

Duluth Human Rights Commission

Wednesday, June 11, 2025 @ 5:30 p.m.

Duluth City Hall Room 430

Public comment will be taken in person. Individuals may also e-mail or mail comments to the Commission prior to the meeting; see contact information at the bottom of the minutes for more information.

1. Call to order and introductions
 - a. Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Ostrander
 - b. Commissioners present: Chair Dr. Nomi Ostrander, Vice Chair Jen Harris, Secretary Amanda Shie, Markus Edgette, Luis Islas, Tyra Jaramillo-Kraemer
 - c. Commissioners absent: None
 - d. City Staff: Human Rights & Equity Officer - Dr. Marsha Lue, Human Rights Assistant - Laura Laaksonen
 - e. Community members: Curt Leitz, Kathleen Spencer
2. Acceptance of May meeting minutes - May 14, 2025
 - a. Commissioner Islas moved to approve May minutes and was seconded by Commissioner Edgette.
 - b. January meeting minutes - city staff determined it's possible to approve with current membership.
 - i. Chair Ostrander moved to approve January minutes. January minutes were approved and accepted.
3. Public comments
 - a. Community member Curt Leitz shared that he is working with a group to develop a response to ICE raids in the community to document what is happening and shine a light on ICE actions. Leitz hopes that the commission can release a strong statement about the issues.
 - i. Discussion with commissioners and city staff ensued, including reviewing what the human rights office can and can't do, resources they offer, whether a person can file a complaint anonymously, and how to encourage affected people (or their acquaintances on their behalf) to speak at a human rights commission meeting, which puts it on official record. Commissioners voiced concern over where people are being held after being detained, who is actually staffing ICE locally, and what more can be done to advocate for immigrants locally.
 - ii. Commissioners encouraged community member Curt to continue documenting ICE incidents and review with the commission as needed.
4. Committee reports
 - a. Executive team
 - i. Executive team met June 3, 2025 via Zoom.
 1. In attendance: Nomi Ostrander, Jen Harris, Amanda Shie

- ii. Chair Ostrander spoke for the executive team, sharing with the commission that the executive team discussed whether or not to have a July meeting and developed team cohesion.
- b. Findings committee
 - i. Findings committee met June 6, 2025, via Microsoft Teams.
 - 1. In attendance: Dr. Marsha Lue, Laura Laaksonen, Nomi Ostrander, Tyra Jaramillo-Kraemer, Amanda Shie
 - 2. A woman who lives in a group-home-type facility is claiming that the people who work there are holding her against her will, give her more rules than others, and make her sign a release form to go visit her family. HRO recommended that because the woman lives in a state facility, this claim should be filed with the state. The woman has called the MN Department of Health but has not heard back from them yet. The findings committee also recommend forwarding this complaint along to the state.
 - 3. A man who lives in a subsidized apartment is claiming that his neighbors fight a lot, and he must call the police repeatedly. The police do come out, but the man says that they don't do anything. The man is trying to fill out an OFP against the neighbors but does not know how and does not want to ask the police for help in doing so. He also requested to move to a different apartment unit away from the neighbors, but was denied the move, even though he had medical documentation that he had to move because of the noise. He has already hired an attorney to find out why his move request got denied. HRO recommended that he file a complaint with DPD or with the state if he has a complaint against law enforcement. The findings committee recommended that he continue to work with his attorney and refer his complaint to the state.
 - 4. A man who worked for a local nonprofit is claiming discrimination based on race. He attempted to write up a subordinate for using racial slurs and sexist remarks, but his director intervened. contacted him the next day saying that someone cannot be racist or sexist against a white man. Conflict ensued, and the man was put on a forced PTO period and then was terminated. The findings committee recommended that he send over the files that he had previously offered to send over, for review for further investigation.
 - 5. A man who lived in subsidized housing for 10 years and recently moved out is filing a claim against his landlord. There were large ice and humidity problems in the house, and the landlord never addressed it. The man wants money for items he had to replace. The findings committee recommended that he fill out the online application to work with Justice North on this issue.
 - 6. A man who uses a wheelchair to get around is filing a claim against a local restaurant. The building that he was trying to get

into was not accessible to him, and he was not able to be served. The man will be meeting with the manager of that restaurant to talk about how he did not have access to the building and will call the HRO back after the meeting.

- c. Committee assignments
 - i. Commissioners Islas and Edgette volunteered to take spots on Findings Committee, Secretary Shie to serve as the alternate.
 - ii. Officer Lue will help coordinate meeting times.
- 5. Old business
 - a. Discuss July meeting
 - i. Commissioners noted availability. Set date of July 9, 2025, and plan to review the annual report to City Council at that meeting.
 - b. Safe Bay
 - i. Vice Chair Harris reported that Safe Bay is active and open.
- 6. New business
- 7. Human Rights Office report
 - a. Attended Trans Joy event on June 8, 2025.
 - b. Invited by summer camp counselor to speak at a summer camp hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Church.
 - c. Elder's Brunch at Central Hillside as part of Juneteenth celebrations on June 12, 2025. Invited commissioners in attendance to join if available.
 - d. Unable to attend Gun Violence Awareness Day hosted by One Roof Community Housing on June 14, 2025, from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
 - e. Family Freedom Center to host a Father's Day Brunch and Juneteenth Kick-off on June 15, 2025.
 - f. Tabling at the Cultural Connections Community Night event at the Depot on June 17, 2025.
 - g. Officer Lue will be leading Juneteenth tabling on June 19, 2025. She will be going at 12 p.m. and will set up at 2 p.m. to table.
 - h. Chair Ostrander reminded the commission of the Disability Pride event from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. on July 9, 2025. Officer Lue is not sure if the commission will be asked to table at this event.
- 8. Announcements and Upcoming Events
 - a. Annual Report to City Council
 - i. Chair Ostrander notes that the commission will discuss the annual report further at the July 9 meeting.
 - b. School district ISD 709 presentation to the commission – Aug 13, 2025
 - i. Expecting a presentation from ISD 709, plus handouts and opportunities to ask questions.
 - c. World Refugee Day on June 20, 2025
 - i. Vice Chair Harris will be there starting at 2 p.m. Secretary Shie and Commissioner Islas will attend the UMD portion of the event starting at 4 p.m.
- 9. Additional public comments

- a. Discussions on recent ICE raids in Duluth
 - i. Commissioners discussed ICE's jurisdiction around schools. The district has stated they require signed warrants and judge's orders before allowing access to schools, after-school programs, or summer programs.
- 10. The commission discussed whether there could be any discussion at a city level about making statements about the recent ICE raids. Commissioners wondered who from DPD could answer their questions about local ICE activity and asked HRO Lue to reach out to DPD or invite them to a meeting.
- 11. Adjourn
 - a. Commissioner Jaramillo-Kraemer motioned to adjourn; Commissioner Islas seconds. Meeting ends at 6:34 p.m.
 - i. Next meeting is planned for 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at City Hall Room 430.

Minutes submitted by:
Amanda Shie, Secretary