

**Minutes**  
**Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council**  
**GENERAL MEETING: TUESDAY, July 8, 2025**

**Welcome:** EISCC President Kevin Folkman

**Opening Prayer**

**Acknowledgment of Indigenous Lands and Peoples**

**Participants:** 31 in the room, 10 online. Full list of those who signed in appears at the end of the minutes.

**BRIEF REPORTS:**

- Secretary & Treasurer (see [www.eiscc.net](http://www.eiscc.net) for [minutes](#) and [financial report](#))
  - Treasurer Warren Marquardson was not present. The President directed members to see the financials on eiscc.net, which show assets of \$166,051.78 at the end of June, with \$149,903.64 designated for Congregations for Kids.
  - Co-secretary Susan Cozzens highlighted the volunteer sign-up sheets, for congregations to offer lunches for future EISCC meetings and for individuals to serve on EISCC committees – Program, Hospitality, or Outreach.
  - Co-Secretary Pauline O-Hare reminded those present that there is no EISCC general meeting in August. The next general meeting is September 9.
- Congregations for Kids (Nancy Jacobs reporting). This will be C4K's 30<sup>th</sup> year. The program will be helping about 1700 students this year. She shared recent family stories.
- Eastside Human Services Forum (Linda Hillesheim reporting). EHSF is not charging dues this year. An administrative assistant position is being filled now. They are considering a fall forum. There are also conversations about further collaboration with the Together Center and the Association of Eastside Agencies.
- Camp United We Stand.
  - Bill Leon, Board member, thanked the various congregations who have welcomed the Camp over the past few years. The Camp is looking for more host sites, particularly on the Eastside. For ten years, this self-organized Camp has been hosting up to 35 adults and has been moving every 3-6 months. Moving is a big burden on everyone. [Contact Bill](#) if you want to talk more about hosting.
  - Christopher Carter, another Board member and a resident in the camp, shared that he would love the camp to stay on the Eastside. The Camp is a group of individuals who are not homeless, even though they are houseless. The partnership among camp, church, and city creates the community. He made a special request for a particular type of fire extinguisher. The Camp Needs List is [here](#).
  - Tammy Waddell added that Nourishing Networks, which works primarily on the Eastside, is partnering with the Camp, but will have a greater challenge helping if they move to the other side of the lake. The Camp is not the only service agency moving out of the Eastside,

straining the remaining service networks. She hopes Eastside congregations will step up to provide space. (The camp provides all equipment and personnel.)

- *Update: The Camp will move to Northshore United Church of Christ in Woodinville at the end of the month.*
- Eastside for All/ [Safe Haven Network](#)
  - Eastside for All is an advocacy organization, working on housing and other issues. Candidate forums are coming up online for two specific city council offices where there are more than two candidates on the primary ballot. July 17 Bellevue CC Position 1 register [here](#). July 28 Kirkland Position 3 register [here](#).
  - In 2019, in response to high levels of immigration enforcement on the Eastside, an informal network called Safe Haven was formed. It does advocacy and raises up the voices of people normally left out of decision processes. They work on systemic issues, as chosen by the group.
  - Safe Haven monthly meetings are now focusing on how to support immigrants in our communities. Everyone is welcome to come to the meetings. Immigrant leaders are centered.
  - The group is in conversation with Indivisible Eastside about how they can support the effort. They are working towards a rapid response team, so that non-immigrants can protect their neighbors at dangerous moments. Adam Dibba from Africans on the Eastside is providing immigrant leadership.
  - Every third Wednesday of the month, the Safe Haven Cafecitos group meets by Zoom. In August, they are hosting a special in-person meeting with a lawyer providing advice on how immigrants can protect themselves. [Contact Guillermo](#) to be added to the list for announcements of meetings.
  - A participant noted the mental health strains that many experience in times like this. Guillermo noted that King County Housing was required to report all residents in their buildings, regardless of citizenship status, to federal authorities. KCHRA sent a letter informing residents of this action; the letter has caused panic.
  - E4A is also asking Eastside police what they are doing in response to ICE kidnapping. A participant asked how we could address deceptive tactics from ICE. Guillermo recommended working through [WAISN](#) (the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network), along with watching Telemundo and other Spanish-speaking networks to get reports. The [ICEBlock app](#) can be used to report ICE activities.

**PROGRAM: Mental Health Crisis De-escalation** (Presentation from Marc Oomen, Executive Director of [NAMI-Eastside](#) (Eastside chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness). Marc's slides are available [here](#).

NAMI Eastside provides family support and advocacy for better mental health responses. Marc presented a short version of their de-escalation training. Contact him to schedule the full version. The training tries to

get a potentially dangerous situation to a place where everyone is safe. The CALM steps are not a linear process; you can be doing more than one step at a time.

C=Communicate. Don't try to control. Think about how you are presenting yourself, especially avoiding making threatening movements. Be approachable. Stand next to the person in crisis, partnering.

A=Assess. This will go on throughout the process. Acknowledge how people are feeling, everyone in the room, including yourself. Safety is the first consideration. If it has reached a certain place, it may go beyond your skills. You need to assess yourself and name your reactions, so that you can slow down and take the next step.

L=Listen. Take 10 seconds to assess. Active listening takes practice. If you are not listening, you may escalate the situation. Validate the experiences and feelings of those in the situation; give space to describe them. Limit your input. Ask open-ended questions, such as "what was that like for you?" Your body language should be similar to theirs.

M=Mediate. Does not need to be linear. If someone needs something, give them help, like food or water. How do we move towards ending the interaction with everyone feeling safe? You are not trying to change anyone's mind. Focus on validating, acknowledging, moving away. Offer that they can call 988, the mental health crisis line. The counselors at 988 will describe what they can do and can talk to the person in crisis. A positive outcome is when they access resources, and everyone goes on with their day.

After the interaction, check in with everyone to see how they are doing. Everyone there may have reactions. It may have triggered other memories. It's best to do this as soon as possible after the event, and make sure you are taking care of yourself. What went well? You can call NAMI Eastside for support.

The last slide in [Marc's presentation](#) gives phone numbers to use as resources in mental health crises. Many are available 24 hours a day, including 988. 988 has population-specific lines, including for indigenous people and veterans. 988 will also now get you to non-police community response 24/7, for substance abuse and homelessness, in addition to mental health crisis. There were questions about the difference between 988 and the Washington Warm Line. The Warm Line is for non-acute support.

A participant noted that the King County Library System is sponsoring mental health first aid training, in partnership with NAMI Eastside. NAMI offers that training regularly, and they are moving towards special offerings for teens. This is a good next step after CALM training. They are always looking for volunteers to help build out their work.

### **Announcements**

- Kevin Folkman announced a seminar for religious leaders on artificial intelligence (AI), co-hosted by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Catholic Community Services of Western Washington. It will be held Monday, July 28<sup>th</sup> from 9-11 am at 15205 SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street, Bellevue WA, 98007. The speaker is Jared Spataro, Chief Marketing Officer for AI at Work at Microsoft.
- Elizabeth Maupin is looking for people to carry on the Issaquah Sammamish Interfaith Council.
- Overlake Church Safe Parking Program is looking for volunteers to help as they host an evening meal and shower opportunity on Thursdays, 5-7.
- Tammy shared an offer of ten brand new skateboards.

- Disability Empowerment is providing training on how to provide appropriate accommodations and is also looking for volunteers to do assessments of whether publicly accessed places are providing what is needed.
- Unity of Bellevue invites us to join their block party on Sunday, July 20.
- Chris Carter invited volunteers to help Camp United We Stand to move on July 28. The biggest task in the camping move is unpacking. Call the Camp to volunteer – 425-616-9953. They will be moving to Northshore United Church of Christ in Woodinville.

Kevin thanked the Together Center for providing our space today.

## Closing Prayer

### Signed In for July 2025

	Last Name	First Name	Organization
	Abebe	Zanta	NAMI Eastside
	Barbee	Leketha	EISHaddiz
	Belmontes	Ericka	Bellevue Lifespring
	Bowling	David	Eastside Foundation & EISCC Board
	Brandt	Lois	Newport Presbyterian Safe Parking
	Buckingham	Brooke	City of Redmond Human Services
	Burrus	Sue	Eastside Friends Meeting
	Carter	Christopher	Camp United We Stand
	Collier	Greg	Newport Presbyterian
	Cozzens	Susan	Eastside Friends Meeting & EISCC Board
	Cunningham	Jason	NAMI Eastside
	Duncan	Megan	The Sophia Way
	Folkman	Kevin	LDS & EISCC Board
	Grunda	Anushna	NAMI Eastside
	Hassan	Farida	NAMI Eastside
	Hillesheim	Linda	Unity of Bellevue & EISCC Board
	Hutchko	Candise	Catholic Community Services
	Jacobs	Nancy	Congregations for Kids
	Kalisa	Isabelle	Hero House
	Kidd-Miller	Joyce	Baha'is of King County North & EISCC Board
	L	Orlando	Camp United We Stand
	Leon	Bill	Camp United We Stand
	Maupin	Elizabeth	Issaquah Sammamish Interfaith Coalition
	Myers-Power	Edie	NAMI Eastside

	O'Hare	Pauline	First Congregational & EISCC Board
	Oommen	Marc	NAMI Eastside
	Perry	Charles	Unity of Bellevue
	Phelps	Ellen Weiss	Temple B'nai Torah & EISCC Board
	Reed	Angel	Imagine Housing
	Rivera	Guillermo	Eastside for All
	Scott	Lacrosse	Unity of Bellevue
	Sheriff	Nikki	MCRC Muslim Community Resource Center
	Shirmohamadi	Nasrin	Bahai Community, Kirkland
	Spohn	Betty	Newport Presbyterian
	Vermouth	Marc	The Sophia Way
	Waddell	Tammy	Nourishing Networks
	Wallin	Scott	Nourishing Networks
	Ware	Michaela	The Sophia Way
	Wattley	Janice	Sammamish Issaquah Interfaith
	Weisel	Nancy	Cross of Christ
	Weiss	Mandy	Disability Empowerment Center