

## **Duluth Human Rights Commission (HRC)**

Regular Meeting - minutes

Wednesday, March 8, 2023 @ 5:30pm

City Hall Room 330

1. Call to Order
  - a. Meeting called to order at 5:36pm
  - b. Commissioners present: Commissioners Jaramillo-Kraemer, Huber, Wittenberg, Lue, and Lyons
  - c. Commissioners absent: Commissioner Keppers
  - d. Guests: Human Rights Officer (HRO) Carl Crawford; Community members Kaylee Grunseth and Kathleen Spencer
2. Consent of Minutes - October 11, 2023
  - a. Motioned to approve by Commissioner Huber; seconded by Commissioner Lyons, unanimously approved
3. Public Comments and Written Comments
  - a. Written public comments submitted prior to meeting
    - i. None
  - b. Live public comments
    - i. None
4. Discussion with representatives from the Duluth Nonbinary, Queer, Trans, Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Intersex, & Asexual (NQT2SLGBIA) Commission
  - a. Commissioner Kaylee Grunseth
    - i. A goal of their commission is to make connections with other commissions, so showing up to make a presence
    - ii. Seven members are on the Duluth NQT2SLGBIA commission
    - iii. They meet the first Wednesday of every month
    - iv. Upcoming events/plans in the works:
      1. Working with local school GSAs - issues around pronouns and bathrooms. Meeting with them once a month to support them while still giving the GSAs the floor
      2. Also always keeping Duluth/Superior Pride in mind - did not table last year but plan to this year. This is something that the two commissions could collaborate on this coming year.
    - v. Is there an opportunity for all city boards and commissions to get together?
      1. This is something that can be established going forward, including conversations about onboarding and shared commission events calendars
5. Executive Team Report
  - a. Recognize the busy personal and professional lives of all commissioners
  - b. We are currently down three commissioners, and are looking to fill those spaces
  - c. The upcoming dates of recognition are:
    - i. March 13 - April 15: Deaf & Hard of Hearing History Month

1. Sarah Lyons will do the write-up for this
  - ii. April 7: International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda
    1. Carl Huber will do the write-up based on his research from last year
  - iii. May 5: National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous People
    1. Tyra Jaramillo-Kraemer will do the write-up for this
  - iv. Also noted that we should have a shared drive of the documentation that we write for reference. This will have to go through Laura.
6. Findings Committee Report
  - a. Met on February 22nd, four cases brought forward:
    - i. A situation where someone was going to have a pro bono attorney to help her get visitation of her children. That attorney dropped out, and Officer Crawford is working to find another one
    - ii. A continuation of a case involving a tenant who is now being let out of her lease
    - iii. Racial issues at a local high school. Conversations are taking place with more meetings scheduled
    - iv. Another continuation of a previous case in which a woman has been awarded guardianship of a relative, but is receiving not financial support
7. Research Committee Report
  - a. No report
8. Communications Committee Report
  - a. Requests for help writing statements
  - b. Wrote a statement for Women's History Month and International Women's Day
9. Events Committee Report
  - a. Did not table at MLK Day, but plan on preparing for that earlier for next year
  - b. What materials would be good for tabling in the future?
    - i. A plastic stand to hold up the QR code
    - ii. Candy/food/merch to hand out (pens/chip clips/magnets)
    - iii. Land acknowledgement
    - iv. A foam board about what the commission is and our mission
    - v. A tablecloth
  - c. Commissioner Wittenberg will take point on requesting funds for tabling materials and researching the materials needed
10. Racial Bias Audit Update
  - a. Everything is posted on the Duluth Police Department website
    - i. They do post updates monthly on the website in pdf form
  - b. The team lead for the Racial Bias Audit will attend the April Human Rights Commission Meeting
11. Human Rights Officer Report
  - a. Visited Lake Superior College to have conversations about the CJM Memorial
  - b. Been working on diversity and inclusion initiatives at UWS

- c. Panelist for the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development regarding challenges in employment
  - d. Part of AICHO human trafficking events
  - e. Panelist at Marshall High School to meet with the Black Student Union
  - f. Involved in the Cloquet Welcoming Communities conversation regarding what it means to have a diverse population in Cloquet
  - g. Panelist at UMD discussing reparations
  - h. 15 presentations total in the last two months
12. Discuss possibility of doing an annual report to city council
- a. This schedule for this is being worked on this month, and we should know when this presentation is taking place some time next month
  - b. The intention is to share the work we have been doing, the work we want to do, and the barriers to doing that work
  - c. Important time to build connections
  - d. It is roughly a 15 minute presentation at a city council meeting, including questions from city council members, and we can pass out materials to the city council members as well
13. Announcements and Upcoming Events
- a. ISD 709 will be attending the May Human Rights Commission meeting
    - i. Can we get the information prior to the May meeting so that we have time to formulate questions?
    - ii. We do have a report from the state, but we do not have an official report from ISD 709
  - b. Commissioner Wittenberg will be having a conversation with a few of the Duluth Chamber of Commerce members regarding pulling for-profit businesses, schools, and nonprofit organizations together regarding DEI initiatives
    - i. The Chamber did get an introductory letter, and could possibly send out that letter more broadly
    - ii. UMD is hosting Hmong Heritage Night on March 29th in the Kirby Ballroom
14. Additional Public Comments and Commissioner Comments
- a. Commissioner Wittenberg is part of the DEI subcommittee for local realtors, and they will be stopping by the next Human Rights Commission meeting to talk about access to housing
  - b. Commissioner Lyons knows a college student of color who was harassed by a man on a DTA bus
    - i. Lyons reached out to the DTA, and is working with them to address this issue. However, she was disappointed in the initial reaction to her complaint.
      - 1. Question: if something is “resolved” like this situation, can it still be a Human Rights Complaint?
        - a. Yes - this is an issue of physical and psychological safety. Also a question of what the protocol is for these situations at the DTA.

- c. Commissioner Lyons: Bemidji State University has had some racial comment incidents. In response to this, there was a public art piece that said “Black Lives Matter”, and the word “Black” was later erased. There have been threats involved on that campus. This is a general issue regarding freedom of speech at college campuses nationwide.
  - d. Commissioner Lyons: ISD 709 is not being as responsive as they should be to racial comments being made by students in schools. The schools have been asking harmed students if they want the school to take action against the students who are making these comments. This is putting young students in a very difficult situation.
    - i. Officer Crawford would be willing to meet with school officials with Commissioner Lyons regarding this issue if she fills out a Human Rights Complaint form
    - ii. Should our conversation with ISD 709 include more than just the academic piece? The current conversation is about suspensions.
    - iii. What role does the Education Equity Advisory Committee have in this issue?
15. Request for Agenda Items for Next Meeting
- a. Can be emailed to Laura for the next meeting
16. Adjourn
- a. Meeting adjourned at 6:51pm
  - b. Next meeting is April 12, 2023

Minutes respectfully submitted by:  
Tyra Jaramillo-Kraemer, Secretary