



**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**  
**CITY HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM 2B, 420 N. POKEGAMA AVE.**  
**DATE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 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:            April 27, 2016 Regular Meeting

FINANCIALS:

CORRESPONDENCE:

PUBLIC COMMENT:

CIRCLE OF HEALING UPDATE:

ITASCA DIVERSITY ALLIANCE:

BIG VIEW UPDATE:

OLD BUSINESS:                    Indigenous Peoples' Day 2016

NEW BUSINESS:                   Allison Ahcan – Blandin Foundation/Rural Pulse Perception Survey

REPORTS ON CALLS AND INQUIRIES:

PENDING COMPLAINTS:

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 Conference Room 2B of City Hall, Grand Rapids, Minnesota, on Wednesday, April 27, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.

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

**Absent:** Mary Jo Wimmer

**Visitor:** None

**Staff:** Michele Palkki, Administrative Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER** Commissioner Noyce called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm

**SETTING AGENDA** Nothing to add

Commissioner Weidendorf arrived at 4:10 pm

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** March 30, 2016

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LAPLANT, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER DOWELL TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 30, 2016 with corrections. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

### **FINANCIALS**

2016 Budget is \$5,000.00. The expenditures to date include the Human Rights Subscription, and Tracks in the Snow. We are waiting for an invoice for Commissioner Wimmer to attend the Anishinaabe Training. A financial report will be included in May's packet.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was nothing to report

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one in attendance

### CIRCLE OF HEALING

Commissioner LaPlant gave a report regarding the happenings for Circle of Healing.

- The last meeting was held in Ball Club; the discussion was about signage project in Bemidji.
- Commissioner LaPlant distributed a handout that will be done each month as a type of newsletter. Different events will be listed and there will be opportunities for you to be involved, if you wish.

### ITASCA DIVERSITY ALLIANCE

Commissioner Noyce gave a report on the Itasca Diversity Alliance.

- The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 2 at the Blandin Foundation at 4 pm. Bart Johnson, Provost Officer of Itasca Community College, will attend to discuss a couple of ideas for Itasca Diversity Alliance with the college students.

### BIG VIEW

Commissioner Moren reported on the Big View, events held, and those coming.

The Big View set up a series of four events to talk about the drug Heroin. Heroin is a highly potent illegal opioid that can lead to severe consequences such as overdose and even death.

This event has had a showing of people from all walks to listen and ask questions. Each event talks about the different segments of this drug and its effect on individuals, families and friends. It has gone rampant in our community and surrounding communities and the effects are devastating. There is a panel of speakers to answer questions at each meeting.

- The first meeting was from a law enforcement side with over 175 people attending.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> event held on April 26<sup>th</sup> attracted over 130 people
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> will be held May 4 and come from the medical perspective
- The 4<sup>th</sup> will be held also in May

Clearly, this topic is of great interest to the public. The goal for the Big View is to introduce topics to the community and that other agencies/group will take the topic further. If new information comes forth, it will be forwarded on to the Commission.

**Big View Continued:**

May 4<sup>th</sup> the Circles of Support are hosting "The Doctrine of Discovery" from 4:30 – 6:00 pm at the Grand Rapids Library. There will be a one-hour documentary film followed by a discussion with the film producer/director Sheldon Wolfchild. Everyone is welcome.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY**

The discussion continued regarding the planning for this event, which will take place the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in October. It was further determined that a sub-committee be set up to put the event together and then come back to the full commission for approval. The sub-committee will consist of Commissioner's Weidendorf, Noyce, Hall and LaPlant.

**MOTION BY LAPLANT, SECOND BY NOYCE, TO RECOMMEND THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS FOCUS ITS 2016 INDIGENEOUS PEOPLE'S DAY ACTIVITY IN A WAY THAT HONORS INDIGENOUS CULTURE MADE VISIBLE AND LASTING THROUGH OJIBWE LANGUAGE SIGNS. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ARROWHEAD REGIONAL ARTS GRANT**

Katie Marshall wrote this grant in partnership with the Human Rights Commission, to bring an exhibit to the MacRostie Art Center. The City received \$3,330.00 toward the Wing Young Huie Exhibit. This will include the Exhibit, Presentation, and a Workshop in October 2016.

**ACT FOR AMERICA**

Commissioner Dowell brought this topic up for conversation. A group met recently at the Sawmill Inn. This is a disappointment of why people, of all races, cannot see each other as equal.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm

The next meeting will be on May 25, 2016

Respectfully submitted, Michele Palkki, Administrative Assistant

25 May 2016

## **Proposal from the Human Rights Commission to the Grand Rapids City Council regarding future ways to celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day**

In 2015, the Grand Rapids City Council voted to henceforth recognize the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples Day. The City's resolution states, "...the City of Grand Rapids embraces the indigenous history and culture that imbue this place and seeks to foster the accurate depiction of history, address ongoing struggles of American Indian peoples of the area, and honor their perspectives and presence in the shared community life of the Grand Rapids area today" .

The first Grand Rapids Indigenous Peoples Day, October 12, 2015, was celebrated with a mini powwow in downtown Grand Rapids, hosted by the city and organized by city officials and the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission in collaboration with members of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. The powwow featured student drum and dance groups from Northland/Remer, Bug-o-nay-ge-shig, Deer River and Cass Lake schools and was attended by hundreds of fourth grade students from throughout the Itasca Area School Consortium (IASC) area, dozens of members of the public, and a notable number of Anishinaabe elders and band members from the Leech Lake Reservation.

Grand Rapids' celebration of its first Indigenous Peoples Day received media recognition throughout the state of Minnesota and beyond. Feedback received by members of the Human Rights Commission was overwhelmingly positive, from both participants and viewers, Natives and Non-natives alike. We commend the City Council and city employees for their whole-hearted and generous support for this 2015 kick-off event, marking a new and forward-looking tradition for our community.

The Human Rights Commission has been discussing how the city might celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day in the coming years. The powwow was a great success, but overseeing something of this scale on an annual basis would hamper our other work for human rights in the community and preclude the possibility of highlighting other facets of American Indian culture and history on Indigenous Peoples Day.

The Human Rights Commission proposes to celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day by focusing on a different aspect of native culture and history each year.

Specifically, we envision that the celebration of Indigenous People's Day each year could include any or all of the following:

1. A public reading of the proclamation (resolution) designating the second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples Day
2. One or more public lectures and/or other educational events of general interest, related to the topical focus for that year
3. Art works and other displays hosted by the City during the week of Indigenous Peoples Day
4. A list of suggestions for local businesses about ways they can help celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day, to bring awareness to their non-native customers of the significance of the day and to welcome and appreciate their indigenous customers.

5. The addition of a permanent visual element in the community related to the facet of Native culture highlighted that year

We propose that the specific focus of Indigenous Peoples Day over the next three years be as follows:

2016: Ojibwe Language and Language Revitalization

2017: Indigenous History of the Grand Rapids Area

2018: Celebrating Local Indigenous People

### **Indigenous Peoples Day 2016: Ojibwe Language and Language Revitalization**

Indigenous culture and language were intentionally subjugated by the US government during decades of forced removal of Native children from their families and placement in boarding schools far from home. Destruction of language by a dominant culture is recognized worldwide as a basic violation of human rights; the interruption of culture and family by the removal of children and the outlawing of indigenous religious practice in this country had profound and lasting impact on the health and vitality of Ojibwe and other indigenous communities across North America. Language, art, and music are the vessels that carry the elements of culture and identity across generations. Native American leaders today are focused on revitalizing language as a key element in moving their communities forward. As a neighboring community to the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, and a community with our own significant number of residents with Indigenous roots, we can assist in this effort.

The Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission proposes to the City Council that to celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day in October 2016 we do the following:

- a. Organize a series of three public presentations during the week of Indigenous Peoples Day:
  - Presentation on the importance of language revitalization and its link to school success for Native children
  - "Ojibwe Language 101", a chance to learn the basics of Ojibwe language usage and construction
  - A story and book or reading event for children in conjunction with the public library
  
- b. Provide for area businesses ideas and some simple materials for highlighting Ojibwe language in their businesses that day (e.g., paper placemats, bookmarks, menus with Ojibwe words, greetings, food names, etc.)
  
- c. Join the initiative already underway by a number of area organizations and businesses to provide permanent Ojibwe language signage in their buildings and facilities. Groups already working on this include Itasca Community College, the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of

Commerce, the Blandin Foundation, the State of Minnesota Department of Corrections Office, School District 318, Kootasca Community Action and some area businesses.

- Install signage in City owned and operated buildings – TBD to include the library, civic center, city hall, golf course and central school
- Include Ojibwe language greetings on the City's website, forms/applications and review print materials for possible inclusion.

We submit this proposal to the Grand Rapids City Council and ask for your approval of the concept. If approved in concept, we will then develop budget and funding as plans for 2016 take shape.

Respectfully submitted by the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission

**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

**SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES  
FOR THE PERIOD ENDING APRIL 30, 2016**

*With Comparative Totals for the Period Ending December 31, 2015*

	<u>Actual</u> <u>4/30/2016</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>12/31/2015</u>
<b>Human Rights Budgeted Expenditures</b>	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,000
Brochures	-	-
Poster, Letterhead & Reprints	-	-
Supplies	-	1,734
Copy Supplies	-	52
Video/Books	-	-
Advertising	-	2,355
Dues	100	100
Postage	-	8
Seminars/Meetings/Schools	-	1,350
Speaker Expenses	875	250
Equipment Rental	-	3,496
Honorariums	-	100
City Staff Training	-	-
Contracted Services-Legal	-	-
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Balance Available	<u>\$ 4,025</u>	<u>\$ (6,445)</u>

---

**Indigenous People's Day Donations**

Blandin Foundation Grant	\$ -	\$ 5,000
Affinity Plus Credit Union	-	50
Itasca Community College	-	300
Miners Inc-Cub Foods	-	100
Northland Foundation	-	1,000
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

**Other Donations**

Arrowhead Regional Arts	3,330	
Balance Available with Donations	\$ 7,355	\$ 5



## Wing Young Huie – Exhibit, Presentation, and Workshop – October 2016

**Summary:** MacRostie Art Center is interested in partnering with the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission to present this program. The cost to bring the artist here with an exhibit, lecture, and workshop would be approximately \$2500. Additional costs could include advertising/promotion, transportation for underserved groups to attend, etc. The GR HRC would be eligible to apply for a grant from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council of up to \$6,000 (MAC is not eligible). MAC can supply the 20% match with staff time, in-kind use of the venue, and some publicity. We'd be happy to help with the grant as well. The grant is due January 29, 2016 with funds available starting April 1.

More info about the Community Arts Learning grant program <http://aracouncil.org/>

More info about Wing Young Huie: <http://www.wingyounghuie.com/>

MAC Contact: Katie Marshall, 218-326-2697, [katie@macrostieartcenter.org](mailto:katie@macrostieartcenter.org)



### EXHIBIT: Identity and the American Landscape

This 50-piece retrospective is culled from 11 projects that span a 30-year career, reflecting the dizzying, changing cultural landscape.

Wing has many exhibition possibilities available for venues of all kinds, appropriate for formal gallery settings to K - 12 schools. His photographs address a host of social topics, including immigration, race, adoption, urbanism, rural life, dementia, spirituality, Lutheranism, gender, vulnerability, homelessness, and social disconnection.



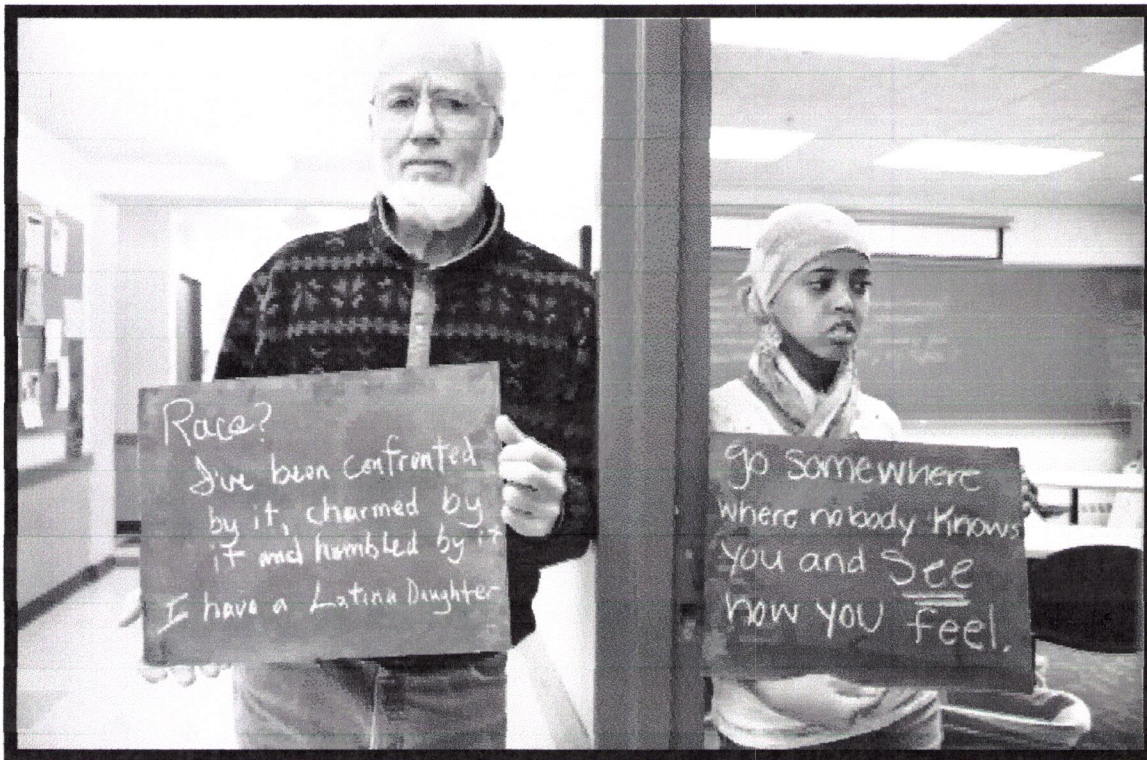
### **LECTURE: How Do Photographs Form Us?**

Wing's dynamic slide show lecture confronts many divisive social issues, such as cultural bias, immigration, religion, and social disconnection. While sharing anecdotes and insights into his creative process—and his abilities to intimately interact with thousands of strangers—he also discusses the personal and professional challenges in his 35-year journey of becoming a celebrated artist.

Contrasting points of views are engaged when Wing presents his photographs that are open to interpretation and asks participants, “What do you see?” He then facilitates a dialogue before revealing the stories behind the photographs that furthers the complexities of cultural and personal perceptions, creating a challenging yet safe environment for deep discussion.

How are we impacted by the daily consumption of countless images created by marketing forces, the media, and popular entertainment? How can we differentiate our authentic selves from idealized realities? Do we become what we see? In other words: How do photographs form us?

Time frame: 45 - 75 minutes.



### WORKSHOP: Chalk Talk

A "Chalk Talk" workshop is also available, in which participants engage each other with an activity used in his recent work, *The University Avenue Project*. Wing elicited responses from hundreds of people in various circumstances by asking a series of open-ended questions. He then chose only one of the answers from each person, which that person wrote on a chalkboard. How would you answer these questions?

- What are you?
- How do you think others see you? What don't they see?
- What advice would you give to a stranger?
- What is your favorite word?
- Describe an incident that changed you.
- How have you been affected by race?

Workshop participants pair with someone in the room they are unfamiliar with, ask each other these questions, choose each others' answer, and then write that answer down on black construction paper with white chalk. (Option: participants can then photograph each other with their chalkboards.) This intimate and non-confrontational interaction addresses issues of bias, challenging preconceptions of the other and one's self.

Time Frame: 45 - 60 minutes.