

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

CALL TO ORDER: Pursuant to due notice and call thereof a regular meeting of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission was held in Council Chambers, Grand Rapids City Hall, Grand Rapids, Minnesota, on Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL: On a Call of Roll, the following members were present: Commissioners Hodgson, Connelly, Joselyn, Friesen and Learmont. Absent: Commissioners Erickson, Carlson, Lopez-Cortes and Stoll.

Staff: City Attorney Chad Sterle and Cynthia Lyman

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Friesen called the meeting to order at 4:00p.m.

SETTING OF REGULAR AGENDA:

Additions to New Business:

Discussion of "Doodle Poll" to establish work group date.

Resignation of Brielle Carlson.

Motion to accept Agenda passed by unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

March 31, 2021 Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Learmont, second by Commissioner Hodgson to accept the minutes. All in favor, motion passed.

FINANCIALS:

Commission Chair Friesen noted that there has been nothing new recorded to the financials. The Reif invoice has not come yet as they are working on getting it to the city, possibly next month and then it will be updated to reflect that. So, subtract \$2,000.00 from the current amount.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ACCOLADES:

Discussion that Commission Chair Friesen worked with a gentleman on helping him access the online system for filing a complaint with the State Human Rights Department. Commissioner Learmont stated that in the future, we may want to formalize the process or at least set up a routine.

OLD BUSINESS:

1) **Sponsorship of Reif Performanc:** There is more information on the attendance. The performance was made available to the high school, possibly 1,200 students, stated Commissioner Connelly, in theory that is the number of students that could have had access. There were also six other schools that bought into it and participated in it.

The other contributors to the performance were Midwest Arts Council who gave \$2,000 and Mobility Mania gave \$250.00.

2) **Data Demographic Workgroup Update:** Commissioners Hodgson and Learmont met with a resident who has mobility issues, Myrna Peterson. She stated that there are four major issues to the city of Grand Rapids:

- a. Transportation
- b. Getting into businesses and getting around inside of the businesses
- c. Sidewalks and pedestrian ramps – infrastructure
- d. Awareness

They stated that this was an eye-opener to hear those issues and that Commissioner Erickson found some census data but they have not had an opportunity to look at it yet and we have not met.

- 3) **Commissioner Onboarding** (Workgroup Friesen, Stoll & Connelly): No updates at this time. Discussion regarding the existing documents such as;
- Commissioner Lopez-Cortes has Past Commission member Freida's binder
 - Barb Sanderson's boxes include a complete history of the Commission since its start in 2004.
 - Reading list from last month, could be updated/broadened to include what the Commission feels is missing i.e. race and other protected class information.
 - Organizing/consolidating and digitizing/scanning the Binder's and Box's documents for new Commissioners
 - City Boards and Commissions Drop Down on city website is a good resource includes phone number contacts, information downloads, other resources and upcoming events.
- 4) **Work Plan Update:** Commission Chair Friesen said we should save this for the special meeting. Commissioner Joselyn asked about the last update of the existing Work Plan and how she could get the newest copy. They will send to Cindy Lyman to redistribute prior to the Work Plan meeting. We are going to talk about the date for the special work group meeting under new business.
- 5) **Indigenous Peoples Day Update:** Discussion: Commission Chair Friesen said that she has not made progress on this. Commissioner Connelly has a meeting tomorrow with ISD 318 & 316, the multidistrict cultural group and they are interested in partnering with us. There has always been a theme and maybe the better way would be to ask them and see what they would like to do.

Commission Joselyn said that the Circle of Healing has played a role in organizing this in the past. They won't be around this year. Commissioner Joselyn would like to talk about and add True Tuesdays to the new business for the next meeting.

- 6) **Anti-Asian Violence: (HRC Awareness Group)** Commission Chair Friesen and Commissioner Joselyn agreed that they have not met to discuss this.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) **Events for Juneteenth:** Commission Chair Friesen started the discussion by saying that you all have the draft version of the write-up that Commissioner Erickson potentially did for the paper. Commissioner Erickson wasn't sure about the relationship with the Jaycees and how it happened in the past. Discussion ensued as to the Jaycees setting up of the flags, using the write up in the paper from last year, the city's Juneteenth Proclamation and the possibility of getting a sign for next Juneteenth.
- 2) **2020 Census Data:** Commission Chair Friesen asked that if they were thinking that Commissioner Erickson had some more of the data. Commissioner Hodgson stated that they have some 2020 Census Data in raw form that we have not looked at and we pledge to do that. Commission Chair Friesen asked that maybe next month we put it in parenthesis and make it 2020 Census Data (Demographic Workgroup) put it together unless you see a reason to keep it separate. Commissioner Learmont said that it won't be until September before we actually see more updated data. Commissioner Joselyn said that right now, they only have state data. Attorney Sterle added that he went to their site and they have the city breakdowns for race and has been posted as of July 1st, 2019.
- 3) **Work Group Community-Wide Education:** Discussion that started by Commission Chair Friesen stating that with the Governor's mandate changing, that there is a possibility of getting more interactive community, police and partnering opportunities for training. Commission discussed the following:
- Police Chief Johnson mentioned Professor from St. Cloud State who we might be interested in.
 - At Work Plan Special Meeting - Investigate/discuss details how to spread out with Community and Police Chief Johnson's interest in partnership
 - Possibilities of Interested Groups for educational opportunities such as Police, Schools, City Groups, City Itself, County and County Deputies
 - Look at tentative time frame for the possibility of recommended trainings by Police Chief Johnson
 - Commissioner Joselyn remarked on the debriefing of Police Chief Johnson after he attended the Annual

Lecture on “Finding Common Ground”. The Police Department is well resourced at this time and is looking to the GRHR Commission to assist with:

- i. Helping to identify good content
 - ii. Community Partnership – loved the model of the Anishinaabe World View Training
- The Role the GRHR Commission can play is helping to promote, engage and partner with the community along with the Police Training
 - GRHR Commission assisted with funding in the past, check to confirm this
 - Community groups kicking in to help with funding as well
 - Brainstorm at the Work Group Special Meeting other different community partners the Commission could reach out to.

- 4) Discussion/Plan Date for Outside Work Session:** Commission Chair Friesen asked if Thursday June 17th, would be okay for the Special Work Group Meeting, to start at 4 pm. Commissioner Connelly may have a conflict with GREDA, but will check and come in when it is done. If that works for the majority, then we will have it on that date.

What is the City Policy on attending meetings, we are looking at Commissioner Stoll’s attendance. Attorney Sterle said that there is an Attendance Policy. We will address this on the next agenda and attach the policy.

The special work session meeting, will roughly meet 2 hours, but schedule it for 3, just in case and order a meal. There are restrictions on using money for meals, but people can pitch in for that as not to use budget money. Attorney Sterle stated that the people that will be attending will pay for the meal so that it is not coming out of the public coffers.

Motion to set a Special Work Group Meeting for Thursday, June 17th at 4pm in the City Council Chambers by Commissioner Joselyn and seconded by Commissioner Learmont, motion passed by voice vote, none opposed.

- 5) Discussion regarding Commissioner Brielle Carlson:** Commissioner Connelly stated that Commissioner Carlson submitted her resignation to the City Council at their May 24th Council Meeting and it was approved. Attorney Sterle said that there is a letter that goes out to Boards and Commission members thanking them for their time served after they resign.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES: Commissioner Friesen asked if there is anything to add to this item, no.

SETTING NEXT AGENDA:

- Discussion on the Minnesota Department of Human Rights adding it to the Agenda as New Business.

Old Business:

- **2020 Census Data (Data Demographic Work Group Combination)**
- **Commissioner On-Boarding**
- **Indigenous Peoples Day Community-Wide Workgroup**
- **Juneteenth Event**

New Business:

- **Check Status/Review Work Plan – for Approval in July**
- **True Tuesdays**
- **City Attendance Policy for Boards and Commissions**
- **State of Minnesota Human Rights Commission Meetings**

Commission chair Friesen asked if there was anything else for the Agenda. No.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.