



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

DATE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 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, Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Doug Learmont	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Barb Sanderson, Vice Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Karen Noyce	<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.

PRESENTATION:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 30, 2015 Regular Meeting

FINANCIALS:

CORRESPONDENCE: 2016 Calendar
2016 Commissioner Contacts

PUBLIC COMMENT:

CIRCLE OF HEALING UPDATE:

DIVERSITY UPDATE:

BIG VIEW UPDATE:

OLD BUSINESS: Tracks in the Snow – Committee Report
Islam Phobia Article

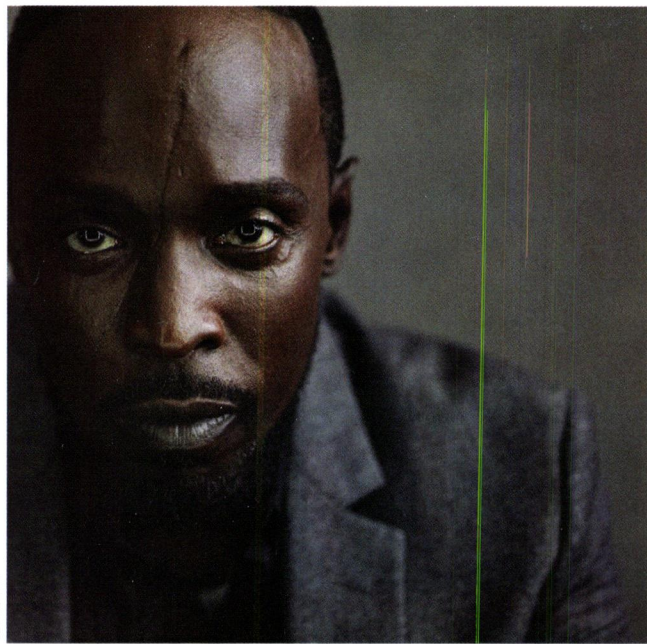
NEW BUSINESS: 2016 Blandin Survey Questions
Wing Huie Art Exhibit

REPORTS ON CALLS AND INQUIRIES:

PENDING COMPLAINTS:

OTHER:

ADJOURNMENT:



END OUR ADDICTION TO INCARCERATION

THE ACTOR AND ACLU AMBASSADOR TALKS ABOUT WHY AMERICA NEEDS TO **KICK THE MASS INCARCERATION HABIT.**

AMERICANS UNDERSTAND that their criminal justice system is broken. We see the news reports, and we know there is real anger out there. Nearly 70 percent of voters believe there are too many people behind bars in America, according to a national survey of 2016 voters conducted for the ACLU's Campaign for Smart Justice. It's time for a national discussion about who belongs in prison and who doesn't.

News headlines make it seem that mass incarceration is a new problem. I grew up in East Flatbush, one of the toughest neighborhoods in

Brooklyn, and I can tell you that none of this is new to the people in my old neighborhood.

In East Flatbush, in Ferguson, in Baltimore's Sandtown and countless other forgotten communities, we have made prison the solution to entirely too many problems. Jail cells became a dumping ground for poor kids of color, the mentally ill and drug addicts. These human beings don't belong in cages. They belong

in school or treatment.

This is personal to me. One of my best friends growing up, let's call him MZ, had talent to spare, and he inspired me to become an actor. But MZ had bipolar disorder. Too poor to get the treatment he needed, he wound up behind bars. Prison wrecked MZ. Over time, he became a shell of his former self, and I lost the friend and brother I knew.

Why are we surprised when people like MZ leave prison worse off than when they went in? Addicts who need treatment are sent to live behind bars instead. Robbed of their basic human dignity, far from their communities, many never recover.

This addiction to incarceration is making our society sick. Some 2.4 million men, women, and children are locked up today—more people per capita than Russia, China or Iran. More African-American men are in the prison system now than were slaves before the Civil War. If you include those on parole and probation, the system has its grip on more than 7 million people.

Black men have suffered the most under this grotesque regime. The War on Drugs is the driving force of oppression. African-Americans make up 40 percent of drug offenders in prisons, even though we are just 13 percent of the U.S. population. Blacks use drugs at roughly the same rates as white men, but are six times more likely to end up in jail.

The inequity is glaring, but the statistics are repeated so often that they lose their shock value. But they aren't just numbers. These are our sons, fathers and brothers. Ruining their lives destroys not just individuals like MZ, but entire families, neighborhoods and communities.

We can't afford this as a country. Billions are spent each year on prisons that could be used for education, health care, or addiction recovery programs. But reducing the prison population is not just a fiscal need—it's a moral one, too. While the cost savings that would come from reducing prison populations is compelling, that's not the only motivation for voters. By an impressive 2-to-1 margin, voters want to use the cost savings to invest in programs that actually keep our communities safe, such as rehab programs, over just cutting taxes for Americans.

After 45 years of dependence on incarceration, what have we accomplished? We have ravaged two generations of black America. We can and must do better. My friend deserved more, and so do hundreds of thousands just like him. I am standing with the ACLU until this changes.

MICHAEL K. WILLIAMS
is an actor who works with the ACLU to end mass incarceration.

“Black men have suffered the most under this grotesque regime. The War on Drugs is the driving force of oppression.”

STATE ACTIONS → NATIONAL WINS

THE ACLU FIGHTS TO ENSURE RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED EVERY DAY,

not only by challenging dangerous laws, but by fighting to keep potentially discriminatory bills from ever becoming laws. Here's a look at the ACLU's work, as shown through efforts to challenge state-based Religious Freedom Restoration Acts (RFRAs), which have the potential to allow religion to be used as a license to discriminate.

INDIANA LEGISLATORS
INTRODUCE
RFRA
IN JANUARY 2015.

ACLU
MOBILIZATION
BEGINS

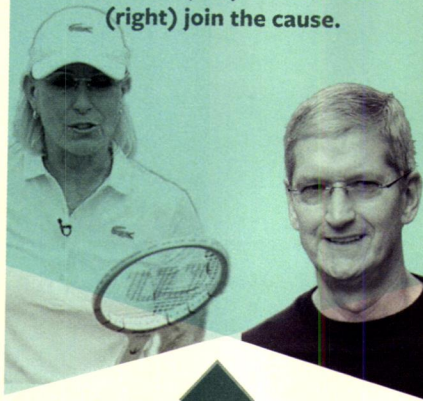
ACLU WORKS WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS TO RELAUNCH FREEDOM INDIANA, A

★ TARGETED COALITION ★

TO REACH A BROAD BASE OF CONSTITUENTS ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM.

After the bill is signed, ACLU AND ALLIES GENERATE PUBLIC OUTCRY

to encourage Gov. Pence to back away from the discriminatory law. Celebrities and business leaders, including George Takei, Martina Navratilova (left) and Tim Cook (right) join the cause.



Prompted by ACLU advocacy, NCAA President Mark Emmert voices concern over how the law may affect "future events" and its workforce.

THANKS TO PRESSURE BROUGHT BY FREEDOM INDIANA, GOV. PENCE AND LAWMAKERS PASS A SO-CALLED FIX TO THE LAW.

WHILE THE "FIX" ADDRESSES SOME OF THE POTENTIAL HARMS OF THE LAW, IT DOES NOT GO FAR ENOUGH.

ACLU PUSHES FOR ADDITIONAL REFORMS.

MORE THAN
10,000
PEOPLE TAKE ACTION

to urge Gov. Mike Pence to veto the bill.

ACLU and allies leverage relationships with powerful business interests, including Eli Lilly, Visit Indiana and Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, to protest RFRA.

Angie's List and gaming convention Gen Con THREATEN TO LEAVE INDIANA when RFRA passes.

SUCCESS!

Because of the NATIONWIDE ATTENTION GENERATED BY THE ACLU AND FREEDOM INDIANA, statehouses across the country dropped plans to pursue similar bills, including Georgia, Maine, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina and Texas.

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, December 30, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

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

Absent: Mary Jo Wimmer

Staff: Michele Palkki, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by chair Hall.

SETTING AGENDA Additions: Nothing to add

APPROVAL OF MINUTES October 28, 2015 Regular Meeting.
There was no November Meeting.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LAPLANT, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER DOWELL TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 28, 2015.
Motion passed by unanimous vote.

FINANCIALS

Commissioner LaPlant wanted to express her thanks to Barb Baird, Finance Department, for her help with the Northland Foundation Grant and all the budget information for Indigenous People's Day. The grant reporting is complete.

CORRESPONDENCE

Staff Liaison Palkki reported that any further changes that the Commission wishes to do with the web page must now go through staff person appointed to the Commission. A ticket will be opened and those on the web team will review and if approved will make the changes.

CIRCLE OF HEALING UPDATE

Commissioner LaPlant reported that there are still openings in the Anishinaabe World Training Session in January.

In addition, one set of the K-6 Ojibwe Dakota curriculum will be distributed to all nine schools. The link for this is <http://www.ojibwe-dakota-in-mn.com>.

DIVERSITY UPDATE

Commissioner Noyce reported that a meeting with George Thompson took place regarding what and how to start a diversity dialogue/curriculum. The next piece would be Community Conversation. How to move throughout the community; where should the Human Rights Commission role be, how to find ways to have organized activities.

There needs to be clarification on what has been done and where to go in the future.

BIG VIEW EVENTS

Commissioner Noyce reported that the Annual Dignity Award was presented to Sampson Longtin. Currently are working on ideas for 2016, possibly will do something on "we are all criminals".

OLD BUSINESS

TRACKS IN THE SNOW

Commissioner Learmont reported an update for the Tracks in the Snow exhibit. The program schedule is coming together well.

The Committee has been working on the details regarding the cost, physical layout of the exhibit, the theme, opening speaker, and the number of presenter's.

Set up will be at the Grand Rapids Public Library on Saturday, January 16 beginning at 2:00 pm for anyone that wishes to help. Opening is scheduled for January 21. There will be two presentations at the Library; January 21 at 6:00 pm and February 3 at 6:00 pm. There will be one presentation at ICC on February 3.

Commissioner's Hall and Learmont will open the exhibit at the Library

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm

The next meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2016.

Respectfully submitted, Michele Palkki, Administrative Assistant

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



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.



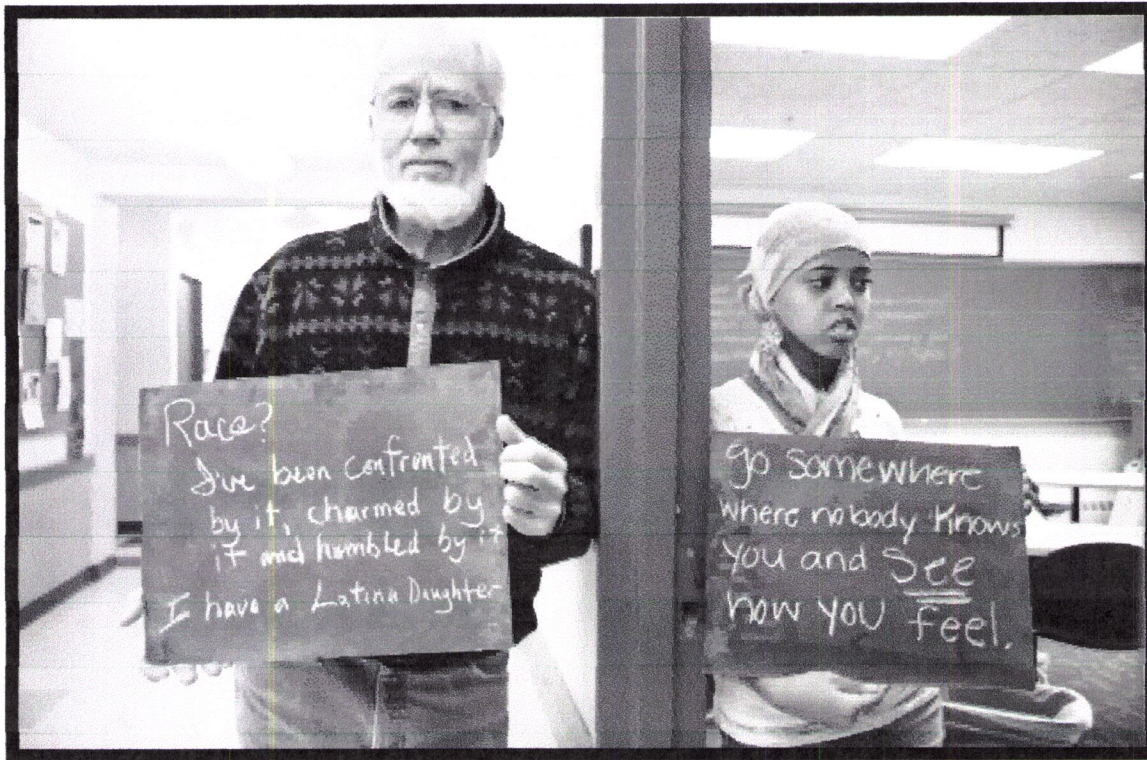
LECTURE: How Do Photographs Form Us?

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.



CITY OF
GRAND RAPIDS
IT'S IN MINNESOTA'S NATURE

2016

January							February							March						
Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3	4	5
											PC							PC		

April							May							June								
Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.		
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7					1	2	3	4
												PC								PC		

July							August							September								
Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.		
					1	2			1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	
												PC								PC		

October							November							December								
Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.		
						1							5						1	2	3	
												PC								PC		

- Golf Course Board - 7 am
- Library Board - 5 pm
- Council Worksession 4:00 pm
- City Council Mtg - 5 pm
- Payroll
- Holiday
- Cable TV Comm. - Noon
- Arts & Culture Comm. - 3:45 pm
- Park & Rec Civic Center Board 5:30 pm
- Airport Advisory Board - 5:00 pm
- Public Util. Comm. - 4 pm
- Economic Devl. Authority - 4 pm
- Fire Dept. Bus. Mtg. - 7 pm
- Housing/Redevelopment Authority 4 pm
- Fire Relief Assn.
- PC Planning Comm. - 4 pm
- Human Rights Comm. - 4:00 pm
- Flex Benefits Deadline