



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

**Wednesday, September 24, 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, September 24, 2025, at 4:00pm 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 Julee Jackson
Council Representative Molly MacGregor
Commissioner Janet Miller
City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle

ABSENT

Commissioner Dokken
Commissioner Meittunen

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

Reverend Sally Cummings of the Christ Episcopal Church addressed the Commission regarding the vandalism of Pride banners and flags around the city of Grand Rapids. There have been three other churches that have had this type of vandalism. There is an open investigation with the Grand Rapids Police Dept.

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 Blomquist, Seconded by Council Representative MacGregor to add an item under the Workplan (#4) to discuss a Worksession for the 2026 Workplan. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Jackson, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller.

PRESENTATION:

None scheduled.

APPROVE MINUTES:

1. Approve Minutes from August 27, 2025

Motion made by Commissioner Grossman, Seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the August 27, 2025 Minutes. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Jackson, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller

FINANCIALS:

2. Approve the September 2025 Financials

No approval needed as per City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle.

BUSINESS:

3. Review Bylaws & City Ordinance Documents

City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle started the discussion by giving some background. The By-Laws are now 20 years old and that he would like some input to any changes/deletions or modifications that the Human Rights Commission would like to see. He asked that Commissioners to review the documents. Once the Commission has reviewed and decided on any modifications, he will push to the City Council.

Some examples of suggested modifications mentioned by the Commissioners so far were:

- Consistent language, City Ordinance matching the State's,
- Attendance - add excused absences,
- Add Training & Development to Article 10,

The Commission decided to set up an Ordinance Work Group consisting of City Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Learmont and Commission Chair Erickson.

4. Workplan

The Commission discussed using a professional service, a consultant to assist with their vision, purpose and community engagement for the 2026 Workplan, Councilmember MacGregor will make an inquiry.

4A. The Commission also decided to check for availability to use the Council Chambers for a Worksession for the 2026 Workplan on Wednesday, Oct 22nd, 2025, from 4-6pm. One item to add to the 2026 Workplan and earmark \$1,500 in funds for the 2026 Housing Panel. The Itasca County Housing and Redevelopment Authority who just had a meeting said that November is National Hunger and Awareness Month. Councilmember MacGregor will contact Diane

Larson, Executive Director at the Itasca County HRA about the Housing Panel in 2026.

UPDATES:

5. Community Engagement/Education and/or Internal Collaboration

One item that was suggested to add to the 2026 Workplan and earmark \$1,500 in funds is the 2026 Housing Panel. The Itasca County Housing and Redevelopment Authority who just had a meeting said that November is National Hunger and Awareness Month. Councilmember MacGregor will contact Diane Larson, Executive Director at the Itasca County HRA about the Housing Panel in 2026.

6. League of MN Cities-Braver Angels Workshop & Annual Conference

Councilmember MacGregor said that it was good to do the LMC meeting, there were many suburbs of the metro area there. She also suggests that this Commission should still do a Braver Angels workshop in 2026.

7. CNA WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Meittunen & Blomquist
ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Learmont & Erickson
Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken
City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson

CNA WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Meittunen & Blomquist
Draft of the Community Needs Assessment Survey Report was shown to the Commission.

ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Learmont & Erickson
City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle, suggests that the ADA document that this work group did, go to the City Council in December.

City Liaison, City Attorney, Chad Sterle excused himself at 5:35pm.

Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken
At this time, the Anishinaabe Education did not confirm a need for support for the Indigenous People's Day Event at MN North. The Commission still intends on supporting this Event in the future but would need to know needs for the event prior to it for a budgeted reimbursement.

City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson
Commissioner Jackson reviewed the changes and it is ready to go.

Motion made by Commissioner Miller, Seconded by Commissioner Blomquist to send out the Survey. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Jackson, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller

8. Community Events

Commissioner Blomquist stated that there is a Kootasca Event tomorrow at the Cohaus, and that to pre-register, they can check their website for information.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

BUSINESS:

3. Review Bylaws & City Ordinances
4. Workplan
5. Review 2026 Workplan Worksession

UPDATES:

6. Community Engagement/Education and/or Internal Collaboration
7. Work Groups
 - CNA WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Meittunen & Blomquist
 - ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Learmont & Erickson
 - Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken
 - City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson
 - Ordinance WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Erickson & Learmont
 - Interfaith WG: Commissioner Grossman

ADJOURN:

Motion made by Commissioner Jackson, Seconded by Council Representative MacGregor to adjourn at 5:45pm. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Grossman, Commissioner Jackson, Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioner Miller

Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Lyman