



**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 420 N POKEGAMA AVE
DATE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 2021
TIME: 4:00P.M.**

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.

BE ADVISED: All meetings will be attended in person.

CALL TO ORDER: 4:00PM

CALL OF ROLL:

Commissioner Connelly, Council Representative
Commissioner Erickson: 6/20-3/23
Commissioner Carlson: 3/21-3/24
Commissioner Friesen, Chair: 3/18-3/21
Commissioner Hodgson: 6/20-3/23

Commissioner Learmont: 3/19-3/22
Commissioner Lopez-Cortes, Vice Chair: 3/19-3/22
Commissioner Joselyn: 3/21-3/24
Commissioner Stoll: 6/20-3/23

SETTING OF REGULAR 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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 28th, 2021 Meeting

FINANCIALS: \$11,727 NO CHANGE

PUBLIC COMMENT/ACCOLADES:

This is an opportunity for anyone from the public to address the Commission regarding comments, concerns and accolades.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Sponsorship of Reif performance: In the Shadow of Slavery
- Data Demographic Workgroup
- Commissioner On-Boarding
- Work Plan Update
- Indigenous Peoples Day Community-Wide Workgroup
- Continued discussion on potential action regarding Anti-Asian violence (Human Rights Commission Awareness Workgroup)

NEW BUSINESS:

- Events for Juneteenth
- 2020 Census Data
- Workgroup: Explore Community-Wide education opportunities about human rights collaborate with GRPD, local law enforcement, other entities.
- Discuss/Plan Date for Outside Work Session

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

SETTING NEXT AGENDA:

ADJOURNMENT:

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, April 28, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL: On a Call of Roll, the following members were present: (Via Web) Commissioners Hodgson, Erickson, Carlson, Commissioner Connelly, (In Person) Joselyn, Friesen, Learmont, Lopez-Cortes. Absent: Commissioner Stoll

Staff: City Attorney Chad Sterle, Janell Hecimovich, Cynthia Lyman

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Friesen called the meeting to order at 4:01p.m.

SETTING OF REGULAR AGENDA:

Motion to approve by Commissioner Erickson, second by Commissioner Connelly to approve the agenda. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

March 31, 2021 Minutes

Motion to approve by Commissioner Connelly, second by Commissioner Lopez-Cortes to approve the minutes. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

FINANCIALS:

Review of financials, there are no changes. Commission Chair Friesen noted that the Reif invoice has not come or been paid yet and that it will be approximately \$2,000.00.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ACCOLADES:

Commission Chair Friesen stated that there had been a call asking the Human Rights Commission to help with a complaint, to be filed at the State Human Rights Commission. She will update the Commission in the future.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1) **Sponsorship of Reif Performance**, In the Shadow of Slavery. Commission Chair Friesen stated that the numbers for attendance are not in as of yet and they will know better next month from the seven schools that were invited to the amazing one-man show performance. The amount that the Commission committed to the Reif was \$2,000.00.
- 2) **Data Demographic Workgroup Update:** Commissioner Erickson stated that 19% of residents have some kind of disability and they are interested in seeing what that looks like. They also met with the City Administrator and the PW Director and they said that the City is reviewing their ADA plan this summer. They will be working on a transition plan and the focus will be in the downtown areas, a type of action plan that they intend to undertake. Commissioner Connelly said that it is good that there is some interest in the City to work with us. Discussion as to whether this is an exclusive focus or trailhead project of our Commission. She also stated that it is a component of the year and Commission Chair Friesen stated that we are making progress and that this will be directed to all places of interest. She also asked if anyone has seen Census Data yet, to see if we can pull some of it as it pertains to our city.
- 3) **Commissioner Onboarding** (Workgroup Friesen, Stoll & Connelly): Discussion that it was good to have information that is relevant, that establishes and tells what the Commission is all about. Also that the By-

Laws are important references for the new Commissioners. Commission Chair Friesen said that we are making progress on what is needed. Commissioner Lopez-Cortes volunteered to bring in a binder to use that was passed down from a retired Commissioner.

Commissioner Hodgson had to depart at 4:30p.m.

- 4) **Work Plan Update:** Commissioner Erickson said she did not have anything at this time. Commission Chair Friesen said that maybe we need to have separate meeting on the Work Plan – to finalize the things that we want to dig into. A discussion ensued that it was suggested that for the next Agenda we should establish a work group to set a budget to submit to the City Administrator as the city will be setting their 2022 Budget soon.

City Attorney Chad Sterle let the Commission know that the City will be fully “live” with open meetings as of June 1st. He reminded the Commission that they could have their meeting anywhere, but it will need to be posted so that the general public can attend. They may want to consider having the “work session” on a separate day rather than on the same May meeting date. Also, even though it is typically not a formal meeting, it will still need to be posted with the determined location.

Motion to approve adding a first week in June work session by Commissioner Joselyn, second by Commissioner Lopez-Cortes. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

- 5) **Indigenous Peoples Day Update:** Commissioner Lopez-Cortes stated that she reached out to the Reif regarding a performer that she would like to have for Indigenous People’s Day. Have not heard back as of yet. Commissioner Connelly discussed regarding reaching out to the Anishinabe that showed interest in participating, bringing it together with the kids as well as the Arts and Culture Commission which may have art focused on the Indigenous Peoples for the event.
- 6) **Anti-Asian Violence: (HRC Awareness Group)** Commission Chair Friesen discussed the needs and that it was difficult to know how to step forward and be a public voice of support for the community. Ideas discussed were publications, business meets and possibly something more official. Discussion of the paper’s freedom of speech. Commissioner Lopez-Cortes stated that she could check to see if Britta Arndt of the paper as she sees everything that happens in our area.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) **Events for Juneteenth:** Commissioner Lopez-Cortes stated that the Jaycees do the flags in town and Commissioner Erickson said that there were questions regarding what they were for. Need to have some kind of education on the “why” of the flags. Commission Chair Friesen said we have time to write up something to put in the paper and have it reviewed in the May meeting and Commissioner Carlson volunteered to assist. Commissioner Joselyn asked if there was a proclamation. Commissioner Connelly said yes it is a proclamation ending slavery and we need to do it again, find it. Discussion revolved around the city contacts for the website, the large banners across state highways for events and the Announcement Board at Blandin. Attorney Sterle said to contact the City Administrator on both.

Commissioner Lopez-Cortes said that the Jaycees have a flier out asking for donations. Commission Chair Friesen will contact Jaycee’s regarding their flier requesting donations, check other groups in town, reach out and volunteer to help. Commissioner Joselyn said she would reach out to the Black Student Alliance who is already working with CAT (Community Action Team) and would be happy to participate and fill the need see if they have anything we can support.

- 2) **2020 Census Data:** Commission Chair Friesen add to New Business and Commissioner Joselyn said that MN did well across the state and that we did not lose population.
- 3) **Work Group Community-Wide Education:** Commission Chair Friesen stated that the Grand Rapids Police Department has had various conversations regarding training. Commissioner Joselyn said that the Chief of Police has a strong interest with training his team and input as to what it would look like. Commissioner Learmont said two years prior that they conducted training and reached out to the Itasca County Sheriff and outlying communities in the area. They also state that they would like the training after the opening of City Hall.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

Discussion on how do complaints come in, Attorney Chad Sterle said that they come in different ways – direct contact, through the city and so far there are no complaints that he is aware of. He reminded the Commission that there are two types of commissions, one that investigates, like the State of MN and ours, which does not.

Commission Chair Friesen stated that she has a voicemail to follow up with as a student from ICC is doing a paper on the Commission.

SETTING NEXT AGENDA:

Same and revisit decisions with the work session.

ADJOURNMENT:

5:24p.m.

