

Shaun Bickley

20 mins ·

This is the email I sent Evan Philip in the Mayor's Office, CM Lisa Herbold and her staffmember Shannon Perez-Darby, and Interim Director of OCR Mariko Lockhart.

I'm at my wit's end with the city standing behind misogynists and white supremacists but bristling at the slightest criticism of their policies. Despite the work we have been able to accomplish, several of us are ready to quit after today if the city can't deal with these issues and provide competent staff support.

To all concerned,

I want to continue to express my disbelief at the city's unwillingness to provide support to the Disability Commission, and its ongoing support of white supremacist, misogynist, and ableist behavior.

I don't know how many Commissioners have to come forward and complain about misogyny and white supremacy from Mayoral and Council-appointments before the city takes it seriously. Apparently six isn't enough. Ten? Fifteen?

Today I witnessed ChrisTiana ObeySumner co-chair by themselves while two older white men screamed at them, interrupted, and corrected them. At one point Eric Scheir began screaming at the top of his lungs at ChrisTiana, threatening to sue. People left the room,. Mr. Scheir is perfectly aware of his ability to physically intimidate women and non-binary people by screaming at the top of his lungs, and if he isn't, he is unqualified to serve on the Commission. I can tell you he would be fired from any job I have ever had for that kind of behavior.

Jayson Morris is a Council-appointed Commissioner. Six Commissioners have complained about his behavior, the Co-Chair and the Director of OCR had a meeting with him to address his behavior, and the Co-Chairs wrote Councilmember Herbold about him on June 8. Nothing has happened. Eric Scheir is a Mayoral appointment who has exhibited this kind of narcissistic, racist, and misogynistic behavior since before he was appointed. Nothing has happened.

At what point do I assume that individuals acting as agents of white supremacy and misogyny, on behalf of the Mayor and City Council, are simply carrying out the will of those entities? Especially since Meg Bartosovsky and I were removed without even being spoken to because of our advocacy on the Commission. There is a pattern here, and it's that white supremacists and eugenicists are given every chance and every opportunity to thrive, but developmentally disabled advocates who question the city are removed post haste.

Six Commissioners signed a letter asking for Marta Idowu to be replaced in her position as Commission liaison. Today, while this screaming rant happened, Marta did nothing. What "support" is OCR providing if they don't address violence within the meetings, don't keep order, don't address micro and macroaggressions, and can't even keep accurate minutes?

My peers voted to appoint me into a Commission-based seat and for me to continue on as co-Chair. I would love to continue the great work we have done, work the City has praised and been credited for, but I sat in that meeting feeling physically unsafe as a man screamed his lungs out at us with the full backing of the Mayor and City Council, and I've seen the disparate treatment we receive when we bring light to these issues.

I don't know how many time I can ask that someone--the Mayor's Office, OCR, the City Council--take responsibility for the situation it has created: to deal with violent Commissioners and to provide competent staff support to our meetings.

Thanks for listening,

Shaun Bickley

Co-Chair, Seattle Commission for People with Disabilities

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Shaun Bickley For the record, it's been 3 weeks and I still haven't been given a reason why I wasn't reappointed (and Meg Bartosovsky STILL hasn't been told even as little as I have--they removed her without a word). I don't expect this administration to reappoint me at this point, but I do expect them to be professional about it and to stop supporting racist, misogynistic, and ableist behavior.

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Kristy Copeland Well written letter Shaun! Sounds like a terrible situation. I hope the city will respond (tho i wont hold my breath)

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Shaun Bickley Considering my peers reappointed me I could just shut my mouth and not make waves for a month while this goes through but this is just an untenable situation. I don't need the Commission to do advocacy work, people come to me. But I do need it not to be an unsafe place or people like Dorian and ChrisTiana will leave and it'll be a Commission of assholes building their resumes and being racists on the city's endorsement, again.

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