



**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, November 24, 2021
4:00 PM**

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission is to promote a community of harmony and respect for the rights and dignity of all.

CALL TO ORDER: Pursuant to due notice and call thereof, the Human Rights Commission will hold a regular meeting on Wednesday, November 24, 2021 at 4:00 PM in City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Learnmont

Commissioner Lopez-Cortez

Commissioner Hodgson

Commissioner Erickson

Commission Chair Friesen

Absent:

Commissioner Joselyn

Commissioner Connelly

PUBLIC INPUT (if anyone wishes to address the Commission):

No Public Input.

SETTING THE AGENDA: (This is an opportunity to approve the regular agenda as presented or add/delete an Agenda item by a majority vote of the Commission members present.)

Add item # 8 Georgia Fort Update

Add Item #9 Proposal for Support of Community Voices: People of Color Telling Their Stories put on by VEMA - Voices for Ethnic and Multicultural Awareness.

Add Item #10 Discuss meeting on December 29th, 2021

Motion to accept the Agenda Additions #8, #9 & #10 made by Commissioner Lopez-Cortez , second by Commissioner Learmont. All in favor, motion passed.

APPROVE MINUTES:

Motion made by Commissioner Hodgson to approve the October 27th, 2021 Minutes and second by Commissioner Lopez-Cortez. All in favor, motion passed.

1. October 27th, 2021 Minutes

FINANCIALS:

The financial balance at this time dated November 30, 2021, does not include the committed \$2,500 for the Georgia Fort Exhibit.

2. Monthly Financial Balance:

BUSINESS:

3. Commission On-Boarding

The Commission was given a handout of the "New Commissioner On-Boarding Packet" by Commissioner Erickson. She will work with IT Director Erik Scott to put on the city's website. suggestions were to add links to the MN Data Practices Act, the Human Rights Statutes and it was suggested that everything be as concise as possible. The comment was made that it is very well done.

There were questions on Article #8 of the by-laws regarding a treasurer and secretary or is that what the city does for the Commission. Was this removed from the by-laws or can we designate officers at the Spring, March Meeting? The on-boarding packet will be a continual process.

4. November/December Training Opportunities

A question was asked who will be attending the Rural Minnesota Equity Summit at a cost of \$50.00 per participant. Commissioner Lopez-Cortez will be attending the Summit training being held November 30th and December 1st.

A motion was made by Commissioner Erickson to fund up to three Commission members to participate in the Rural Minnesota Equity Summit at a cost of \$50.00 per person being held November 30th and December 1st, 2021, motion seconded by Commissioner Erickson. All in favor, motion passed.

IDI Training: Intercultural Development Inventory Training, is a new training that uses a questionnaire that rates the needs of a group at \$30.00 per person. An outside facilitator, someone will come to work with the Commission. Commissioner Learmont suggested that the Commission wait to commit funds for this training until next year.

5. Report on Work Plan/Financial Update

There were a few corrections on the Work Plan: Page 2 under Juneteenth, it should be "freedom from discrimination", Page 6 under Juneteenth correction change "of" to "from". On Page 5 under paragraph 2, at the end of the first line, take out one of the "based upon"s.

We will review the Work Plan at the January 2022 meeting and know more about the budget after the City Council's meeting on truth and taxation coming up in December.

6. Calendar Revision

The City Calendar will be adopted at the December 20th City Council Meeting and we can discuss the Speaker Commitments and Ethnic Heritage Calendars at that time.

7. CAT Team/Colored Lines Documentary, Focus on Local Issues

Nothing new at this time, tie into new Agenda Item #9.

#8 New Item: Georgia Fort Exhibit Update. The exhibit will run around the middle of December and go to ICC's student center in January. By the December meeting we should have more details. The MacRostie and KAXE will be marketing the event.

#9 VEMA, the Voices for Ethnic and Multicultural Awareness will host "Community Voices: People of Color Telling Their Stories" on December 7th, 2021. It is free, but pre-registration is required. Seraphia is the founder of VEMA and she is the anti-racism organizer for Kootasca. It would make sense to partner with them for this event. Their request for funding is \$2,544.00 and it would cover honorarium for the 10 speakers of the event.

The Blandin Foundation and Kootasca have both vetted VEMA, but before the Commission releases any funding they would like them, VEMA, to be subject to the approval of the City Clerk and the City Attorney.

Motion was made by Commissioner Erickson to approve \$2,544.00 made payable to Kootasca for "Community Voices: People of Color Telling Their Stories" on December 7th, 2021, at the Reif Center, subject to the review and approval of the City Attorney. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hodgson. All in favor, Commissioner Lopez-Cortez abstained. Motion Passed.

#10 New Item: December 29th, 2021 Commission Meeting. The Commission meeting on December 29th as far as the members present, is still going to be held. If anyone is unable to attend, please contact Commissioner Friesen and let her know by December 15th, 2021.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

There was an inquiry from the Presbyterian Church regarding awareness of racial injustice in the community and in their church. There is an item in the work plan addressing this.

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

1. Approval of November 24th, 2021 Minutes.
2. Monthly Financial Balance

3. Georgia Fort Exhibit Update
4. VEMA: Community Voices: "People of Color Telling Their Stories"
5. Training Opportunities: Update on Rural Equity Summit
6. End of Year Financial Update

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn meeting at 5:26pm.

Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Lyman