

Duluth Human Rights Commission (HRC)
Regular Meeting - minutes
Wednesday, January 10, 2024, 5:30 pm
City Hall Room 430

1) Call to Order and Introductions

- a) Meeting called to order at 5:35pm
- b) Commissioners present: Commissioners Lue, Wittenberg, Keppers, Harris, and Huber.
- c) Commissioners absent: Commissioners Jaramillo-Kraemer and Ostrander.
- d) Guests: Human Rights Officer (HRO) Carl Crawford and community member Kathleen Spencer

2) Consent of Minutes

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

3) Public comments and written comments

- a) Request by Commissioner Keppers to add a discussion to the agenda about the mayoral transition and how it impacts the work of the Commission and Office of Human Rights.

4) Committee Reports

a) Executive Team

- i) The Team didn't meet over the last month, but did converse via email to discuss nominations for the Human Rights Award and to request an update to the website as the roster of commissioners isn't up-to-date.
- ii) The whole of the commission then discussed live at the meeting
 - 1) Ideas about educational seminars and guests to invite to upcoming Commission meetings:
 - (a) Housing as a human right
 - (b) Failures of the current medical system
 - (c) Criminalization of the poor
 - (d) Nate Smith from ISD709 - February or March invitation
 - (e) ISD709 mandated suspension update - Carl H. will reach out to district to schedule a time in May or June to meet
 - (f) Civility Project as a way to bring people together across difference
 - 2) New commissioner Harris expressed her interest in learning more about the events committee and Commissioner Wittenberg will follow-up with her about this.

- 3) The Commission discussed ideas on how to spread the word about the Human Rights Award, including speaking with Kelly about media options, being a guest on the morning shows, MPR, PBS, Almanac North, etc.
- 4) The commission agreed to re-open nominations for the Award and to have a new deadline of Friday, March 15 for nominations.

b) Findings Committee

- i) The committee didn't meet over the last month.

5) Mayoral Transition brought to the floor by Commissioner Keppers

- a) Officer Crawford shared that things have changed for the department, but that a lot is still to be learned. There is always work for the Human Rights Office to be working on, so they are continuing to do all the necessary work.
- b) The Mayor isn't currently meeting with Commissions and Boards, but we can send out a request for a meeting. Commissioner Lue will reach out to the Mayor through the Human Rights Office to schedule this meeting.
- c) Officer Crawford believes that the Human Rights Office will continue to remain a core city service despite changes, including a new CFO, city attorney, and Community Relations Representative.
- d) The Human Rights Officer position is a protected, though appointed position.

6) Announcements and Upcoming Events

- a) MLK Events will run Thursday - Monday. Connect with Doug Bowen Bailey if you're able to volunteer.
- b) Officer Crawford will be in the Twin Cities Thursday, Saturday, and Monday to attend a conference, day of service, job fair, and the rally

7) Human Rights Officer Report

- a) Officer Crawford shared the Commission on Disability Booklet which has been an issue important to the Mayor.
- b) The warming shelter is short on staff and in great need of volunteers.
- c) Officer Crawford was a speaker and panelist at Northspan's "Welcoming Workplaces" seminar.

8) Additional public comments and commissioner comments

- a) None.

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

10) Adjourn

- a) Meeting adjourned.

b) Next Meeting: March 13, 2024