

Councilmember Driscoll introduced the following Ordinance and moved for its adoption:  
ORDINANCE NO. 04- 05-09 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS,  
MINNESOTA, ESTABLISHING GRAND RAPIDS CITY CODE CHAPTER 10 AND A  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION THE CITY COUNCIL OF GRAND RAPIDS,  
MINNESOTA ORDAINS:

Section 1. Grand Rapids City Code is hereby created by adding the following Section 1 entitled 'Human Rights Commission':

SEC. 1 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION.

Subd. 1. Establishment and Composition. A Human Rights Commission, composed of nine (9) members, is hereby established for the purpose of securing for all citizens freedom from discrimination ([MN STAT 363A.02](#)):

- (1) in employment because of one or more of the following: race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, familial status, and age;
- (2) in housing and real property because of one or more of the following: race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and familial status;
- (3) in public accommodations because of one or more of the following: race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability;
- (4) in public services because of one or more of the following: race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, and status with regard to public assistance; and
- (5) in education because of one or more of the following: race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and age.

(b) Such discrimination threatens the rights and privileges of the inhabitants of this state and menaces the institutions and foundations of democracy. It is also the public policy of this state to protect all persons from wholly unfounded charges of discrimination. Nothing in this chapter shall be interpreted as restricting the implementation of positive action programs to combat discrimination.

It is also the purpose of the Human Rights Commission to protect all persons from wholly unfounded charges of discrimination. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as restricting the implementation of positive action programs to combat discrimination.

It is also the purpose of the Human Rights Commission to secure for all citizens full participation in the affairs of the City by assisting the Minnesota Department of Human Rights in implementing State laws against discrimination and by advising the Council in long-range programs to improve community relations in the City of Grand Rapids.

Members shall be appointed by the Grand Rapids City Council for indefinite terms. An

Administrative Assistant who is a permanent City staff person shall, and the City Attorney may, function as ex officio members of the Commission. It is desirable that Commission members be representative of the broad spectrum of the citizens of the City. Commission members should be willing to attend training sessions for the purpose of facilitating the discharge of their duties. Members shall serve without compensation.

**Subd. 2. Meetings.**

Regular meetings shall be scheduled on a quarterly basis to handle regular Commission business and further efforts of information dissemination. Special meetings shall be held at the call of the Chairperson. Such business meetings shall be open for public attendance.

Minutes shall be kept of all Commission proceedings. The Administrative Assistant shall be responsible for all minute and record-keeping duties. The Commission shall adopt its own bylaws after approval by the City Council.

**Subd. 3. Quorum.**

No meeting shall be conducted by the Commission without a quorum, being a majority of all members, being present. The concurring vote of a majority of the Commissioners present shall be necessary for any action.

**Subd. 4. Purpose and Duties of the Commission.** The Human Rights Commission shall have the following purpose and duties:

**A. Monitoring and Advising.**

To review community information, public feedback, and emerging issues related to human rights, and to advise City staff and the City Council on notable trends or concerns affecting residents.

**B. Community Resource and Referral.**

To serve as a point of contact for residents seeking information on human rights issues and to refer individuals to the Minnesota Department of Human Rights or other appropriate agencies for investigation or assistance. The Human Rights Commission will not participate in the investigation, nor opinion rendering of human rights violation complaints. They will simply refer such matters to the Minnesota Department of Human Service.

**C. Public Education and Awareness.**

To support the City's efforts to promote nondiscrimination by participating in or co-sponsoring public information activities, community events, and awareness initiatives when feasible.

**D. Collaboration with Community Partners.**

To maintain communication and foster cooperative relationships with local organizations, schools, tribal governments, advocacy groups, and other entities engaged in human rights work.

**E. Policy and Ordinance Review.**

To provide feedback to City staff and the City Council on selected City policies, ordinances, and practices, offering recommendations to promote accessibility, inclusion, fairness, and equitable impact.

**F. Input on City Initiatives.**

To advise the City on human rights considerations within City plans, programs, and communications, including accessibility and equity implications, upon request or when opportunities arise.

**G. Reporting and Transparency.**

To prepare and submit an annual report summarizing the Commission's activities, community insights, and recommendations for improving equity and inclusion within the City.

**Subd. 5 Duties of Commission Personnel.**

**A. Duties of the Chair.** The duties of the elected Commission Chair shall be:

- a. Organizing meetings, meeting with outside community organizations or persons, and providing overall leadership for the Commission;
- b. To act as the authorized liaison representative of the Commission, both with complainants and the public in general;
- c. Appoint Commissioners to task-focused committees;
- d. Delegate duties to the Vice Chair and/or other Commissioners as appropriate.

**B. Duties of Vice Chair.** The duties of the elected Commission Vice Chair shall be:

- a. Performing the duties of the chair in the absence or at the request of the chair;
- b. Assist the chair in planning, administering, and conducting Commission business.

**C. Duties of the Administrative Assistant.** The duties of the City staff person designated as Administrative Assistant to the Commission by the Mayor shall be:

- a. To take minutes and keep official records of all Commission proceedings, and to function as correspondent for such communications with Federal and State agencies as are directed by the Commission.

**Subd. 6 Budget.** The Human Rights Commission must establish a yearly budget for Grand Rapids City Council's consideration and approval. This budget must be submitted in accordance with the regular Grand Rapids City budgeting process on a yearly basis and it is to cover all expenses including but not limited to legal services, staffing, and all expenses related to publication or promotion of the commissions activities.

Section 2. After adoption, signing and attestation, this ordinance shall be published once in the official newspaper of the City and shall be in effect on and after the date following such publication.

Adopted by the City Council of Grand Rapids, Minnesota, this 24 day of May 2004.

FOR ADOPTION: Driscoll, Erkkila, Drake, Zeige

AGAINST ADOPTION: Schlauderaff

Susan Zeige, Mayor

ATTEST:

E ward Trela, - City Administrator/Clerk

Published in the Grand Rapids Herald Review on May 30, 2004