium of subject matter experts; we could also host and establish a webinar series on different topic areas. The Asset Analysis data gives us insight on topic areas are, where we could cultivate webinars on that information.

Commissioner Salas: There would also be the community of learning? Because of the ideas who are the external experts that we could call upon, but also internally. You create part of the implementation is to identify what communities of learning already exist, but also creating those (communities) as a part of implementation and also saying what really worked of those collective spaces where one can advance slowly on their own, but once in a community of practice and learning, then you’re able to really accelerate that burden across the board. What may take one agency longer to accomplish, might take another agency a shorter time because they’re in relationship. That part should be included.

Commissioner Kim: Learning from an expert is one thing, learning from a peers is different and you often need both, The other thing, I do think that this Committee and the Commission overall should consider that our audience (in terms of implementation and technical assistance) may be the departments and agencies, but also to the Legislature, who may want to write legislation to mandate “X” or “Y”, but could use support, technical assistance on that as well. If the Commission, or hopefully an Office, to get a place of having capacity to provide, not just to Departments and Agencies, but to the Legislature as well.

Executive Director Estes: (Referencing the Commission discussion slide), the idea of defining “key terms”. There has been interest in the State of California around defining a term like “equity”. That is one of those foundational pieces is this is, is this something that the Commission feels is important in defining specific key terms around what is equity in the context of this Framework? What is racism in the context of this Framework? What is structural racism in the context of this Framework? I ask because I have seen Legislative interest, we also had a bill, AB766, which was about embedding racial equity into Agency strategic plans. You can see the appetite is there, and I do think the Legislature is your audience. Other things to think about is “what is the role of the Legislature in understanding equity and inequities that it may produce within its own processes?” I think they are and could be champions of this work, but what are the technical assistance supports they need? What are the structures and strategies they need to build out, to be able to make informed decisions? We (California Racial Equity Commission) is not a public advisory body. We can put this out there, but we are not advising the Legislature, there are many advocates on here, and your networks could see the opportunity for something like that.

Commissioner Kim: Whether Legislators reach out to a body like the Racial Equity Commission...in a couple of years, if Legislators don't regularly see this Commission as a partner, in what they are thinking and building, then we are doing something wrong. We really must be clear about how we can make sure that they see us as an attractive partner. We have capacity, we have skills, we have supports, and we know how to work with them. Is there anything we want to ask from the Staff to help prepare for upcoming committee meetings because it is about to get real for Framework development? Any tasks for Staff?

Commissioner Salas: The report was on interviewing people at a certain time. If there is an addendum, that would include "what are some of the challenges in the work today?" I think that would be important.

Commissioner Hedricks: No specific requests of Staff at this time.

Commissioner Kim: To Commissioner Salas' point, getting up to date, given the shift in politics, is it really the case that "96% of respondents still have infrastructure"-that they may have had in the Fall of last year? That may be more timely and helpful than the change management. I know we have them on contract for a range, but we might want to put up front and do some "double checking" to see if that is still there and what challenges might be.

Executive Director Estes: I may not be able to do a survey, because it did take nine months to go from idea to live, let me think with that and have a conversation with the Administration on what could be feasible. They may already have this information, and I might be able to garner some of that and share feedback with this committee. As I engage with other colleagues and leaders throughout the State, I can also get a sense as well and also share that feedback. I do like the idea of understanding where people are now. We ended the survey, November 3rd (2024).

Commissioner Kim: That was before the inauguration, any Executive Orders, anything.

Executive Director Estes: We are operating in a totally different world.

Commissioner Kim: When is the next committee meeting for this committee? I want to see what might be feasible in terms of timeline between now and then,

Executive Director Estes: We had not planned another meeting until the Fall. What I will say is if you all want to have a meeting sooner, we can find a way to carve out a virtual meeting for you all. We would just have to get a sense as to when you would like to have that {happen}.

Commissioner Kim: To me, it would be worthwhile to reconvene after there was a draft of the Framework that delineated what our section might be, after getting feedback from the committee. To make sure we are going in the right direction on the implantation side of the Framework.

Executive Director Estes: September would be a good time- it is not perfect because we are running out of time. This is a body of work that continues beyond December 1st, and that is something we must be clear on with the stakeholders and the audience. This is not a one and done in a section in the Framework. The subsequent report that we must release in December of 2026 being: "What is our implementation plan? How do you evaluate this? How do you self-

evaluate your implementation? How do you do it- in aggregate?” After implementation, we can see if “we forgot these three items”- after implementing for a few months, we realize you really need these “things”. This is an on-going journey. I want us to not think about rushing to the end, but rather how are we positioning this committee and the Commission to continue to lay that roadmap forward? For the State, September would be when we could acknowledge your comment.

Executive Director Estes: To acknowledge your comment around the Legislature “seeing us as a partner”, I have been contacted by several Legislators and have gotten meetings scheduled. I give them updates. We are meeting in Speaker Rivas’ district in June. We will be in Senator Pro Tem’s district in September, so we are touching very important spaces and places with powerful leaders within our State Legislature. So those are opportunities where we are making sure that they and their Staff are aware and are invited and engaged as it is important for them to start seeing as a partner.

Commissioner Kim: If the committee members are comfortable, we will keep the September committee meeting schedule for the meeting and the main task is whether we can get an update on the survey since the election and given this new environment and for us to have a solid copy of the draft of what might be in the Implementation and Technical Assistance section of the Framework, so that we could review and give direct feedback before it is finalized in December.

Executive Director Estes: You will at least have a high-level idea based on this conversation and hearing you all talk about the “what’s” is helpful to see what needs to actually be in the other areas of the Framework. We will have an outline for you all to discuss and deliberate in June. Then though summer workshopping, especially as we continue to engage community, so you do have a more robust draft by the Fall.

No additional Commissioner discussion.

Public Comments

Alejandra Ponce de Leon, Catalyst California, California Racial Coalition Commission.

Agenda Item #5: DISCUSSION: Next Steps for Staff Action

Executive Director Estes: Getting an addendum or additional information on the challenges experienced most recently by agencies and departments. Follow-up with Administration to get a sense of what might be feasible. Planning a September committee meeting and trying to position this committee to have a robust draft to review the infrastructure pieces that need implementation supportive pieces that need to back up the elements within the Framework. This is going to be an ongoing conversation that is starting now, but won’t be “pen to paper” until later in the year.

Commissioner Kim: Hopefully the draft, in the Implementation and Technical Assistance section of the Framework will speak to some of the “what” and “how” that we discussed today including the additional elements that were added by other committee members:

Commissioner Kedrick's piece around engaging experts and community organizations and moving the community engagement piece forward; Commissioner Salas' point about mandates and accountability, to make sure we have alignment here during the discussion as a committee is represented in that write-up that we review in September would be great.

Executive Director Estes: The staff will be developing a committee report and minutes, that the full commission can be aware of your conversation and proceedings.

Public Comments

No public comments.

Agenda Item #7: Meeting Adjournment

Commissioner Kim: Thank the Racial Equity Commission Staff and Commissioners and the public for joining us today.

Meeting was adjourned by common consent.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 PM.