



**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
CITY HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM 2B, 420 N. POKEGAMA AVE.**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 30, 2016**

**TIME: 4:00 P.M.**

4:00 CALL TO ORDER:

CALL OF ROLL:

	Present	Absent
Commissioner Becky LaPlant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Jackie Dowell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Mary Jo Wimmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Frieda Hall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Doug Learmont	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Melissa Weidendorf, Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Karen Noyce, Vice Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Alice Moren	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner John Schirber	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MEETING PROTOCOL POLICY:

***Please be aware that the Council has adopted a Meeting Protocol Policy which informs attendees of the Council's desire to conduct meetings in an orderly manner which welcomes all civil input from citizens and interested parties. If you are unaware of the policy, copies (orange color) are available in the wall file by the Council entrance.***

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: October 26, 2016 Regular Meeting

FINANCIALS:

CORRESPONDENCE:

PUBLIC COMMENT:

CIRCLE OF HEALING UPDATE:

ITASCA DIVERSITY ALLIANCE:

BIG VIEW UPDATE:

OLD BUSINESS: Indigenous People's Day Follow Up  
Meeting With Different Boards  
Acting for Grand Rapids – Racism  
Window Clings

NEW BUSINESS: Symposium – Reimburse in person/virtually  
Partner with organizations to bring "We are all criminals" to town

REPORTS ON CALLS AND INQUIRIES:

PENDING COMPLAINTS:

OTHER/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 the Grand Rapids Fire Hall, Grand Rapids, Minnesota, on Wednesday, October 26, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.

**CALL OF ROLL:** On a Call of Roll, the following members were present: Commissioners John Schirber, Alice Moren, Jackie Dowell, Becky LaPlant, Frieda Hall, Melissa Weidendorf, Doug Learmont and Karen Noyce

**Absent** Mary Jo Wimmer

**Visitors:** Allison Ahcan –Blandin Foundation  
Myrna Peterson – Mobil Mania (Accessibility)

**Staff:** Michele Palkki, Administrative Assistant

**Commissioner Weidendorf called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm**

Setting Agenda Nothing to add

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** September 28, 2016

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER DOWELL, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER SCHIRBER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF September 28, 2016 as presented. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

**FINANCIALS** A current financial report was distributed to the Board

**CORRESPONDENCE** Nothing to report

**PUBLIC COMMENT** No one in attendance

**CIRCLE OF HEALING** Commissioner LaPlant reported the following

- The Circle of healing meeting will be held in Ball Club from 5:30 – 7:30 pm.
- Thank you to all who participated in the Indigenous People's Programs
- Circle of Healing gave out 60+ Indigenous People window clings at the Chamber Event, there are some left over, contact Becky
- November Circle of Healing will be held in Grand Rapids at the Blandin Foundation on November 17 from 11 – 1 pm. They are beginning to put together 2017 Projects. One thought is to do a winter film festival for Indigenous People.
- December Circle of Healing will be held in Ball Club on December 15 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm and will be held at the Blandin Foundation. Commissioner LaPlant reported they are working on the 2017 calendar.

**ITASCA DIVERSITY ALLIANCE** Commissioner Noyce reported the following

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> potluck at the Presbyterian Church went well. Conversations have started about racism. They are going to meet once a month to keep the talk on racism continuing. The next meeting is scheduled for November 13<sup>th</sup> at the Presbyterian Church. Anyone who wishes to join can do so.
- Several churches, in the area, have been contacted to find out if they would be interested in hosting the conversation regarding racism. Many churches have indicated they would like to be involved. Commissioner Noyce will continue to work with this group.

The Commission moved to New Business, as there are 2 guests with us with items on the agenda. Allison Ahcan and Myrna Peterson. Introductions were made

**NEW BUSINESS**

**BLANDIN FOUNDATION – RURAL PULSE**

Allison Ahcan was present to address the board on the Rural Pulse Perception Study. Every 3 years the Blandin Foundation does a poll for rural people to tell what the condition the community is in and what the trends are.

Ms. Ahcan distributed the plan and results to the Commission and then spent some time on what the survey said. The Foundation is confident the Commission will be able to use information that came out of this survey to reach out to the community and their needs. You can go online at [www.ruralpulse.org](http://www.ruralpulse.org) and pull up the report.

The report will be used in what the Commission can work toward in the future.

The Commission thanked Ms. Ahcan for coming and presenting this valuable survey to us.

**MOBILE MANIA – Myrna Peterson**

Myrna Peterson gave a short story about her accident and how she ended up in a wheelchair. Being in a wheelchair can be very difficult to get out and move about in the community. Most people, that are not just wheelchair bound, have difficulty to go from place to place. Many businesses are ok by the State Code but that does not make them always accessible. Ms. Peterson reported that our area alone had over \$50 million dollars of new construction and most of them were not accessible. Again they were ok by the code but still not accessible to all those who have limited mobility.

Ms. Peterson feels that this group of individuals is not seen as a protected class. They might not be a minority by the means of the definition. If we could take a positive approach to reaching all people.

### Myrna Peterson Continued

The cost for transportation is at such a rate that this is not a viable option for most. Grand Rapids does not have an accessible taxi service yet. The Arrowhead Transit system is bound by the MN Department of Transportation so they have to follow guidelines for their busses. It takes 5 calls per hour to justify the bus so their hours are 10 am to 4 pm. Some busses are available on Sundays but they do not run on Saturdays.

The Commission asked how they could help with this situation. Ms. Peterson explained that they are putting together a video presentation. They will be going to the Chamber Luncheon after the first of the year and asked if they could present this to the Commission in March. The Commission was very open to this and will have the Council Chambers reserved so there can be room for wheelchairs.

The Commission thanked Myrna for coming and they would be there to help.

**BIG VIEW** Commissioner Moren reported the following are the next subjects.

- Sex Trafficking
- Wellness Court

Commissioner Wimmer will be attending the conference on Racism in the Twin Cities.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY DEBRIEF** Commissioner Becky LaPlant

Commissioner LaPlant opened with there were 3 different people she talked with, who do not live here, said, "I see changes in Grand Rapids". This is very encouraging and that we are going the right direction.

This year's activities include an emphasis on language: Dale Adams opened up with reading the Resolution proclaiming Indigenous People's Day beginning October 10, 2016.

Commissioner Chair Melissa Weidendorf welcomed those in attendance.

City Administrator Tom Pagel reported that in an attempt to be open, welcoming and actively engaged in the cultural efforts, the City of Grand Rapids has erected Ojibwe language throughout the city to serve in acknowledgement of the local indigenous population.

Dan Jones was the special speaker who shared and assisted in the translations.

The contemporary Native American music group Brule performed at the Reif Center on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Indigenous People's Day Continued**

October 13 students from Grand Rapids and Greenway high School provided an Ojibwe 101 workshop held at the Grand Rapids Library and open to the public. Students shared Ojibwe language and translation to those who attended.

Finally with a former resident of Grand Rapids, Chelsea Annette reading from her book Discovering the Little Brothers.

Commissioner LaPlant reported that she did attend the Grand Rapids Library Board regarding the Mural the Human Rights wished to donate and would they be interested in having Ojibwe language at the Library.

They accepted the mural, donated by the Human Rights Commission but they did not wish to provide a specific language but to stay neutral.

There is money left in the Northland Grant that was approved for the Library to purchase a collection of Ojibwe books. Commissioner LaPlant will be speaking more with Administrator Pagel regarding possible signage at the Civic Center.

Commissioner LaPlant has a thank you card, DVD of October 10 events and notes from the Grand Rapids Herald Review to send to Dan on behalf of the Human Rights Commission.

### **HUMAN RIGHTS PLACECARDS**

Rapids printing did the previous cards back in 2011. This item can wait until next March so the listing of Commissioners is current. We check at that time into cost and how many to order.

### **WELCOME SIGNS**

Commissioner Wimmer and Dowell have been working on this project. An order has been placed for 250 window clings, Commissioner Wimmer will report back.

Due to the late hour these items will be placed on the November Agenda for discussion

### **HUMAN RIGHTS PLACECARDS** **VISIT OTHER COMMISSIONS**

The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 30, 2016 at 4:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm

Respectfully submitted, Michele Palkki, Administrative Assistant