

**From:** [Brandi Champagne](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment for 1/11/21 city council meeting  
**Date:** Sunday, January 10, 2021 10:33:22 PM

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Regarding item 5.a. from your agenda:

You are asking for a report from the Human Rights Commission on actions the city should take to promote diversity and ensure everyone can thrive in safety and dignity. But there are so many people right here in the Salem community who can advise you on what actions the city can take. Who have been trying any way they can for city officials to hear their voices. They are asking you to listen, so please listen.

First and foremost, the city of Salem should unequivocally denounce white supremacy. And acknowledge that white supremacy has a large presence in Salem that will no longer be tolerated. Then, set up a commission of BIPOC community members who experience white supremacy first-hand every day here in Salem, to advise you on additional actions the city should take to ensure everyone can thrive in safety and dignity.

As a white person, I have benefited from white supremacy my entire life. I didn't ask for it, but I benefit nonetheless, at the expense of the BIPOC community. We are all responsible for acknowledging this, and forging a better path forward, especially for BIPOC. Please, let the Salem BIPOC community help us all move forward together.

Thank you,

Brandi C., Salem resident

**From:** [Brett](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment 5a  
**Date:** Monday, January 11, 2021 8:17:12 AM

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Dear Mayor Bennett and Salem City Council Members,

I am very pleased to hear that you are asking for a review by the Human Rights Commission on actions that can promote diversity in our fair city. Such an action is something that Salem, OR desperately needs especially in this modern day and age. I would of course ask that all councilors vote in favor of Agenda item 5a. I would also ask that you all make sure that this is not the last agenda item issue on this topic. Receiving a report from the HRC is an amazing first step to take but of course once you receive that report, you must follow it up with action based on the information you receive.

Sincerely,

Brett Stoner-Osborne

Salem, OR Ward 1 resident

**From:** [Cathy and Paul](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Jan. 11 council meeting, agenda item 5.a.  
**Date:** Saturday, January 9, 2021 9:24:37 AM

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January 9, 2021

Re: 1/11/21 meeting, agenda item 5.a., Motion from Mayor Bennett regarding Community Inclusion

Mayor Bennett and Council Members:

The first action that the City needs to take to promote diversity and ensure everyone can thrive in safety and dignity is to **condemn white supremacy**. Now. Don't wait for a report. Adopt a resolution now and share it far and wide. Make it clear to the hate groups that they are not welcome here. Hate has no place in Salem.

Respectfully,  
Cathy Ostrand-Ponsioen

**From:** [Laura Sauter](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Promoting Diversity motion  
**Date:** Sunday, January 10, 2021 2:08:56 PM

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While I can appreciate (if I squint hard enough) the good intentions behind the mayor's motion that the city council request a report from the Human Rights Commission on "promoting diversity in Salem, I urge the city council to take stronger action. The "Proud Boys" and their ilk must be strongly discouraged from spreading their hate and violence in Salem. They should be declared a criminal street gang and arrested every time they gather in order to intimidate our citizens and foment violence.

Sincerely,  
Laura Sauter  
Salem

**From:** [Nate Carter](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public meeting, 1/11/21, Motion Regarding Community Inclusion - Written Testimony  
**Date:** Sunday, January 10, 2021 3:24:19 PM

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There is a motion pending before the City Council to "request a report from the Human Rights Commission" on actions that the City can take to "promote diversity" and "ensure everyone \* \* \* can thrive in safety and dignity."

Here's an action that the City can take to promote that goal, right now: Condemn White supremacy and anyone who promotes it through violence, harassment, or otherwise. Condemn the violence that White supremacists such as the Proud Boys have brought to our city. Condemn those who have harassed our BIPOC residents, and businesses owned by our BIPOC residents. Full stop. No excuses. No "both sides." Call the problem out by its name.

That isn't nearly enough to remedy the problem, but if the City can't take that necessary first step, then with all due respect, it really can't do shit.

Nate, Salem resident 1976-1995, 2007-present

Sent from my Galaxy

**From:** [Sarah Evans](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment for Jan. 11 City Council Meeting  
**Date:** Sunday, January 10, 2021 10:26:45 AM

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Hello - Below is a public comment in regards to item 5a on the meeting agenda, "Motion from Mayor Bennett regarding Community Inclusion."

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Dear Mayor and City Council,

I am providing this testimony to urge you to take strong action to condemn white supremacy and racism in our city. I am white but I support all the Black, Indigenous and other people of color who live in Salem. I believe them when they talk about racism and the fear they have faced in our city, and I urge you to also take their concerns seriously.

The mayor's "Community Inclusion" motion on tonight's agenda is not nearly strong enough, for multiple reasons:

1. We don't need another report from another commission. If the city had been listening to people of color and their allies these past months and years, they would already know that Salem is currently a place where they experience racism and do not feel safe. They have also given you many ideas of ways that you can promote a safer environment for people of color.
2. Nothing in the motion mentions racism or white supremacy by name. Instead, it uses soft, whitewashed language like "promote diversity as a core strength." Nothing in this motion is different than what we do now. The language is so weak that it doesn't actually serve any real purpose and it would end up accomplishing nothing.

If you do not explicitly condemn racism and white supremacy, then the incorrigible actions we've seen in our city on behalf of the Proud Boys and other racist groups will continue to happen. These groups continue running amok in our city because no one challenges them, they are not policed even when they harm our citizens of color, and you have not publicly put out the message that hate is not welcome here.

You must state publicly that hate is not welcome in Salem, and that you will not tolerate racist and white supremacist actions in our city. Don't use weak, whitewashed language. Address the problem directly by calling it what it is, and then taking action on the many things that people of color have told you make them unsafe in our city.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Evans  
Salem Resident, Ward 1

**From:** [Sarah Rohrs](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#); [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment re: Mayor's Motion on Community Inclusion  
**Date:** Sunday, January 10, 2021 4:11:56 PM

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Jan. 10, 2021

Mayor Chuck Bennett and members of the Salem City Council –

I am writing to urge the City Council to adopt a strong statement denouncing racism, white supremacy and hate groups in Salem, and to back that statement up with anti-racist policies and programs.

For months white supremacists have paraded through Salem's parks and residential neighborhoods. They've pointed rifles at bystanders and looked for people of color to terrorize.

We've witnessed fights and assaults, black-owned businesses targeted with frightening vandalism, and smashed windows at the State Capitol during the Dec. 21 Legislative Session.

Clashes on New Year's Day garnered national attention in a Newsweek article.

Throughout, many people of color here in Salem have talked of their fear, intimidation and exhaustion.

And for months Salem residents have called on City Council members to unite and issue a strong public statement saying hate groups and the racism they represent are not welcome here.

I am encouraged to see this issue on tonight's agenda, but the mayor's motion does not address the immediate issue at hand.

White supremacists find Salem a welcoming place to spew their hate and violence. It's time for you, as city leaders, to challenge these hatemongers and issue a public statement that the racism they represent will not be tolerated here.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sarah Rohrs

Salem, Oregon