



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 30, 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, July 30th, 2025, at 4:00pm in City Hall Council Chambers at 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Erickson at 4:14pm.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT:

Commissioner Angella Erickson
Commissioner Doug Learmont
Commissioner Amy Blomquist
Commissioner Julee Jackson
Commissioner Janet Miller
City Liaison, City Attorney Chad Sterle

ABSENT:

Commissioner Ronald Grossman
Commissioner Katelyn Dokken
Commissioner Stephanie Meittunen
Council Representative Molly MacGregor

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 Blomquist, Seconded by Commissioner Jackson to add Introductions to the Agenda, prior to the Presentation. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Miller

PRESENTATION:

1. City Liaison, City Attorney Chad Sterle

City Liaison, City Attorney Chad Sterle discussed that the City Council created the Human Rights Commission by Ordinance back in 2004, at a time when there were not many rural commissions of this type. There is opportunity for change as there haven't been any changes since 2018 when the 75% attendance requirement was added. He handed out the Ordinance and the Bylaws for the Commissioners to review for the August meeting.

APPROVE MINUTES:

2. Approve June 25, 2025, Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Blomquist, Seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the minutes with corrections from June 25, 2025. Voting Yea: Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Learmont, Commissioner Blomquist, Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Miller

FINANCIALS:

3. Approve Financials for July 2025

No motion needed per City Attorney Chad Sterle.

BUSINESS:

4. Workplan

Discussed where the Commission is in Quarter 3 and went over the survey, interfaith and Indigenous People's Day. They will review these again next meeting. Looking ahead at Quarter 4 and planning for 2026, the Commission could still do something in November and establish a Housing work group to work with the Itasca County HRA Executive Director Diane Larson at the Community Needs Assessment.

UPDATES:

5. League of MN Cities-Braver Angels Workshop

Council Representative MacGregor is absent this evening and they will follow up with her next meeting on possibly hosting a Braver Angels Workshop.

6. League of MN Cities-Annual Conference

Once again Council Representative MacGregor is absent and will have information to update the Commission at the next meeting.

7. Work Groups

Community Needs Assessment WG: Commissioners Meittunen, Jackson, Blomquist & Council Representative MacGregor

ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Learmont and Erickson

Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken

City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson

CNA Assessment WG: Commissioners Meittunen, Blomquist & Council Representative MacGregor. This work group is ongoing.

ADA Compliance WG: Commissioners Erickson and Learmont met with the Jon Peterson, the City's Facility Maintenance Manager/Building Official and Rob Mattei, the City's Community Development Director to discuss Disability Issues, Challenges and the possibility of the City doing an accessibility audit for City-owned properties. The Commissioners drafted a letter titled City Accessibility Recommendations as a start and will try to meet with Jon Peterson and Rob Mattei again.

Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken. Getting things lined up for Indigenous People's Day has been a challenge and it needs to be done soon.

City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson. City Attorney Chad Sterle said that the draft of the survey is done well and the City's Human Resources Officer is now reviewing it.

8. Community Engagement/Education

Grace House has a pancake breakfast the Sunday of Tall Timber Days.

9. Current Events

The City is probably not having a booth at either Tall Timber Days or the Itasca County Fair. National Night Out is also coming up and the Commission should put it on their calendar for next year's event.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

None.

SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

BUSINESS:

1. Review Bylaws and City Ordinance Documents
2. Workplan

UPDATES:

3. Community and/or Internal Collaboration
4. League of MN Cities-Braver Angels Workshop & Annual Conference
5. Work Groups:
 - CNA WG: Council Representative MacGregor, Commissioners Meittunen & Blomquist
 - ADA Compliance: Commissioners Learmont & Erickson
 - Community Events WG: Commissioners Erickson, Jackson and Dokken
 - City Staff/Volunteer Survey WG: Commissioners Erickson and Jackson
6. Community Engagement/Education
7. Current Events

ADJOURN:

Commission Chair Erickson adjourned the meeting at 5:35pm

Respectfully Submitted by Cynthia Lyman