

Duluth Human Rights Commission (HRC)
Regular Meeting - minutes
Wednesday, November 8, 2023 @ 5:30pm
City Hall Room 155

1) Call to Order and Introductions

- a) Meeting called to order at 5:37pm
- b) Commissioners present: Commissioners Lue, Jaramillo-Kraemer, Keppers, Ostrander, and Huber.
- c) Commissioners absent: Commissioner Wittenberg
- d) Guests: Human Rights Officer (HRO) Carl Crawford, community member Kathleen Spencer, Duluth City Councilor-at-Large Terese Tomanek, and intern Emma Chehowk.

2) Consent of Minutes - October 11, 2023

Motioned to approve by Commissioner Keppers; seconded by Commissioner Huber; approved unanimously.

- a) Correction to Minutes: TRIO Day event at University of Wisconsin-Superior started at 3pm not 4pm.

3) Public comments and written comments

- a) Councilor Tomanek noted that the City Council has asked state leadership to expand leeway to hold virtual meetings to increase participation.
 - i) Currently, virtual participation can be held in case of illness, but not inclement weather.
- b) HRO Crawford reported that Commissions have been asked not to meet in December due to renovations.
- c) Commissioner Ostrander asked a question about protocol if a commission meeting is disrupted. This question is informed by the recent City Council disruption. HRO Crawford noted that there is currently no guidance.

4) Committee Reports

- a) Executive Team
 - i) Commissioner Lue has sent the Human Rights Award (HRA) information to the city's Public Information Officer. The Public Information Officer will help add HRA information and nomination form on the City website. There will also be a press release and a social media push. Commissioner Lue will be in regular contact with the Public Information

Officer to monitor the amount of nominations that come in in case we need to make additional promotion pushes. City Councilor Tomanek asked for the information to be sent to the City Council. Commissioner Huber suggested it also be sent to the chairs of other commissions.

- ii) Commissioner Huber attended the Education Equity Advisory Committee (EEAC) meeting. They are not meeting this month because they are going to have a joint meeting on the development of a workforce plan. Commissioner Huber will be more involved with that group and has joined the EEAC. Their next meeting will be in December. Commissioner Huber also met with ISD 709 representatives to stay engaged and collaborate going forward. Commissioner Lue recommended we invite an ISD 709 representative to a Commission meeting early next calendar year to discuss the current data. Commissioner Keppers, suggested February as a target month. The Commission could then invite ISD 709 a few months later.

b) Findings Committee

- i) Met Monday November 6, 2023
- ii) Individual contacted HRO Crawford about their employer refusing to use appropriate pronouns. HRO Crawford has reached out to discuss the issue with the employer.
- iii) Older gentleman reached out with assistance with snow removal. HRO Crawford connected the individual with resources.
- iv) Continuing issue: Woman hurt on the bus. Matched with an ARMS worker and is working with a different attorney to try to push forward a lawsuit against DTA.
- v) Continuing issue: Child in physical custody of paternal grandfather. Birth parent is trying to get visitation, but is not able to get free legal aid. Court set another continuance. HRO Crawford will meet again with the birth parent this week. Visitation rights have been awarded, but grandfather is not permitting.

5) Review Work Plan

- a) We discussed the changes last meeting. We now need to vote to adopt the workplan and hear any additional changes. Commissioner Huber noted that the acronyms need to be spelled out. The executive committee will make those changes, along with a few minor typos. Work plan adopted unanimously (Commissioner Keppers motioned, Commissioner Huber seconded).

- b) Commissioner Keppers suggested we have one of the Commission's listening sessions about how we create respectful dialogue prior to the 2024 election. HRO Crawford noted that Speak Your Peace might be a good organization to host it.

6) Announcements and Upcoming Events

- a) Transgender Day of Remembrance: 11/20 event is at 125 W. Superior 2nd floor. at 5:30pm; Lake and State candlelight vigil 6:30-7:30pm.
- Skip Sandman Memorial will be held on 11/18 from 2-4pm at the Language and Cultural Learning Center.
- Racial Bias and Policing meeting at AICHO (11/14) 7-9pm.

7) Human Rights Officer Report

- a) Reported that the Post Advisory Board held a meet and greet in Duluth. The Board's next event will be in Makato.
- b) Reported that the Governor's Council for MLK Celebration Week will hold events from Thursday (1/11) - Monday (1/15).
- c) Presented to University of Wisconsin at Superior students about the State of Wisconsin withholding funding if the universities continue to do DEI work.
- d) Attended an event with the Minnesota Council on African American Heritage.
- e) Attended Public Defenders Board meeting in Alabama.
- f) Talked to University of Minnesota at Duluth business school students on 11/7 about bias and stereotypes.
- g) Dedication of the Renee Van Nett pavilion.

8) Additional public comments and commissioner comments

- a) City Councilor Tomanek updated Commissioners on Temple Israel. Temple Israel received a grant from Homeland Security to install stronger security doors, bulletproof glass, and add secure planters at the front of the building.

9) Request for Agenda Items for next meeting, discuss upcoming meeting schedule

10) Adjourn

- a) Meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.
- b) Next Meeting: January 10, 2024.