



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

**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.

ROLL CALL:

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

PRESENTATION:

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.)

APPROVE MINUTES:

- [1.](#) December 9th, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes
- [2.](#) December 9th, 2025, Worksession Minutes

FINANCIALS:

- [3.](#) Approve December 31, 2024, Financials

BUSINESS:

4. Welcome New Commissioners & Introductions
5. Election of Officers
6. Current Events
- [7.](#) 2025 Workplan

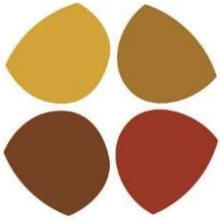
UPDATES:

8. New Banners - Statt Wraps
9. Work Groups

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

ADJOURN:



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 09, 2024
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 Monday, December 9, 2024 at 4:00pm in the City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Erickson at 4:02pm.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT

- Commissioner Angella Erickson
- Commissioner Doug Learmont
- Commissioner Ronald Grossman
- Commissioner Rick Blake
- Commissioner Katelyn Dokken
- Commissioner Julee Jackson
- City Liaison, Human Resources Officer, Chery Pierzina

ABSENT

- Commissioner Amy Blomquist

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

Visitor introduced herself as Stephanie, a Grand Rapids resident, came to observe the Human Rights Commission meeting.

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 Grossman, Commissioner Blake, Commissioner Dokken, Commissioner Jackson

PRESENTATION:

None at this time.

APPROVE MINUTES:

1. September 25, 2024

Motion made by Commissioner Learmont, Seconded by Commissioner Blake to approve the September 25, 2024, Minutes. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Blake, Commissioner Dokken, Commissioner Jackson

FINANCIALS:

2. There has been no change to the financials.

Motion made by Commissioner Blake, Seconded by Commissioner Dokken to approve the financials. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Blake, Commissioner Dokken, Commissioner Jackson

BUSINESS:

3. Community Volunteer Policy

Discussion ensued regarding the draft of the Community Volunteer Policy. At an earlier meeting this summer, there were inquiries as to how someone can volunteer for Human Rights Commission sponsored events. City Attorney Chad Sterle suggested that the Commission draft a policy and Commissioner Jackson worked on a drafting a Volunteer Policy. Questions came up regarding background checks and their possible cost, age and hourly requirements, whether they are compensated and checking the city's volunteer policy. Commissioners Erickson and Jackson will continue to work on this policy.

4. New Banners - Statt Wraps

The Human Rights Commission would like to replace the faded Juneteenth banners. At the September 25th, 2024, meeting, Statt Wraps (Statt LLC) gave the Commission an estimate for two different types of banners that they can make. After reviewing the two different types, the Commissioners decided to commit to purchase the banners from their September 12, 2024, estimate #1453, Item #1 "Printed Banner 18oz Mesh, Double Sided Print 3'x30'" to replace the Juneteenth banners.

Motion made by Commissioner Blake, Seconded by Commissioner Grossman to commit to purchase and pay for new Juneteenth banners from the 2024 Operating Budget, for a total cost not to exceed \$2,558.00 from Statt Wraps (Statt LLC). Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Blake, Commissioner Dokken, Commissioner Jackson

UPDATES:

5. Indigenous People's Day

Commission Chair Erickson stated that Kate from the MacRostie shared that there was great press coverage with many kids and teachers attending. The evening portion attendance was a bit smaller due to the cold weather, but the dancing was wonderful. She also stated that she was thankful for the sponsorships and volunteers. It was suggested during the discussion that the work group should gather feedback from the event.

6. Work Group Updates

There was some discussion on work groups but nothing to report as they are looking into the new year of 2025 planning.

7. School District Policy

This item was tabled until 2025.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

None.

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

BUSINESS:

3. Community Volunteer Policy
4. New Juneteenth Banners
5. 2025 Workplan

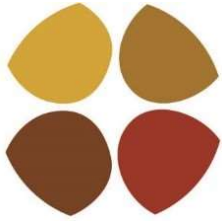
UPDATES:

None set at this time.

ADJOURN:

Motion made by Commissioner Grossman, Seconded by Commissioner Jackson to adjourn at 4:45pm. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Blake, Commissioner Dokken, Commissioner Jackson

Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Lyman



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION WORKSESSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 09, 2024
5:00 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 Monday, December 9th, 2024 at 5:00pm in the City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

The worksession was called to order by Chair Erickson at 5:00pm.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT

Commissioner Angella Erickson
Commissioner Doug Learmont
Commissioner Ronald Grossman
Commissioner Katelyn Dokken
Commissioner Julee Jackson
City Councilor Rick Blake
City Liaison Chery Pierzina

ABSENT:

Commissioner Amy Blomquist

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.)

1. 2025 Work Plan

During the Worksession, the Commission discussed and looked over the past year in order to plan the 2025 Human Rights Commission Work Plan. The Commission decided to break down the year into categories of; Successes, Challenges/Barriers, What Else They Could Be Doing and What and Who was Missed. Each of these categories were then broken down into subcategories and discussed:

Successes:

- Events
- Marketing
- Presentations & Training

Challenges/Barriers:

- Community Engagement
- Commissioner Expectations
- Missing - Mission Focused Work
- Other

What Else Could We Be Doing:

- Presentations & Data
- Events
- Partners
- Policy
- Other

What and Who is Missing:

- Housing/Homelessness
- Mental Health
- Partner/Community Connections
- DEI/IDEA + Recruitment
- Other

ADJOURN:

The worksession was adjourned at 6:00pm.

Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Lyman

**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

**SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES
FOR THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2024**

	<u>Actual 12/31/2024</u>
Human Rights Budgeted Expenditures	\$ 7,500
Pipe Ceremony	125
Human Rights Commission Posters	19
Blanket Exercise	275
Name Plates	60
Itasca Pride Festival	364
BOLD Theater Transportation Sponsorship	1,000
Indigenous People's Day	3,100
Juneteenth Banners	2,400
Postage Expense	-
	<u>-</u>
Grants Received	-
Balance Available	<u>\$ 158</u>

City of Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission Workplan Session – Notes

Monday, December 9th, 2024 from 5—6pm at City Hall Council Chambers

Attending: Angie, Doug, Ron, Julee, Katelyn, Rick, Chery, Cindy

Absent: Amy

This information was collected through reflection and dialogue, and then used to guide the initial planning of the 2025 Human Rights Commission Work Plan.

What were successes/should we keep?

- **Events**
 - o Indigenous Peoples Day – student portion great, would have liked more community engagement
 - o Juneteenth – need to increase participation
 - o Pride event
 - Lots of community members wanting to be involved after that event
 - Lots of community interest and great community participation
- **Marketing**
 - o New banners!
- **Presentations & Training**
 - o Outside organization presentations
 - Justin Page from MN Dept. Civil rights
 - GRPD Chief Morgan
 - o Onboarding
 - Doing more – still need to do more

What were our challenges or barriers?

- **Community Engagement**
 - o Lack of community participation
 - o Students at MN North – concerns of safety and feeling welcome in community
- **Commissioner Expectations**
 - o Planning too late
 - o Time & other time commitments
 - o Participation of commissioners
 - Are expectations clear for work groups, showing up, volunteering equally?
 - Lack of quorum
 - o Subject matter – staying on task?
- **Missing – mission-focused work**
 - o Lot of time in meetings spent on marketing and business (though necessary) also takes away from discussion around issues in community
 - *Briefly discussed looking at other rules to run meetings (i.e. get rid of Roberts Rules)*
 - o Should have done more with Pride (larger sponsorship, actively volunteer, etc.)
- **Others**
 - o Seek opportunities for funding
 - o Systemic structures
 - Sexism, racism, ableism, etc.

What else could we be doing

- **Presentations & Data** – Continue having speakers come to the Commission; Do more with data collection in a variety of capacities.
 - o Work with GRPD and Chief Morgan
 - 2024 Bias report
 - *Other reports / opportunities to partner*
 - o Protected Classes
 - Scanning and ensuring we are hitting on all and finding opportunities to support wide range
 - Better statistics on understanding our community, diversity, and the needs
 - o More guest speakers
 - Community partners
 - school personnel
 - others
 - o 2-303. F – *data collection on low-income concentrations within the city and send recommendations to planning commission and council*
 - o Reports to utilize or seek out re: data
 - MN Community Civil Rights Needs Report – *To be released February 2025*
 - ALICE
 - HRA – PIT report
 - KOOTASCA
- **Events**
 - o More events for Juneteenth
 - o Education to the public on protected classes
 - o Increase event participation through advertising
 - Use of radio, newspaper, etc.
- **Partners**
 - o Find a group to partner with like the blankets for homeless etc. of food bank
 - o Partner with other city departments / commissions
- **Policy**
 - o Policy recommendations / engaging with City Council
 - o Voting protections
- **Others**
 - o Seek additional funding
 - o Do what we can to make GR more welcoming (ex. bring back “all are welcome” materials)
 - o Combat misinformation – *what is our role or how can we support*
 - o Discussion and/or actions on national/international human rights situations
 - o Plan for the future to find ways to engage the next generation to take our places in future

WHAT and WHO is missing?

- **Housing / Homelessness**
- **Mental Health**
 - o Community-based options for MH crisis (instead of police response)
- **Partner/Community Connections**
 - o Opportunities to bring in students for planning / volunteering?
 - o More interaction with other community stakeholders (schools, religious, social organizations, etc.)
 - o Opportunities for connection in faith and nonfaith communities

- Big View – how to help support and create a wider reach
- **DEI/IDEA + Recruitment**
 - Need to recruit more commissioners generally
 - *Unaware of the diversity of current commission make up – opportunity here to learn more*
 - Government Academy
 - Opportunities to help push visibility in different groups of people outside of facebook and newspaper
 - Other ways to recruit and engage?
 - Diverse population – ensuring representation and activities
 - Indigenous / Native American distrust of GR (city, policies, groups)
- **Others**
 - Accountability framework for City – ensuring actions by City (policies, regulations, projects, etc.) are viewed through a human rights lens
 - Immigration & Welcoming Communities
 - What opportunities are available here?



Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission Calendar Year 2024 Work Plan

Prepared in accordance with Commission By-laws, Article 10

2024 QUARTER	GOAL OR ACTIVITY (refer to goal or activity description page for more detail)	ORDINANCE	ACTION TAKEN	EST. COST (See Notes)	ACTUAL
Q1 Jan – March <i>Possible events/ recognitions: International Women’s Day – Black History Month -</i>	Marketing & Awareness - Press Release - Banner purchase			\$600	
	Creation of New Commissioner Onboarding Process -Programming & Presentations workgroup to define and develop specific training materials or personnel for new and existing Commissioners -Reports at commission meetings to improve knowledge about commission duties, human rights issues, and human rights concerns			\$100	
	Training and Collaboration Provide at least one (1) of each following area to support growth, development, and collaboration: - Onboarding topic - Presentation + Q&A - Current event or “hot topic” item for presentation and discussion - Protected class topic or event - Connect with other commission / department within City			-	
	Collaboration Opportunities for 2024—2025			-	

	<p>Intentional discussion around areas for connecting and collaborating with other organizations, entities, businesses, Commissions, and Departments.</p> <p>Initial suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Women’s Day (March) - Mental Health / NAMI - Homelessness 				
	Development of Juneteenth & Pride Event Task Forces				
	Quarter Total			\$700	
Q2 April – June	<p>Training and Collaboration</p> <p>Provide at least one (1) of each following area to support growth, development, and collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Onboarding topic - Presentation + Q&A - Current event or “hot topic” item for presentation and discussion - Protected class topic or event - Connect with other commission / department within City 	City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws		\$100	
<i>Possible events/ recognitions: Stomp the Stigma – Mental Health Awareness Month – Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month – LGBTQ+ Pride Month</i>	<p>Development of Indigenous People’s Day Event Task Force</p> <p>Reminder work group should meet with prior to school summer break and begin conversation on support needed</p>			-	
	<p>Support Juneteenth Day Event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recognize <i>Freedom Day</i>, including human rights, civil rights, and freedom of discrimination in our community by assisting in public awareness and celebration events -Banner request to city! 	Sec. 2-303(3)		\$2,000	
	<p>Support Pride Day Event/s Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look for opportunities to be involved in and/or support community events, outreach, or publication 			\$1,000	
	Quarter Total			\$3,100	

Q3 July – Sept <i>Possible events/recognitions:</i> ADA / Disability Pride month – Hispanic Heritage Month	Training and Collaboration Provide at least one (1) of each following area to support growth, development, and collaboration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Onboarding topic - Presentation + Q&A - Current event or “hot topic” item for presentation and discussion - Protected class topic or event - Connect with other commission / department within City 	City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws, including Article Ten		\$100	
	Collaboration Opportunities with City / Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Connect - Fair booth - Tall Timber Days - Neighborhood Block Party 				
	Marketing & Awareness - Press Release				
	2024 Work Plan Review – DUE JULY				
Quarter Total				\$100	
Q4 Oct – Dec <i>Possible events/recognitions:</i> (Nov) Native American Heritage Month – International Day of Persons with Disabilities – Human Rights Day	Training and Collaboration Provide at least one (1) of each following area to support growth, development, and collaboration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Onboarding topic - Presentation + Q&A - Current event or “hot topic” item for presentation and discussion - Protected class topic or event - Connect with other commission / department within City 	City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws, including Article Ten		\$100	0
	Indigenous People’s Day Cosponsor activities or publications to further human rights purposes with regard to indigenous people in the city -Don’t forget banner request to City!	Sec. 2-303(1, 3) Article(10)(3, 5)		\$3,000	
	2025 Planning & Budgeting - Include presentation to city council				
	Human Rights Awareness Events - Human Rights Day (Dec 10)	Sec. 2-301		\$500	

	75th Anniversary -Community Conversations -Possible tie to school collaboration -Possible speakers and presentations - Possible Event	Sec. 2-303(5)			
	Quarter Total			\$3,600	
	2024 Commission Budget	\$7,500			
	Budgeted Expenditures			\$7,500	
	TOTAL ACTUAL EXPENDITURES				

Notes:

- A. The time needed to organize and arrange the components for many activities will result in most listings involving more than one calendar quarter
- B. The estimated Cost column lists budgeted net cash costs to the City. It does not include contributions made to an activity by a collaborating partner nor an assumed value for donated time or resources by Human Rights commissioners, city administrative staff, or others.

Summary Description of Goals and Activities

Improve Human Rights Awareness

City of Grand Rapids Rules, Division 6 Section 2-301 states that the Commission will take positive measures to disseminate the nondiscriminatory policies of the city with respect to all unfair discriminatory practices by conducting public information meetings. During 2022, the Commission will appoint a work group to develop a plan and conduct one or more activities to improve human rights awareness in the city. Consideration of ways to promote human rights awareness may include improvements to the Human Rights Commission page on the city’s website, updating or developing and distributing new brochures, literature, or pamphlets that create awareness and promote better understanding of human rights with city staff and the broader community, sponsoring speakers or informational and educational events or contests, and promoting Human Rights Day on December 10, 2022. The Commission will also identify other areas in which there is need for making citizens, businesses, organizations, city staff, and institutions aware of human rights concerns and requirements.

New Commissioner On-boarding:

Human Rights commissioner terms are for three years. Commissioner terms may be renewed with city council appointment, and normal turnover typically results in one to three new commissioners being appointed each year. To effectively fulfill their roles, commissioners should be knowledgeable about federal and state human rights laws, city ordinances regarding the human rights commission, and human rights commission bylaws. Newly appointed commissioners should also be aware of past actions and activities of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission as well as city council positions and needs related to human rights. The Commission intends to develop a plan and program that would inform newly appointed commissioners, as well as continuing commissioners, of their responsibilities, duties, city policies and relevant administrative procedures, and other aspects. This on-boarding process is to be discussed with a plan and materials developed during 2021 for implementation with newly-appointment commissioners.

Commissioner Training and Education

Actions or decisions by the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission to provide freedom from discrimination requires knowledge about the types of prohibited discrimination and ways in which these types of discrimination may occur in employment, housing, real property, public accommodations, public services, education, and unfounded charges (City of Grand Rapids Rules, Division 6 Sec 2-301). The Commission plans to identify and act to identify and support commissioner training opportunities and activities in calendar year 2022. This may include approaches such as outside speakers, presentation or event sponsorship, community meetings, interviews, identifying and sharing of pertinent new articles or reports, and/or in other ways. Commissioner training and education would be an ongoing objective and activity.

Support Juneteenth Day Event

The Commission intends to recognize *Freedom Day*, June 19th, which includes recognizing freedoms in our nation and community including human rights, civil rights, and freedom of discrimination and creating public awareness of these rights through assisting street-side setting of street banners recognizing these freedoms, posting of United States flags, and co-issuing news media information.

Gather and Evaluate Demographic Data

The Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission strives to identify human rights issues of greatest concern in the city, and to develop and implement activities to make improvements in the areas of greatest concern. Achieving this goal requires demographic data about the city population. To gather such data the Commission desires to identify data needs and data sources, analyze the data, and from the data analysis develop plans for Commission activities in the community or recommend city policies to address, mitigate or alleviate those human rights concerns or issues. The Commission intends to review 2020 census data to inform changes in priorities, activities, and recommendations in the city.

Review human rights educational opportunities with schools

Schools in Grand Rapids contain their own sets of human rights concerns and opportunities. The Commission intends to explore and begin discussions with the schools in Grand Rapids to look into such possibilities as improving student experiences and understanding of diverse cultures possibly through programs such as pen pal programs with students in other countries, sponsoring an education Summit focused on human rights, or conducting a Human Rights Day event with local school. When an appropriate event is identified, the Commission expects to support such event.

Indigenous People’s Day

The Commission was an important factor in establishment of Indigenous People’s Day in Grand Rapids and has continued as a key factor in conducting and sponsoring the annual event as part of creating cultural awareness in the local community. This role is planned to continue in 2022, including establishing a Human Rights Commission Indigenous People’s Day committee to collaborate with other community groups to plan, identify a theme, organize, and conduct an Indigenous People’s Day program and activities.

Human Rights Awareness Events - Human Rights Day (December 10)

To improve awareness of human rights in the city, the Commission plans to discuss and review ways to improve awareness of human rights in the city. Committee work is expected to include approaches such as conducting community conversations, identifying ways to tie human rights awareness with the local schools, arranging and sponsoring topical speakers, and/or other means of fostering human rights awareness preferably in collaboration with other groups or entities.

Notes:

During the year, adjustments may be made to reflect changes in costs, changes in priorities, changes in format or delivery methods, or identification of human rights concerns that were not identified in compiling the preceding list but which the Commission feels need to be addressed. Examples include:

- a. Possible adjustments could occur due to identifying new or incidental human rights concerns related to protected groups and areas from the [Minnesota Human Rights](#) and other state statutes and regulations:

Protected Classes	Protected Area
RACE	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
COLOR	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
CREED	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, and credit
RELIGION	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, and credit

NATIONAL ORIGIN	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
SEX	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
MARITAL STATUS	Employment, housing, public accommodations, education, and credit
DISABILITY	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	Employment, housing, public services, education, credit
AGE	Employment and education
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
FAMILIAL STATUS	Employment, Housing
LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ACTIVITY	Employment

b. Adjustments could occur as a result of use of alternative education/training delivery methods such as print, seminars, webinars, speeches, and others