

City of Northfield

*City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
northfieldmn.gov*



Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

Human Rights Commission

6:00 PM - REGULAR AGENDA CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. [26-097](#) October 22, 2025 HRC Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [1 - 10-22-25 HRC Meeting Minutes draft](#)

2. [26-098](#) December 15, 2025 HRC Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [1 - December 15, 2025 HRC Meeting Minutes](#)

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Persons may take one opportunity to address the Board/Commission for two (2) minutes (not including interpreter's time) on any topic, even if on the agenda, with the condition that they may not speak on the same item later in the meeting. No notification of the Chair is required. However, speakers are asked to complete a sign up card. Persons wanting a response to a question must submit the question in writing to the recording secretary. Questions must include name and information on how to contact. You may use the back side of the comment cards available in the meeting room. Persons cannot gift their 2 minute speaking time to other members of the public.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

REGULAR AGENDA

Persons that wish to speak on a regular agenda item must provide name and address by completing & submitting a sign up card. Persons may also contact the staff liaison via the City's website no later than 12:00 noon on the day of the meeting. The Chair will call up individuals to speak, based on preregistration and cards submitted, after the staff report on an item. Please be respectful of the public's and the Commission's time. Members of the public wishing to speak must adhere to the following guidelines:

- *Speak only once for no more than two minutes (not including interpreter's time) on the topic unless the speaker is addressed by the Commission;*
- *Identify your relationship to the topic;*
- *Have a spokesperson or two for your group to present your comments;*
- *Persons wanting a response to a question must submit the question in writing to the recording secretary, including name and how you would like to be contacted.*

3. [26-099](#) 2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration debrief

4. [26-100](#) 2026 Subcommittees.

STAFF UPDATES

5. [26-101](#) Staff Report.

ADJOURNMENT



Legislation Text

File #: 26-097, **Version:** 1

HRC Meeting Date: February 25, 2026

To: Members of the Human Rights Commission

From: Kirsten Fjeld Zillmer, Meeting Associate

October 22, 2025 HRC Meeting Minutes

Action Requested:

Please review the October 22, 2025 HRC Meeting Minutes and approve or approve with amendments.

Summary Report:

N/A

Alternative Options:

N/A

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timelines:

N/A



City of Northfield

City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
northfieldmn.gov

Meeting Minutes - Draft Human Rights Commission

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

6:00 PM

Police Department, Training Room

6:00 PM - REGULAR AGENDA CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Schuyler Vogel called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: 6 - Commissioner Bruce Morlan, Chair Schuyler Vogel, Commissioner Jess Toft, Commissioner Kelli Podracky, Vice Chair Adam Gebler and Commissioner Xiomara Conde Arenas

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Veronica Gamino

Also present: Commissioner Mae Berglund, Commissioner Dean Kvestad, Spanish Translator Claudia Garcia, and Meeting Associate Kirsten Fjeld Zillmer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Jess Toft, seconded by Commissioner Kelli Podracky, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Commissioner Morlan, Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Commissioner Podracky, Vice Chair Gebler and Commissioner Conde Arenas

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Jess Toft, seconded by Commissioner Xiomara Conde Arenas, to approve the minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Commissioner Morlan, Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Commissioner Podracky, Vice Chair Gebler and Commissioner Conde Arenas

1. 25-567 August 27, 2025 HRC Meeting Minutes

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Kelli Podracky reported about an initiative, "Lights Out for the Youth," that will be held on the December 21. This is an opportunity for businesses and residents to turn off their lights for an hour to bring attention to youth homelessness and those who are sleeping outside. Participants will be able to donate the money they save for that hour to the Key's Wallflower Project, which provides housing to homeless youth in Rice County. Someone from LAFTY will attend the December HRC meeting to speak about it.

Commissioner Mae Berglund reported that a No Kings Rally was held in Northfield.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. [25-568](#) 2025 and 2026 Subcommittees.

Commissioner Bruce Morlan raised the possibility that the HRC issue a statement to the Planning Commission regarding the need for new industry coming into Northfield to address the issue of affordable housing and suggested that perhaps doing so could be part of the conditional use permit process. Spanish Translator Claudia Garcia stated that in the past commissions have brought such resolutions or made requests for ordinance changes directly to the city council and that she would research options available to the HRC.

Commission Morlan reported that the Immigration subcommittee had discussed possibility of bringing someone in to talk about the various categories of people entering the U.S.

Commissioner Morlan also spoke about need for the HRC's Economic Development and Housing subcommittees to be aware of what is happening in the Economic Development Authority, Housing & Redevelopment Authority, and the Planning Commission so that the HRC can have input early the process as decisions are being made. He also made the point that by being on an HRC subcommittee, commissioners should take the initiative to pay attention the what is going on in the city related to that subcommittee.

Commissioner Jess Toft reported that Pride in the Park is looking at making some changes that will reflect the strong partnership it has with the city. She also reported that the LGBTQ+ subcommittee is focusing on how to uphold the city's commitment to stand with the LGBTQ+ community by working with supportive local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce to provide accountability, training, education.

Chair Schuler raised the possibility of combining the LGBTQ+ subcommittee with the immigration subcommittee. He also asked that the subcommittees that haven't met discuss if there is a need or energy to continue the subcommittee with the understanding that a subcommittee can always be reestablished.

Commissioner Mae Berglund indicated interest in serving on the Housing subcommittee, Commissioner Dean Kvestad and Commissioner Xiomara Conde Arenas are interested in serving on the Immigration subcommittee.

3. [25-569](#) 2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration.

Commissioner Jess Toft provided updates on the planning for the MLK Celebration. She discussed the intention of providing more family friendly activities and food. Commissioners indicated that they would reach out to their contacts to look for additional help and performers. Nominations for and presentation of the Human Rights Award were discussed. A SignUp Genius will be created for HRC members to volunteer for the night. Commissioners also discussed the possibility of seeking donations from local businesses as a sponsor of the event.

STAFF UPDATES

4. [25-570](#) Staff Report.

Spanish Translator Claudia Garcia reviewed the Minnesota Human Rights Act, current city services, and interpreter etiquette . She indicated that the Community Events Calendar and the Northfield Public Broadcasting have been cut from the city budget.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Schuler Vogel adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.



Legislation Text

File #: 26-098, **Version:** 1

Human Rights Commission Meeting Date: February 25, 2026

To: Members of the Human Rights Commission

From: Matt Bailey, Meeting Associate

December 15, 2025 HRC Meeting Minutes

Action Requested:

Please review the December 15, 2025 HRC Meeting Minutes and approve or approve with amendments.

Summary Report:

N/A

City Plans & Policies Relevance:

N/A

Alternative Options:

N/A

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timelines:

N/A



City of Northfield

City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
northfieldmn.gov

Meeting Minutes - Draft Human Rights Commission

Monday, December 15, 2025

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

6:00 PM - REGULAR AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

- Present:** 4 - Commissioner Bruce Morlan, Chair Schuyler Vogel, Commissioner Jess Toft and Vice Chair Adam Gebler
- Absent:** 3 - Commissioner Veronica Gamino, Commissioner Kelli Podracky and Commissioner Xiomara Conde Arenas

Also present: Ben Martig, City Administrator; Claudia Garcia, Staff Liaison; Matt Bailey, Meeting Associate; Sam Froehle, Youth Representative (Voting)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Morlan, seconded by Commissioner Froehle, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Yes:** 5 - Commissioner Morlan, Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Vice Chair Gebler and Froehle

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Commissioner Morlan reported on a local initiative concerning the issue of ICE activity in the community, providing business owners with information on their legal rights and how to interact with ICE agents on their premises. Vice Chair Gebler suggested a subcommittee of the Commission on this issue. Staff Liaison Claudia Garcia and City Administrator Ben Martig provided information on current City efforts regarding the issue such as Know Your Rights outreach. Chair Vogel suggested that the existing Immigration subcommittee address the issue. Commissioner Toft also volunteered to help with outreach to children.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. [25-649](#) 2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration.

The Commission discussed the upcoming 2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration event, including activities and award presentations. Award nominees include Nancy Antoine, the Principal of Bridgewater Elementary School for the individual award and Northfield Supporting Neighbors for the institutional/organizational award.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morlan, seconded by Vice Chair Gebler, to

award by acclamation the Human Rights Awards to Nancy Antoine, Principal of Bridgewater Elementary School and to Northfield Supporting Neighbors.. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Morlan, Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Vice Chair Gebler and Froehle

- 2. [25-650](#) 2025 and 2026 Subcommittees.

No reports from the subcommittees were presented.

STAFF UPDATES

- 3. [25-651](#) Staff Report.

Staff Liaison Claudia Garcia and City Administrator Ben Martig presented updates from City staff, including the City Council's assumption of the duties of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority. Garcia and Martig responded to questions and comments from the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice Chair Gebler, seconded by Commissioner Morlan, to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Morlan, Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Vice Chair Gebler and Froehle



Legislation Text

File #: 26-099, **Version:** 1

Human Rights Commission Meeting Date: February 25, 2026

To: Human Rights Commission

From: Claudia Garcia, Staff Liaison

2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration debrief

Action Requested:

Summary and debriefing on the MLK Jr. celebration

Summary Report:

The Martin Luther King Jr. celebration was on Monday, January 19, 2026, at the Northfield High School Auditorium and lower cafeteria.

MLK celebration

- Planning and logistics subcommittee
 - Schuyler Vogel
 - Adam Gebler
 - Jess Toft
 - _____
 - _____
- Budget: \$2,000
 - Venue: \$500
 - Speaker: \$500
 - Food/drink: \$600
 - Materials/Award plaque: \$400
- Logistics
 - Event date: January 19, 2026
 - Time: 6pm
 - Location: Northfield High School Auditorium
 - Speaker: Quannel Cooper
- Human Rights Award Nominations
 - Updates
 - Social media

- Flyers

Alternative Options:

NA

Financial Impacts:

NA

Tentative Timelines:

NA



Legislation Text

File #: 26-100, **Version:** 1

Human Rights Commission Meeting Date: February 25, 2026

To: Human Rights Commission

From: Claudia Garcia, Staff Liaison

2026 Subcommittees.

Action Requested:

Discussion and Plan for the year.

Summary Report:

Each subcommittee should choose a date once a month to meet and plan. The expectation is that one person will oversee reporting back to the staff liaison and create a report for the bi-monthly HRC meetings

The members of the commission are representatives of the City and should act in accordance with the City's policies and procedures. Members of the public cannot join the subcommittees on decision making but they are allowed to volunteer to help at events.

- **Housing** subcommittee
 - Participants
 - Veronica Gamino
 - Bruce Morlan
 - Kelli Podracky
 - Mae Berglund
 - _____

- **Immigration** subcommittee
 - Participants
 - Veronica Gamino
 - Bruce Morlan
 - Dean Kvestad
 - Xiomara Conde Arenas
 - _____

- **Economic Development** subcommittee
 - EDA meeting dates are the fourth Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Northfield City Hall Council Chambers
 - Participants
 - Bruce Morlan
 - _____
 - _____

- **2SLGBTQIA+** subcommittee
 - Event date: June 6th, 2026
 - Location: Northfield Central Park
 - Participants
 - Jessica Toft
 - Adam Gebler
 - Kelli Podracky
 - _____

- **Hispanic Heritage Celebration** subcommittee
 - Event date: September 12, 2026
 - Location: Northfield Central Park
 - Participants
 - Veronica Gamino
 - Schuler Vogel
 - _____

Alternative Options:

NA

Financial Impacts:

NA

Tentative Timelines:

NA



Legislation Text

File #: 26-101, **Version:** 1

Human Rights Commission Meeting Date: February 25, 2026

To: Human Rights Commission

From: Claudia Garcia, Staff Liaison

Staff Report.

Action Requested:

None.

Summary Report:

The following are some updates on activities to share with the Human Rights Commission:

- **MN Department of Human Rights**
 - One of the strongest civil rights laws in the country- the Minnesota Human Rights Act.
 - They are charged with upholding the civil rights of Minnesotans by enforcing the [Minnesota Human Rights Act <https://mn.gov/mdhr/yourrights/>](https://mn.gov/mdhr/yourrights/). Passed into law in 1967.
 - **Vision-** Create a world where everyone can lead lives full of dignity and joy.
 - **Mission-** Make Minnesota discrimination free.
 - **3 Primary Duties**
 - The Minnesota Human Rights Act tasks the Minnesota Department of Human Rights with three primary duties:
 - Investigate charges of discrimination
 - Issue Workforce and Equal Pay Certificates
 - Educate to reduce discrimination and disparate outcomes
- **Report Discrimination**
 - Do you believe you were discriminated against? Were you asked about your current or past pay while applying for a job?
 - Please complete the form below. That information goes directly to the investigation team.
 - If you do not have access to the internet to complete this form, leave us a message at **651-539-1100** or **1-833-454-0148**. Translation/interpretation services are available.
 - **Filling out this form does not mean you filed a charge of discrimination.** We will review the information you submitted and determine your experience is covered under the Minnesota Human Rights Act.
 - The [Civil Rights Investigation Process chart <https://mn.gov/mdhr/intake/what-happens-next/>](https://mn.gov/mdhr/intake/what-happens-next/) explains what happens

- next.
- You have within **one year** to report the alleged act of discrimination to the Minnesota Department of Human Rights.
- If you are the victim of a crime, including a hate crime, or fear for your safety, call 911 immediately.
- **News:**
 - Make sure to subscribe for email updates: [Minnesota Department of Human Rights <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNDHR/subscriber/new?email=>](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNDHR/subscriber/new?email=>)
- **Public Participation**
 - Northfield has many residents who want to stay connected, informed and participate. Northfield is a community with caring, passionate and thought-provoking residents. We want to hear from everyone.
 - [Public Participation | Northfield, MN - Official Website <https://northfieldmn.gov/1633/Public-Participation>](https://northfieldmn.gov/1633/Public-Participation)
- **Collaborating with different community partners and city departments:**
 - **City Administration**
 - City Hall will be closed on
 - Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
 - Juneteenth (June 19)
 - Independence Day (July 4)
 - Labor Day (First Monday in September)
 - For questions regarding elections, please contact:
 - Lynette Peterson, City Clerk
 - 507-645-3001
 - lynette.peterson@northfieldmn.gov <mailto:lynette.peterson@northfieldmn.gov>
 - [Northfieldmn.gov/Vote](https://northfieldmn.gov/Vote)
 - **Northfield Public Library**
 - The library is now selling:
 - Hiawathaland Bus tokens and
 - Processing US passports by appointment:
 - Home - Passport Services - MyNPL at Northfield Public Library <https://mynpl.org/passports>
 - Service hours:
 - Mon: 9am-noon; 1-4pm
 - Tues: 9am-noon; 1-4pm
 - Wed: 9am-noon; 1-4pm
 - Thurs: 1-4pm; 5-7pm
 - 1st & 3rd Sat: 9am-noon; 1-4pm

- **Engineering:**
 - Construction & Development Projects
 - Staying connected with live projects on “**Notify Me**” to stay up to date on live projects.
 - <https://www.northfieldmn.gov/291/Construction-Development->

- **Community Development**
 - Latino Economic Development Center (**LEDC**) will be collaborating with the City of Northfield and **MCCD** (Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers)

- **DMV**
 - Hours:
 - Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 7:30am- 4:15pm
 - Tuesday 7:30am-5:45pm
 - Friday 7:30am-11:45am
 - For more information, visit the website: Motor Vehicle | Northfield, MN - Official Website (northfieldmn.gov) <<https://www.northfieldmn.gov/258/Motor-Vehicle>>

- **Continuous efforts for accessibility and equity:**
 - Interpreter Etiquette- is a guide for those needing and [Meeting Participants | Northfield, MN - Official Website \(northfieldmn.gov\)](https://www.northfieldmn.gov/1506/Meeting-Participants) <<https://www.northfieldmn.gov/1506/Meeting-Participants>>

 - Cultural & Language Training
 - <https://www.northfieldmn.gov/1297/LanguageLine>
 - LanguageLine is a service that the City of Northfield invested in. Staff have 24/7 access to LanguageLine and access to more than 240 languages.

 - Providing communications in English and Spanish
 - Social media platforms
 - [\(1\) City of Northfield, Minnesota | Northfield MN | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/cityofnorthfield) <<https://www.facebook.com/cityofnorthfield>>
 - [City of Northfield \(@cityofnorthfield\) Instagram photos and videos](https://www.instagram.com/cityofnorthfield/?hl=en) <<https://www.instagram.com/cityofnorthfield/?hl=en>>
 - [\(3\) City of Northfield account | LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/city-of-northfield-account-7514b2278/) <<https://www.linkedin.com/in/city-of-northfield-account-7514b2278/>>

 - Accessibility links on City website
 - Translate feature

Alternative Options:

NA

Financial Impacts:

NA

Tentative Timelines:

NA