

Duluth Human Rights Commission

Wednesday, August 13, 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 5:33 p.m. by Chair Nomi Ostrander
 - b. Commissioners present: Chair Nomi Ostrander, Vice Chair Jen Harris, Secretary Amanda Shie, Markus Edgette, Luis Islas
 - c. Commissioners absent: Tyra Jaramillo-Kraemer
 - d. City staff: Human Rights & Equity Officer - Dr. Marsha Lue
 - e. Guest speakers: Representatives from ISD 709 - Betty Greene, Brenda Spartz, Jen Larva
 - f. Community members: Mary Parsatoun, Taylour Blakeman, Betty Konsland, Kathleen Spencer, JoAnne Bates, Tom Bates, Tom Tusker, Bri Kaymierczak
2. Presentation on suspension rates – ISD 709
 - a. ISD 709 presented on school suspension rates, see attached presentation.
 - b. Prevention & Response Summary: ISD 709 is in their 4th year of implementing Minnesota Multi-tiered System of Supports (MnMTSS), which moves from universal support practices to individualized support. Chair Ostrander brought up concerns about support for students from immigrant families given the increased capacity of ICE. ISD 709 said they want limited impact on families and students and want all to feel welcomed and supported. For ICE to access students, they must have a proper judicial warrant and follow proper legal procedures. They do not currently offer remote education options for students impacted by concerns over deportation.
 - c. In conclusion, ISD 709 noted this is the only time they present this data, though they have continual internal conversations. They noted school board meetings are all recorded, with agendas and recordings available online for the community to understand what conversations are taking place within the district.
3. Acceptance of June Meeting Minutes
 - a. Commissioner Islas moved to approve June minutes, seconded by Commissioner Edgette.
4. Committee Reports
 - a. Executive Team
 - i. The executive team met August 11, 2025, via Zoom.
 - ii. In attendance: Chair Dr. Nomi Ostrander, Vice Chair Jen Harris, Secretary Amanda Shie
 1. Presented an annual report for the City Council in July. Went well.
 2. Based on interest from the City Council, aim to schedule two listening sessions per year.
 3. Discussion on how the Commission wants to reach out/coordinate with other commissions.
 - b. Findings Committee

- i. Did not meet. The committee will likely have a report at the next Commission meeting.
 - ii. The committee is still getting inquiries, just not quite to the level of the Findings Committee.
- 5. New Business
 - a. 2025-2026 work plan. Chair Ostrander shared a draft with the Commission. The executive team will work on it before the September 10th meeting and will bring the final version before the Commission then.
- 6. Human Rights Office Report
 - a. July commemorates 35 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Lots of great organizations working in this space in Minnesota and Twin Ports region - two to highlight are [Great Lakes ADA Center](#) and the [MN Council on Disability](#).
 - i. Great Lakes ADA offers free webinars open to the public and also hosts recordings of these webinars through their website.
 - ii. MN Council on Disability Director will be in Duluth to do workshops. A general ADA workshop open to the general public will be held at Lake Superior College on September 22nd from 10:30 a.m. to noon.
 - b. August 18, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.: Unity in Community event held at Bayfront. Commissioners Islas and Edgette will try to attend.
 - c. August 28, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.: Duluth-Superior Pride Mayors' Opening Reception at Spirit Room. Commissioners were encouraged to attend if possible.
 - d. August 29, 10:15 - 10:45 a.m.: Drag queen storytime at Duluth Public Library, Main Branch.
 - e. August 30: Full day of Pride Fest at Bayfront. Duluth Public Library will share a table with HRC. Officer Lue will attend with bookmarks and handouts.
- 7. Announcements and Upcoming Events
 - a. August 30 & 31: Pride Fest is on Saturday the 30th and Pride Parade is Sunday the 31st.
 - b. Duluth Tenants Union is looking for volunteers to knock on doors about the Right to Repair Ordinance.
 - c. October 8, 6 p.m.: ACLU hosting "Power Back to the People: An Evening of Dissent" in the Twin Cities. Commissioner Islas has more information if people are curious.
- 8. Old Business
 - a. None.
- 9. Public comments
 - a. A community member asked if the city of Duluth has a closet/library of equipment available for loaning to disabled folks. Officer Lue does not know of one or any plans to do so at the moment. The ALS Association was noted in the discussion as a resource, though supplies may only be available from the Twin Cities.
- 10. Adjourn
 - a. Commissioner Edgette motioned to adjourn; Commissioner Islas seconds. The meeting ends at 6:59 p.m.
 - i. The next meeting is planned for 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at City Hall Room 430.

Minutes submitted by:
Amanda Shie, Secretary