

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, April 29, 2026
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, April 29th, 2026, at 4:00pm in the City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

ROLL CALL:

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

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.)

PRESENTATION:

1. Itasca Pride

APPROVE MINUTES:

- [2.](#) March 25, 2026, Minutes

BUSINESS:

- [3.](#) 2026 Workplan
- [4.](#) Grand Rapids Area Human Rights Fund Draft-Community Foundation
5. Walk for Life-September

UPDATES:

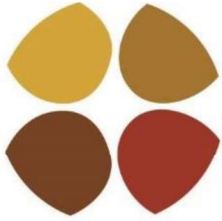
6. Housing
7. City Council Updates
- [8.](#) Stomp on Stigma
9. Work Groups:
 - Community Engagement/Education and/or Internal Collaboration WG: Commissioner Vice

Chair Miller and Council Representative MacGregor
- Interfaith WG: Commissioner Grossman

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

ADJOURN:



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

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CALL TO ORDER: Pursuant to due notice and call thereof, the Human Rights Commission will hold a regular meeting on Wednesday, March 25th, 2026, at 4:00 pm in City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00pm by Vice Chair Blomquist.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT

Commissioner Doug Learmont
Commissioner Amy Blomquist
Commissioner Ronald Grossman
Council Representative Molly MacGregor
Commissioner Janet Miller
Commissioner Stella Leone
Commissioner Brittany Pope-Sears
Commissioner Renee Ducharme

ABSENT

Commissioner Stephanie Meittunen

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 Commissioner Grossman, Seconded by Commissioner Learmont to approve the agenda as presented. Voting Yea: Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Leone, Commissioner Pope-Sears, Commissioner Ducharme. Motion Passed

PRESENTATION:

None.

APPROVE MINUTES:

1. Approve Minutes from February 25th, 2026

Motion made by Council Representative MacGregor, Seconded by Commissioner Learmont to approve the February 25th, 2026, Minutes. Voting Yea: Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Leone, Commissioner Pope-Sears, Commissioner Ducharme. Motion Passed.

BUSINESS:

2. Introduction of New Commissioners

The Commissioners welcomed the new appointees, and both introduced themselves.

3. Election of Officers

Motion made by Commissioner Learmont, Seconded by Commissioner Grossman to elect Commissioner Blomquist to the position of Human Rights Commission Chair. Voting Yea: Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Grossman, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Leone, Commissioner Pope-Sears, Commissioner Ducharme. Voting Abstaining: Commissioner Blomquist. Motion Passed.

Motion made by Commissioner Learmont, Seconded by Council Representative MacGregor to elect Commissioner Janet Miller to the position of Human Rights Commission Vice Chair. Voting Yea: Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Leone, Commissioner Pope-Sears, Commissioner Ducharme. Voting Abstaining: Commissioner Miller. Motion Passed.

4. 2026 Workplan

The Human Rights Commissioners discussed other opportunities to present information to other Committees and Boards. Commission Chair Blomquist stated that the objective is to do four per year, but that doesn't mean that they can't do more. For instance, Commission Vice Chair Miller would like to add the LAC next month to the work plan. They are waiting to hear from the Grand Itasca Board and the Blandin Foundation. Council Representative MacGregor will check on those.

One other opportunity would be with School District 318's Council of Athletes run by Athletic Director Dale Christy. The question came up from the newly appointed Commissioners as to why there is no funding and Council Representative MacGregor let them know that there was half a million cut from the City's Budget with a zero percent levy.

Commissioner Grossman stated that even without funding it is important to connect with other groups. The Human Rights Commission banner can be set up anywhere.

The Pridefest will be on June 14th this year due to Father's Day being on June 21st. Commission Vice Chair Miller will be asking for volunteers soon.

5. Grand Rapids Area Human Rights Fund Draft-Community Foundation

Commissioner Learmont handed out a draft of the GR Area Human Rights Fund. Please review for any changes you may like to see and Mindy at the Community Foundation needs to check the revisions, then the Human Rights needs to approve the final draft and then it needs to go to the City Council for their approval because they have restrictions and so does the Community Foundation.

6. HRC Presentation

Commission Vice Chair Miller will be using the HRC Presentation at the Kiesler House on April 2nd at 11am. Open to others to come.

UPDATES:

7. Housing

There was a press release/proclamation for Fair Housing.

8. City Council Updates

The City Council approved the updates to the Human Rights Commission ordinance that the HRC had been working on.

9. Stomp on Stigma

Commission Chair Blomquist said that this event is a good opportunity for the Human Rights Commission to volunteer and have our banners out. She will talk to the organizers regarding a plan. The city will post a notice of quorum for the event.

10. Community Engagement/Education and/or Internal Collaboration Work Group: Commission Vice Chair Miller is using the Story Stitch for her groups at Kiesler. Commissioner MacGregor said that the Story Stitch class with Community Education didn't have enough people, so it wasn't a go.

Interfaith Work Group: Commissioner Grossman went to a meeting and talked about the Human Right Commission and what they do.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

None.

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

BUSINESS:

2. 2026 Workplan
3. GR Area Human Rights Fund Draft-Community Foundation
4. Walk for Life - September

UPDATES:

5. Housing

6. City Council Updates
7. Stomp on Stigma
8. Community Engagement/Education and/or Internal Collaboration WG: Commission Vice Chair Miller and Council Representative MacGregor
9. Interfaith WG: Commissioner Grossman

ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:22pm.
Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Lyman



Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission Calendar Year 2026 Work Plan

Prepared in accordance with Establishing Ordinance and Commission By-Laws

All activities for 2026 are supported by our guiding vision themes of: Community Awareness; Education outreach and Communication; Our Role; Collaboration; and Listening to Community

2026 QUARTER	GOAL OR ACTIVITY (refer to goal or activity description page for more detail)	ORDINANCE	ACTION TAKEN	EST. COST (See Notes)
Q1 Jan – March <i>Possible events/recognitions:</i> International Women's Day – Black History Month	Ordinance Review Review and clarify HRC role and alignment with city ordinances	2-303 (F)	Updated draft sent to Commissioners for review	\$0
	Fair Housing Act Support development of work group to review possible panel / other community engagement opps within Itasca County	2-303 (B, C, E, F)	Planning meeting set for 1/14 in partnership with Itasca County HRA	\$1,500
	Presentation to Outside Organization Community awareness, education/outreach, listen to community	2-303 (B, C)		\$0
	Quarterly Workplan & Budget Review Review progress on workplan activities and budget expenditures	Article 10 2-303 (G)		\$0
Q2 April – June <i>Possible events/recognitions:</i> Stomp the Stigma – Mental Health Awareness Month – Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month – LGBTQ+ Pride Month	Story Stitch Event Host community event - either facilitating or bringing someone in. Education/outreach, listen to community	Article 10 (1, 2, 3)	Commissioner McGregor attended training 11/22/2025	\$1,500
	Volunteer at Stomp on Stigma Community awareness and collaboration at established community event	2-303 (B, C) Article 10 (2, 3, 4, 5)		\$5,000
	Volunteer at Pride Event Community awareness and collaboration at established community event	2-303 (B, C) Article 10 (2, 3, 4, 5)		\$7,000
	Presentation to Outside Organization Community awareness, education/outreach, listen to community	2-303 (B, C)		\$0
	Quarterly Workplan & Budget Review Review progress on workplan activities and budget expenditures	Article 10 2-303 (G)		\$0
Q3 July – Sept	Braver Angels Event	Article 10 (1, 2, 3)		\$2,500

2026 QUARTER	GOAL OR ACTIVITY (refer to goal or activity description page for more detail)	ORDINANCE	ACTION TAKEN	EST. COST (See Notes)
<i>Possible events/recognitions:</i> Hispanic Heritage Month Q3	Host community event - either facilitating or bringing someone in. Education/outreach, listen to community			
	Presentation to Outside Organization Community awareness, education/outreach, listen to community	2-303 (B, C)		\$0
	Quarterly Workplan & Budget Review Review progress on workplan activities and budget expenditures	Article 10 2-303 (G)		\$0
Q4 Oct – Dec <i>Possible events/recognitions:</i> Native American Heritage Month	Soup on the Street Community awareness and collaboration at established community event	2-303 (B, C)		\$2,000
	Indigenous People’s Day Support Community awareness and collaboration at established community event	2-303 (B, C) Article 10 (2, 3, 4, 5)		\$5,000
	Presentation to Outside Organization Community awareness, education/outreach, listen to community	2-303 (B, C)		\$0
	Quarterly Workplan & Budget Review Review progress on workplan activities and budget expenditures	Article 10 2-303 (G)		\$0

Notes:
 City Council eliminated a set budget for the Human Rights Commission in 2026. Estimated costs are ballpark for the entire event – not necessarily a direct contribution expected or anticipated from either the HRC or City of Grand Rapids.

Summary Description of Goals and Activities

The Commission will conduct a comprehensive review of city ordinances related to human rights to clarify the HRC's role and ensure alignment with current city regulations. This review will help commissioners better understand their authority, responsibilities, and the scope of their work in protecting human rights within the community. The ordinance review will provide a framework for future decision-making and help define how the Commission can most effectively serve the community within its legal mandate.

FAIR HOUSING ACT SUPPORT

The Commission will support the development of a work group to explore fair housing issues and possible panel discussions or other community engagement opportunities within Itasca County. This activity aims to increase awareness of fair housing rights, identify housing discrimination concerns, and provide education to community members about their rights and responsibilities under fair housing laws. The work group may partner with local housing authorities, advocacy organizations, and community stakeholders to create meaningful dialogue and resources around housing equity.

PRESENTATIONS TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS (QUARTERLY)

The Commission will conduct quarterly presentations to outside organizations such as schools, service clubs (Rotary, Lions, etc.), faith communities, and civic groups. These presentations will raise community awareness about the HRC's role, educate audiences about human rights and protected classes, provide outreach to diverse community segments, and create opportunities to listen to community concerns. Each presentation will be tailored to the specific audience and may include information about discrimination prevention, the complaint process, and available resources. This activity supports the vision themes of Community Awareness, Education/Outreach, and Listening to Community.

STORY STITCH EVENT

Story Stitch is a community dialogue facilitation methodology that creates safe spaces for people to share personal stories and build understanding across differences. The Commission will either facilitate a Story Stitch event directly or bring in trained facilitators to lead this community conversation. This event will provide an opportunity for community members to share their lived experiences related to identity, discrimination, belonging, and human rights. Through storytelling and guided dialogue, participants will build empathy, discover common ground, and strengthen community connections. This activity aligns with the vision themes of Education/Outreach, Our Role, and Listening to Community.

BRAVER ANGELS EVENT

Braver Angels is a national organization dedicated to bridging political divides and fostering constructive dialogue across ideological differences. The Commission will either facilitate a Braver Angels workshop or bring in certified Braver Angels facilitators to lead a community event. This structured dialogue will help participants understand different perspectives, reduce contempt and hostility, and find common ground despite political or ideological differences. The event will contribute to building a more cohesive community where diverse viewpoints can coexist respectfully. This activity supports Education/Outreach, Our Role, and Listening to Community vision themes.

QUARTERLY WORKPLAN & BUDGET REVIEW

The Commission will conduct quarterly reviews of its work plan progress and budget expenditures to ensure accountability, transparency, and effective use of resources. These reviews will allow commissioners to assess which activities are meeting their goals, identify any needed adjustments to priorities or approaches, track spending against the annual budget, and ensure alignment with the Commission's vision themes. Regular review creates opportunities for learning, course correction, and strategic planning. This activity reflects the Commission's commitment to responsible stewardship of public resources and effective governance as outlined in Article 10 of the Commission By-Laws.

COMMUNITY EVENT PARTICIPATION & VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

The Commission will actively participate in and volunteer at established community events throughout the year to increase HRC visibility, demonstrate collaboration with community partners, and engage directly with diverse community members. Target events include Stomp on Stigma (mental health awareness), Pride celebrations (LGBTQ+ support), Soup on the Street (food security and homelessness), Indigenous People's Day, and other community gatherings as opportunities arise. Through this hands-on engagement, commissioners will staff information tables, distribute educational materials about human rights protections, assist with event logistics, and engage in conversations with community members about discrimination and available resources. This visible presence helps vulnerable populations feel uplifted and supported while educating the broader community about human rights. The Commission remains open to participating in additional community events that align with its mission and vision themes. This activity supports Community Awareness, Collaboration, and Listening to Community vision themes.

COMMISSIONER TRAINING AND EDUCATION (ONGOING)

Actions or decisions by the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission to provide freedom from discrimination require 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 support commissioner training opportunities and activities throughout the year. This may include approaches such as outside speakers, presentation or event sponsorship, community meetings, interviews, identifying and sharing of pertinent news articles or reports, and/or other methods. Commissioner training and education will be an ongoing objective and activity that strengthens the Commission's capacity to serve the community effectively.

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

Marked up draft for review and discussion

March 25, 2026



**Agreement to Establish the
Grand Rapids Area Human Rights Fund**
within the
Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation

THIS AGREEMENT, dated this ____ day of _____, 2026 is made to establish the Grand Rapids Area Human Rights Fund (the “Fund”) within the Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation (the “Foundation”). **At the time of this agreement, the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission** (the “Donor”) **as the founding donor** makes an irrevocable gift of **\$1.00** to The Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation (the “Foundation”), a 501(c)(3) organization authorized to receive and hold charitable funds in accordance with its charter and bylaws. This is to be used to establish a fund at the Foundation to be known as the Grand Rapids Area Human Rights Fund (“the Fund”). The purpose of the Fund is to support organizations, initiatives, and community-led efforts that uphold human rights and promote dignity and respect for individuals and families in the Grand Rapids, Minnesota area, with an emphasis on **human rights oriented** education, awareness, and constructive community engagement **as defined by the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission**.

1. The Fund will be identified, as described above, by the Foundation in all relevant literature, reports, promotional material and public documents.
2. The Fund will be subject to the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Foundation, as the **Foundation** may amend them from time to time.
3. The Fund is designated to meet **human rights related** charitable needs in the community and surrounding area of the **Grand Rapids Area**.
4. Distributions from the Fund shall be consistent with the exempt purposes of the Foundation. The Foundation board shall have the power to modify any restriction or condition on the distribution of funds for any specified charitable purposes or to specified organizations if in the sole judgment of the board, (without the approval of any trustee, custodian or agent), such restriction or condition becomes, in effect, unnecessary, incapable of fulfillment or inconsistent with the charitable needs of the community or area served.

5. It is the intent of the **founding** donor that the Fund be considered nonendowed and distributions from the Fund may be made in any amount not to exceed the balance of the Fund.
4. Gifts may be added to the Fund anytime **from private or public funds**. The Foundation may commingle the assets of the Fund with the assets of other funds held by the Foundation, provided the separate identity of the Fund will be maintained and distribution from the Fund will be clearly identified as such to the grantees.
5. It is intended that the Fund will be continued as long as the need for the Fund exists, and assets are held in the Fund for its purposes.
6. The governing board of the Foundation shall have final authority and discretion as to the investment and reinvestment of the assets of the Fund as part of the Foundation Investment Portfolio.
7. The Foundation will provide all routine accounting, and reporting to the Minnesota Attorney General and Internal Revenue Service regarding the Fund. The Foundation shall be entitled to reasonable compensation for management of the Fund in accordance with their regular fee schedule. The administrative fee for a nonendowed fund is 2% annually (calculated .50% quarterly) with a minimum annual fee of \$250.
8. The Fund will be the property of the Foundation held by it in its corporate capacity and will not be deemed a trust fund held by it in a trustee capacity. It is intended the Fund will be a component fund of the Community Foundation and that nothing in the Agreement will affect the status of the Foundation as an organization described in Sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) of the Internal Revenue Code. This Agreement will be interpreted in a manner consistent with the foregoing intention and to conform to any applicable requirements of the Internal Revenue Code and IRS Regulations.

Advisors

The Chair of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission shall serve as the Advisor(s) to this Fund and may be replaced by the Commission. When and if the Commission does not or is not able to designate an advisor, then the following individuals may serve as Advisors to the Fund.

- 1.
- 2.

14th Annual STOMP ON STIGMA 5K

MARK YOUR CALENDARS, MAY 2, 2026!

**8:30am Registration and 10:00am Race Start
Join us at YANMAR ARENA in Grand Rapids, MN**

Beneficiaries include: National Alliance on Mental Illness, Kiesler, MN North Psychology Student Scholarship, Community Café and Free at Last Program.

MENTAL HEALTH
MATTERS



Registration:

\$25 registration 10 years old and up
Children 9 years old and under FREE

T-Shirts are guaranteed for the first 150
registered participants.

Prize drawings and Bike Give-a-way!

Email: stomponstigma@cmhsreach.org

If you would rather participate virtually you will be eligible to enter in our prize drawings! Registration is the same process just mark the "VIRTUAL" box.

By signing below, I acknowledge that my participation in the 5k Run /Walk involves a risk of injury and assume the risk for same. On my own behalf, behalf of my heirs and to the fullest extent permitted by law, I hereby release and discharge Stomp on Stigma/CMHS of any and all liability for injury, death and/or any other claims incurred by me with any aspect of the 5k run and walk.

Mail form and entry fee to:

Stomp on Stigma
35382 US HWY 2 West
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

I give my permission to use any pictures taken of me for future events.

VIRTUAL

IN PERSON

Credit Card Payment Info:

Card Number

Exp. Date and Sec. Code

Name on Card (please sign)

Name

Address

Phone

Age

T-shirt Size: S M L XL 2XL
Circle: YOUTH ADULT

Signature

Date

Signature of parent or guardian if under 18 years of age

Date

Paid: Y N

Cash: _____

Check: _____

CC: _____