



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

**Wednesday, June 25, 2025
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, June 25th, 2025, at 4:00pm in City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

Commission Chair Angella Erickson called the meeting to order at 4pm.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT:

Commissioner Angella Erickson
Commissioner Doug Learmont
Commissioner Julee Jackson
Commissioner Stephanie Meittunen
Council Representative Molly MacGregor
City Liaison, City Attorney Chad Sterle

ABSENT:

Commissioner Amy Blomquist
Commissioner Ronald Grossman
Commissioner Katelyn Dokken

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

None

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.)

Motion made by Council Representative MacGregor, Seconded by Commissioner Jackson to approve the agenda as written. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Meittunen, Council Representative MacGregor.

PRESENTATION:

1. Itasca County HRA Executive Director Diane Larson

Itasca County Housing and Redevelopment Authority Executive Director Diane Larson gave a presentation regarding the Itasca County Housing Needs. Ms. Larson presented a slide show regarding the findings from the Comprehensive Housing Study Summary for Itasca County (handout to Commission) that they had done for them from September 2024. She talked about some of the findings, that showed groups that face the most barriers for housing were low income and mental illness. She also discussed the Fair Housing Act, the Human Rights Act and HUD, which all deal in some aspect with compliance, and the prosecution of landlords for discrimination across the county.

The Commission would like to get together with Ms. Larson in October to organize for the 2026 Fair Housing Month in April, with the Human Rights Commission to take the lead for a Proclamation.

APPROVE MINUTES:

2. Approve Minutes from May 28, 2025

Motion made by Council Representative MacGregor, Seconded by Commissioner Jackson to approve the Minutes from May 28, 2025. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Meittunen, Council Representative MacGregor

FINANCIALS:

3. Approve June 30, 2025, Financials

City Liaison, City Attorney Chad Sterle said that they did not need to approve the financials. It was noted that the Pride pancake breakfast has not been taken out of the financials yet.

BUSINESS:

4. Workplan

Reviewed the Workplan as Quarter 2 is just about finished. The Community Needs Assessment Work group will continue to work on developing an event/panel presentation.

There is an upcoming event on August 5, 2025, that the Commission may want to attend at Gunn Park and will be hosted by Building Bridges that may fit into the Interfaith category on the Workplan. Council Representative Molly MacGregor will send information regarding a formal invite for the Commission.

UPDATES:

5. Juneteenth

There were approximately 30 people that participated in the Juneteenth Walk and Commissioner Meittunen and Council Representative MacGregor attended.

6. Pride Event

The Pride Event went well and Commissioner Erickson estimated that they served approximately 150 people for the pancake breakfast.

7. Mobility Mania-Accessibility for All Event

The Mobility Mania/Judy Garland Event, again the heat was a factor for the participants and they did not set the record for the dancing wheelchairs.

8. League of MN Cities-Braver Angels Workshop

Council Representative MacGregor would like to check into sponsoring a training of the Braver Angels workshop, possibly January or February next year.

9. League of MN Cities-Annual Conference

Council Representative MacGregor will attend this upcoming event and give a summary of her presentation at the Annual Conference to the Commission at the next meeting.

10. Work Groups

Community Needs Assessment WG: Commissioners Meittunen, Blomquist & Council Representative MacGregor

ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Learmont and Erickson

Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken

City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson

11. Community Education/Engagement

Discussed Community Education/Engagement and what the Commission could prioritize or would like to be doing.

12. Current Events

No discussion.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

Regarding last month's call, Commissioner Erickson sent them information not only how to contact the State of MN Human Rights to file a complaint, but at the State Department of Corrections as well.

Regarding the Pride Event, Staff Liaison, City Attorney Chad Sterle said that there were less conflicts than in 2024. The City Council and the Security were more prepared for this 2nd year of this event.

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

PRESENTATION:

1. City Liaison, City Attorney Chad Sterle

BUSINESS:

4. Workplan

UPDATES:

5. League of MN Cities-Braver Angels Workshop
6. League of MN Cities-Annual Conference
7. Work Groups
8. Community Engagement/Education
9. Current Events

ADJOURN:

Commission Chair Erickson adjourned the meeting at 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Lyman