



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

**Wednesday, January 29, 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, January 29th, 2025, at 4:00 pm in City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

The meeting was called to order at 4pm by Commission Chair Erickson.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT:

Commissioner Angella Erickson
Commissioner Doug Learmont
Commissioner Amy Blomquist
Commissioner Ronald Grossman
Commissioner Katelyn Dokken
Commissioner Julee Jackson
Commissioner Stephanie Meittunen
Council Representative Molly MacGregor
City Liaison Human Resources Officer, Chery Pierzina

ABSENT:

Commissioner Jessi Bloom

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

Resident of Grand Rapids, Beth George of 333 NE 8th St spoke to the Commission regarding the rights of the citizens of Grand Rapids. She addressed how they are feeling left out when it comes to amenities and she had concerns about the poverty and homelessness in our community.

PRESENTATION:

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 Commissioner Jackson, Seconded by Commissioner Dokken to approve the agenda as written. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner

Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Dokken, Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Meittunen, Council Representative MacGregor

APPROVE MINUTES:

1. December 9th, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Blomquist, Seconded by Commissioner Jackson to approve the special meeting minutes with the correction of taking Caleb Christiansen's name out of the Roll Call. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Dokken, Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Meittunen, Council Representative MacGregor

2. December 9th, 2025, Worksession Minutes

These minutes will be approved at the February Human Rights Commission meeting.

FINANCIALS:

3. Approve December 31, 2024, Financials

Motion made by Commissioner Blomquist, Seconded by Commissioner Grossman to approve the December 31, 2024, Financials. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Dokken, Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Meittunen, Council Representative MacGregor

BUSINESS:

4. Welcome New Commissioners & Introductions

The Human Rights Commission welcomed and introduced themselves to one of the new Commissioner Stephanie Meittunen.

5. Election of Officers

This item was tabled until the March meeting.

6. Current Events

The discussion consisted of many topics and how some might tie into the Human Rights Commission's Mission statement and its goals.

Some of the items discussed were:

- Current legislature, both at the national and state levels
- Young adults in the community
- Lack of warming centers in the city
- Possibly making recommendations to the City Council
- Community Development plans
- Blandin Beach and no Parks & Rec Board

- Financial limitations/constraints for this Commission

7. 2025 Workplan

The Commission discussed what else they could include in the 2025 Workplan, going quarter by quarter, referencing the 2024 Workplan and Chair Erickson's notes from the worksession.

During the discussion of the various reports coming out for 2024 regarding the community, the Commission decided to form a Community Needs Group with Council Representative MacGregor, Staff Liaison Pierzina and Commissioners Meittunen and Blomquist.

Discussed connecting with Police Chief Morgan regarding the 2024 Bias Report and any other insight he may have into low income and warming centers. Which in fact also reflects the resident's comments from the Public Input.

February being Black History month the Commission would like to post an acknowledgment. Commissioner Dokken had to depart the meeting. There was also discussion of starting events earlier by contacting folks from last year's events. Council Representative MacGregor volunteered to contact Indigenous People's Day coordinators. Commissioner Blomquist volunteered to reach out to Itasca Pride for the Pride event.

Also, discussed possibly conducting an anonymous survey regarding poverty and looking at the Census Data to better understand the community's diversity. Before Council Representative MacGregor departed the meeting, she asked if the Commission would consider being at a Chamber Luncheon and then left the meeting.

Commission Chair Erickson will try to have a draft of the 2025 Workplan for the next meeting.

UPDATES:

8. New Banners - Statt Wraps

The banners have been delivered to Public Works for storage.

9. Work Groups

The Community Needs Group was established earlier in the meeting to be Council Representative MacGregor, Staff Liaison Pierzina, Commissioner Meittunen and Commissioner Blomquist.

Commission Chair Erickson will be talking with the City Attorney, Chad Sterle regarding the City Volunteer Policy.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

None.

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

BUSINESS:

4. Welcome New Commissioners & Introductions
5. Current Events
6. 2025 Workplan

UPDATES:

7. Work Groups
8. Volunteers

ADJOURN:

Commission Chair Erickson adjourned the meeting at 5:39pm.
Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Lyman