

Meeting minutes Human rights commission

Members present: Andrea Alvarez, Lee Conlife, Otoha Masaki, Catherine Lawler Turnbull, Cynthia Tlaiye, Akilah Anderson,

Members absent: Jackie Kay, Isabel Anderson

Guest: None

Staff present: Pat Coleman, community engagement coordinator

1. Call to order – roll call – 6:02pm
2. Approval of agenda

A motion was made by Commissioner Lawler Turnbull, seconded by Commissioner Alvarez, to approve the agenda of January 27, 2026 meeting. Motion carried
3. Approval of minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Lawler Turnbull, seconded by Commissioner Alvarez, to approve the meeting minutes of the December 16, 2025 meeting. Motion carried
4. Old business
 - a. Workplan approval and Council Advisory Communication form

Mr. Coleman presented the work plan, noting it was similar to what was discussed at the previous meeting with minor wordsmithing on the fourth work plan item. He explained that the fifth item was left open for city council to add anything if needed. The next step would be preparing an advisory communications form to council for approval of the work plan. Mr. Coleman indicated the work plan would likely be presented at a February 17th study session and then moved to regular consent at the following meeting for council vote.

All commissioners voted in favor of approving the work plan and moving forward with the advisory communications form to council.
 - b. Human Rights Award

Mr. Coleman reported that only two submissions have been received for the Human Rights Award with about a month remaining until the deadline. The goal is to exceed last year's submissions of three or four.

If you need special accommodations or have questions about the meeting, please call (Pat Coleman 952-924-2518) or the administration department at 952.924.2525.

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Commissioners discussed strategies for increasing submissions, including posting on social media and distributing flyers. Commissioner Alvarez mentioned already posting flyers at the library on the Day of Racial Healing. Mr. Coleman indicated he would send email blasts to city contacts and provide printed materials for commissioners to distribute. The city will also post on social media by the end of the week. The review of submissions will occur at the March meeting with presentation planned for April.

5. New business

a. Federal Agents in SLP

- i. Mr. Coleman provided an extensive briefing on the city's response to recent federal immigration enforcement activities. He shared the city's federal actions updates webpage, which includes the official city statement, information about joining other suburban communities in response efforts, frequently asked questions, and community resources including legal assistance.

Commissioners shared their personal experiences and community observations during the recent immigration enforcement activities. Commissioner Lawler Turnbull described feeling anxious even as a white person when delivery trucks arrived at her home. Commissioner Tlaiye recounted having a panic attack at Michael's when a balloon popped during the tense period. Commissioners noted the widespread trauma being experienced in the community and praised Minnesota's leadership in showing how to handle such situations.

The discussion covered various community responses including business closures in solidarity, economic impacts on local establishments like Mexico City Cafe, and the organizing efforts through Signal chat networks for rapid response. Commissioners discussed the challenge of staying informed about protests and mutual aid efforts while maintaining security from federal surveillance.

Mr. Coleman asked commissioners to share any additional resources they encounter, as the city continues updating its community resources page. Commissioners suggested adding information about mental health support, guidance for talking to children about the situation, and donation opportunities for those unable to participate in direct action.

The group discussed the police department's role, clarifying that while ICE can request crowd control assistance, the police department's first priority is protecting city residents and they operate within existing policy guidelines. Commissioners raised questions about whether the city could restrict hiring former ICE agents, which Mr. Coleman indicated would need to be reviewed by HR for legal implications.

Commissioners emphasized the strong community solidarity they've witnessed, with neighbors, schools, and organizations reaching out to

support affected families. They noted both the Minnesota response being recognized nationally and the targeting of cities that voted against the current administration.

6. Kudos

Commissioners expressed appreciation for community members stepping up during difficult times, including those providing rides and support when people felt unsafe driving or leaving their homes.

7. Work group/subcommittee updates

a. New Community Resources

Mr. Coleman reported that Commissioner Anderson has connected with the Jewish Family Center, which is accepting donations and coordinating grocery deliveries to address food insecurity in the community. A meeting is being arranged to gather more information for sharing with the broader community.

8. Chair and staff updates

a. Vision 4.0 Updates

Mr. Coleman provided an update on the Vision 4.0 process, reporting that after completing community engagement and reporting to city council in December, the work has entered the second phase focusing on strategic priorities and implementation planning. A new consultant group held a kickoff meeting with city council on Monday, and the process includes individual council member meetings and a council retreat in February. The goal is to adopt strategic priorities by March 2026, after which staff will develop the implementation plan.

b. National Day of Racial Healing Recap

The National Day of Racial Healing event was held the previous Monday with strong attendance. Despite a last-minute location change from Westwood to a new venue, approximately 90 out of 100 registered participants attended. Commissioner Alvarez praised the healing exercises and community conversations, particularly noting the valuable interactions with SOAR students and diverse community members including Greg from the nature center.

A participant from London noted the cultural difference of seeing white folks participating in racial healing work, which he found surprising compared to similar events in London that typically only attracted people of color. Commissioners suggested adding programming for children and families, as many parents wanted to bring their kids but the content was more appropriate for older children and adults. Mr. Coleman indicated he would take this feedback to the planning committee for future consideration.

The event featured healing activities led by Zara Healing Group from Minneapolis, with the community conversations being the most well-

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received portion as designed to empower participants to continue such discussions beyond the event.

9. Adjournment – 7:14 p.m.