



**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 420 N. POKEGAMA AVE.
DATE: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2021
TIME: 4:00 P.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: Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.021, Subdivision 1, some or all members may appear by telephone or other electronic means.

4:00 CALL TO ORDER:

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

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS:

- Commissioner Bernadine Joselyn
- Commissioner Brielle Carlson

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: January 27, 2021 Meeting

FINANCIALS: \$11,766.61

PUBLIC COMMENT/ACCOLADES:

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

OLD BUSINESS:

- Data and Demographic Work Group
- *Colored Lines* viewing discussion/reaction
- Update from new commissioner on-boarding workgroup
- Work Plan progress plus potential edit/restructure for April meeting

NEW BUSINESS:

- Sponsorship of Reif performance "In the Shadow of Slavery"
- Indigenous Peoples Day potential collaborations

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, January 27, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL: On a Call of Roll, the following members were present: (Via Web) Commissioners Erickson, Hodgson, Connelly, Ensley (Ensley arrived at 4:42PM) (in-person) Lopes-Cortes, Learmont, Friesen. Absent: Commissioner Stoll.

Staff: Chad Sterle, Janell Hecimovich

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Friesen called the meeting to order at 4:09 p.m.

SETTING AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Commissioner Connelly, second by Commissioner Stoll to approve minutes for December 25, 2020. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

FINANCIALS:

Review of financials; no change.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ACCOLADES:

No public attendance.

CIRCLE OF HEALING:

Suggestion was made by Commissioner Friesen to remove this item from the Agenda going forward. Commissioner Learmont made the motion, second by Commissioner Connelly.

BIG VIEW UPDATE:

Suggestion was made by Commissioner Friesen to remove this item from the Agenda going forward. Commissioner Learmont made the motion, second by Commissioner Connelly.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1) Update on *Colored Lines* – there will be a showing in February.
- 2) SEEN: 295 people were able to view the show in various locations. It was overall a good viewing during a pandemic.
- 3) New Commissioner onboarding work group: Friesen, Stoll, Connelly. No update.

- 4) 1st Quarter Goals on Work plan – State has a Human Rights group that could be collaborated with. Commissioner Lopez-Cortes will take lead on contacting the Minnesota League of Human Right and the Minnesota Department of Human Rights to begin collaboration ideas.
- 5) Contact City IT Dept to have your City issued email setup.
- 6) The demographic information workgroup identified two areas of concern.
 - a. Disability - 19.6% of Grand Rapids population is identified as having a disability
 - b. Housing

Contact City Administration to ask for City staff resources to gather information about the two items of concern listed above.

More information on these areas of interest is posted on the City of Grand Rapids Website.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) Commissioner Moren had resigned and there will be two vacant positions to fill.

CALLS/COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES:

None.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA:

- Review on Colored Lines,
- Look at quarterly goals on Work Plan and check progress of projects.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted: Janell Hecimovich, Administrative Assistant

Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission

Fourth Quarter 2020 – Calendar Year 2021 Work Plan

Prepared in accordance with Commission By-laws, Article 10

QUARTER	GOAL OR ACTIVITY <i>(refer to goal or activity description page for more detail)</i>	ORDINANCE	EST. COST <i>(See Notes below)</i>
2020 Q4 Oct – Dec	Improve Human Rights Awareness - Consider information to be added to the city’s Human Rights Commission web page - Update other commission-related materials (such as pamphlets and awareness materials)	Sec.2-301(a, b, and c)	\$ 500
	Gather and evaluate demographic data -Gather or develop demographic information to use in identifying the most significant human rights concerns -Develop activities, strategies, or policy recommendations to address human rights concerns	Sec. 2-303(3)(1, 2, and 6) Sec. 2-301 (a)	\$ 0
	Human rights educational opportunities - <i>Support of SEEN exhibit</i>	Sec. 2-303(3), Sec. 2-301(a)(5)	\$ 3,500
	Human rights educational opportunities -Explore / discuss Reif Center, District 318, Arts & Culture Commission or other human rights partnership opportunities	Sec. 2-303(3), Sec. 2-301(a)(5)	\$ 0
	New commissioner on-boarding and commissioner training and education - Discuss commissioner on-boarding, training, and education needs and opportunities - Commissioner consideration of using commissioner applications or biographies as a way to introduce commissioners to each other or for public posting and to identify skills and training needs.	City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws, including Article Ten	\$ 0

	<p>- November and December – prepare and disseminate binders to commissioners with key information regarding HRC roles, responsibilities, ordinances, by-laws, authority, history, and duties.</p>		
<p>2021 Q1 Jan – March</p>	<p>New commissioner on-boarding and commissioner training and education -Establish work group to define and develop specific training materials or personnel for new and existing Commissioners -Reports at commission meetings to improve knowledge about commission duties, human rights issues, and human rights concerns</p>	<p>City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws, including Article Ten</p>	<p>\$ 500</p>
	<p>Explore opportunities for interfaith community human rights event -Work group to investigate legal limits, permissible activities, and opportunities</p>	<p>Sec. 2-303(1) Article(10)(3)</p>	<p>\$ 500</p>
	<p>Minnesota League of Human Rights -Explore membership opportunity, jointly organize and sponsor human rights themed activities.</p>	<p>Bylaws Sec 10 (3, 7)</p>	<p>\$ 500</p>
	<p>Indigenous People’s Day Participate in planning and co-sponsor activities or publications to further human rights purposes with regard to indigenous people in the city - Explore and discuss possible partnership with area schools, organizations, and Arts & Culture Commission related to Indigenous People’s Day Celebration</p>	<p>Sec. 2-303(1, 3) Article(10)(3, 5)</p>	<p>\$ 0-</p>
	<p>Explore community-wide educational opportunities about human rights to collaborate with GRPD, local law enforcement, other entities -Work group to investigate possible collaboration and co-sponsoring of training, community dialogue, or other relevant opportunity.</p>		<p>\$ 1,000</p>
<p>Q2 April – June</p>	<p>Commissioner on-boarding and commissioner training and education - Conduct training for new and existing Commissioners -Reports at commission meetings to improve knowledge about commission duties, human rights issues, and human rights concerns</p>	<p>City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws</p>	<p>\$ 500</p>

	<p>Review of 2020 Census Data Monitor release of 2020 census data to review and inform possible changes to human rights work plan and priorities</p> <p>Disability / Differing Abilities opportunities -Establish a work group to explore events, resources, and awareness activities as it relates to disability (potential for national ADA Anniversary in July, national Disability History Month October, and synchronization with other state or national days of recognition)</p> <p>Support Juneteenth Day Event -Recognize <i>Freedom Day</i>, including human rights, civil rights, and freedom of discrimination in our community by assisting street-side setting of street banners and United States flags, and public awareness of these rights</p> <p>Indigenous People's Day -Participate in planning with regard to indigenous people's day in the city</p> <p>- Explore and discuss partnership with area schools and Arts and Culture Commission related to Indigenous People's Day Celebration</p>	<p>Sec. 2-301</p>	<p>\$ 0-</p>
<p>Q3 July – Sept</p>	<p>Commissioner training and education -Identify and support commissioner training and education opportunities</p> <p>Review human rights educational opportunities with schools -Identify, coordinate, and support human rights educational events</p> <p>Minnesota League of Human Rights - Organize and sponsor human rights themed activity or event.</p> <p>Indigenous People's Day Participate in planning and cosponsor activities or publications to further human rights purposes with regard to indigenous people in the city</p> <p>- Explore and discuss possible partnership with area schools and Arts and Culture Commission related to Indigenous People's Day Celebration</p>	<p>Sec. 2-303(1, 3) Article(10)(3, 5)</p> <p>City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws, including Article Ten</p> <p>Sec. 2-303(3), Sec. 2-301(a)(5)</p> <p>Bylaws Sec 10 (3, 7)</p> <p>Sec. 2-303(1, 3) Article(10)(3, 5)</p>	<p>--\$ 0</p> <p>\$500</p> <p>\$ 500</p> <p>\$ 500</p>

Q4 Oct – Dec	<p>Commissioner training and education -Send select commissioners to attend annual Human Rights Symposium organized by the MN Department of Human Rights (typically in December)</p> <p>Indigenous People's Day Cosponsor activities or publications to further human rights purposes with regard to indigenous people in the city</p> <p>Human Rights Awareness Events - Human Rights Day (Dec 10) -Community Conversations -Possible tie to school collaboration -Possible speakers and presentations</p>	City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws, including Article Ten Sec. 2-303(1, 3) Article(10)(3, 5)	\$ 500 \$ 1,500 \$ 800
	Budget Amount Not Committed to Scheduled Objectives (see Note C)		\$ 0
Year 2020	Fourth Quarter 2020 Budgetted expenditures		\$4,000
Year 2021	2021 Budgetted Expenditures		\$7,800
Year 2021	Total Fourth Quarter 2020 and Calendar 2021 Budget (see Note D)		\$ 11,800

Notes:

- A. The time needed to organize and arrange the components for many activities will result in most listings involving more than one calendar quarter
- B. The estimated Cost column lists budgeted net cash costs to the City. It does not include contributions made to an activity by a collaborating partner nor an assumed value for donated time or resources by Human Rights commissioners, city administrative staff, or others.
- C. Revision of the 2020 work plan resulted from city cancellation of the scheduled regular January 29, 2020 Commission meeting, city setting of the February 26, 2020 regular Commission meeting, and city cancellation of most 2020 commission meetings with the on-set of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Commission reconvened for its first regular agenda meeting on September 30, 2020.
- D. The Commission was informed that the City Administrator intends to recommend the commission be allowed to roll over any unused fiscal year 2020 budget dollars to fiscal year 2021, due to the cancellations of most 2020 commission activities by the city due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of October 8th, 2020, the commission budget had \$4,300 uncommitted.

Summary Description of Goals and Activities

Improve Human Rights Awareness

City of Grand Rapids Rules, Division 6 Section 2-301 states that the Commission will take positive measures to disseminate the nondiscriminatory policies of the city with respect to all unfair discriminatory practices by conducting public information meetings. During 2020 and 2021, the Commission will appoint a work group to develop a plan and conduct one or more activities to improve human rights awareness in the city. Consideration of ways to promote human rights awareness may include improvements to the Human Rights Commission page on the city's website, updating or developing and distributing new brochures, literature, or pamphlets that create awareness and promote better understanding of human rights with city staff and the broader community, sponsoring speakers or informational and educational events or contests, and promoting Human Rights Day on December 10, 2021. The Commission will also identify other areas in which there is need for making citizens, businesses, organizations, city staff, and institutions aware of human rights concerns and requirements.

Explore opportunities for interfaith community event

The Commission has concerns based upon empirical observations about the possibility of, or of having, discriminatory activity in the city based upon based upon religion, race, or national origin. One of the ways to deal with this, if this is the case, could be through events involving or sponsored by multifaith and non-faith organizations. Prior to developing a program, and recognizing that there are legal and other considerations relating to this type of activity by a public body such as the Commission, the Commission intends create a work group to consider possibilities of this type and consult with legal counsel to ascertain legal boundaries. When an acceptable activity and format is identified, the Commission expects to support such event.

New Commissioner On-boarding:

Human Rights commissioner terms are for three years. Commissioner terms may be renewed with city council appointment, and normal turnover typically results in one to three new commissioners being appointed each year. To effectively fulfill their roles, commissioners should be knowledgeable about federal and state human rights laws, city ordinances regarding the human rights commission, and human rights commission bylaws. Newly appointed commissioners should also be aware of past actions and activities of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission as well as city council positions and needs related to human rights. The Commission intends to develop a plan and program that would inform newly appointed commissioners, as well as continuing commissioners, of their responsibilities, duties, city policies and relevant administrative procedures, and other aspects. This on-boarding process is to be discussed with a plan and materials developed during the first quarter of 2021 for implementation with 2020/2021 newly-appointed commissioners.

Commissioner Training and Education

Actions or decisions by the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission to provide freedom from discrimination requires knowledge about the types of prohibited discrimination and ways in which these types of discrimination may occur in employment, housing, real property, public

accommodations, public services, education, and unfounded charges (City of Grand Rapids Rules, Division 6 Sec 2-301). The Commission plans to identify and act to identify and support commissioner training opportunities and activities in calendar year 2020. This may include approaches such as outside speakers, presentation or event sponsorship, community meetings, interviews, identifying and sharing of pertinent new articles or reports, and/or in other ways. Commissioner training and education would be an ongoing objective and activity.

Support Juneteenth Day Event

The Commission intends to recognize *Freedom Day*, June xx, which includes recognizing freedoms in our nation and community including human rights, civil rights, and freedom of discrimination and creating public awareness of these rights through assisting street-side setting of street banners recognizing these freedoms, posting of United States flags, and co-issuing news media information.

Gather and Evaluate Demographic Data

The Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission strives to identify human rights issues of greatest concern in the city, and to develop and implement activities to make improvements in the areas of greatest concern. Achieving this goal requires demographic data about the city population. To gather such data the Commission desires to identify data needs and data sources, analyze the data, and from the data analysis develop plans for Commission activities in the community or recommend city policies to address, mitigate or alleviate those human rights concerns or issues.

Review human rights educational opportunities with schools

Schools in Grand Rapids contain their own sets of human rights concerns and opportunities. The Commission intends to explore and begin discussions with the schools in Grand Rapids to look into such possibilities as improving student experiences and understanding of diverse cultures possibly through programs such as pen pal programs with students in other countries, sponsoring an education Summit focused on human rights, or conducting a Human Rights Day event with local school. When an appropriate event is identified, the Commission expects to support such event.

Census Activities

The Commission intends to review 2020 census data to inform changes in priorities, activities, and recommendations in the city.

Indigenous People’s Day

The Commission was an important factor in establishment of Indigenous People’s Day in Grand Rapids and has continued as a key factor in conducting and sponsoring the annual event as part of creating cultural awareness in the local community. This role is planned to continue in 2021, including establishing a Human Rights Commission Indigenous People’s Day committee to collaborate with other community groups to plan, identify a theme, organize, and conduct an Indigenous People’s Day program and activities.

Human Rights Awareness Events - Human Rights Day (December 10)

To improve awareness of human rights in the city, the Commission plans to discuss and review ways to improve awareness of human rights in the city. Committee work is expected to include approaches such as conducting community conversations, identifying ways to tie human rights awareness with the local schools, arranging and sponsoring topical speakers, and/or other means of fostering human rights awareness preferably in collaboration with other groups or entities.

Explore community-wide educational opportunities to collaborate with GRPD, local law enforcement, other entities

The Commission would like to explore possible collaboration and co-sponsorship of an event with the Grand Rapids Police Department, and possible others. This work group would work alongside the GRPD Chief of Police and/or other identified representatives of GRPD to develop a mutually beneficial and relevant educational and/or training opportunity.

Minnesota League of Human Rights

The Commission plans to look into membership in the Minnesota League of Human Rights and associating with the League in organizing and sponsoring or co-sponsoring human rights themed activities.

Notes: During the year, adjustments may be made to reflect changes in costs, changes in priorities, changes in format or delivery methods, or identification of human rights concerns that were not identified in compiling the preceding list but which the Commission feels need to be addressed. Examples include:

- a. Possible adjustments could occur due to identifying new or incidental human rights concerns related to protected groups and areas from the Minnesota Human Rights and other state statutes and regulations:

Protected Classes	Protected Area
RACE	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
COLOR	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
CREED	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, and credit
RELIGION	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, and credit
NATIONAL ORIGIN	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business

SEX	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
MARITAL STATUS	Employment, housing, public accommodations, education, and credit
DISABILITY	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	Employment, housing, public services, education, credit
AGE	Employment and education
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
FAMILIAL STATUS	Employment, Housing
LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ACTIVITY	Employment

b. Adjustments could occur as a result of use of alternative education/training delivery methods such as print, seminars, webinars, speeches, and others