



City of Northfield

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

Meeting Minutes - Final Human Rights Commission

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

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: 4 - Chair Schuyler Vogel, Commissioner Jess Toft, Vice Chair Adam Gebler and Commissioner Xiomara Conde Arenas

Absent: 3 - Commissioner Veronica Gamino, Commissioner Bruce Morlan and Commissioner Kelli Podracky

Also present: Staff Liaison Claudia Garcia and Meeting Associate Kirsten Fjeld Zillmer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Vice Chair Adam Gebler, seconded by Commissioner Jess Toft, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Vice Chair Gebler and Commissioner Conde Arenas

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. [25-470](#) June 25, 2025 HRC Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Jess Toft, seconded by Vice Chair Adam Gebler, to approve the minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Vice Chair Gebler and Commissioner Conde Arenas

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

REGULAR AGENDA

2. [25-471](#) 2025 Subcommittees.

Commissioner Jess Toft reported that with the passage of the resolution to make the City of Northfield an LGBTQIA+ Sanctuary City, the LGBTQIA+ subcommittee members will be meeting with city businesses to discuss how they can support the resolution and convey they are a safe space.

Staff Liaison Claudia Garcia noted that the Hispanic Heritage Celebration will be held on September 13, 2025 and asked the committee members to volunteer at the HRC table.

3. [25-472](#) 2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration.

Chair Schuyler Vogel reported that the speaker and music have been arranged for MLK Celebration. Commissioners discussed possibility of reducing the amount spent on the Human Rights Award plaque and allowing more than one award to be given if the HRC decided it was merited. Staff Liaison Claudia Garcia reviewed the qualifications for the award.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Adam Gebler, seconded by Commissioner Jess Toft, to allow the HRC to award the Human Rights Award to multiple people or organizations. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Vice Chair Gebler and Commissioner Conde Arenas

Commissioner Jess Toft raised the possibility of changing the time of the MLK Celebration from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., in order to accommodate families. Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of making this change, stressing the benefit of attracting more young people to the event. Staff Liaison Claudia Garcia noted that the HRC would need to vote on changing the time.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Adam Gebler, seconded by Commissioner Jess Toft, to change the time of the January 19, 2026 MLK Celebration to 6:00 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Vice Chair Gebler and Commissioner Conde Arenas

STAFF UPDATES

4. [25-473](#) Staff Report.

Staff Liaison Claudia Garcia reported that the MN Human Rights Act is one of the strongest in the nation and provided information about how to file a report about a possible human rights violation with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights.

Staff Liaison Garcia congratulated the HRC on the passage of the resolution to make the City of Northfield an LGBTQIA+ Sanctuary City by the city council. She also noted that she received an inquiry from a city out of state asking about the process of accomplishing this.

She reported that the Latino Economic Center will be working with the City of Northfield and the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers. She also encouraged community members and organizations to submit video content to be aired on the Northfield Public Broadcast channels and to share event information on the Community Events Calendar.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Jess Toft, seconded by Vice Chair Adam Gebler, to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m. The motion carried by the following

vote:

Yes: 4 - Chair Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Vice Chair Gebler and Commissioner Conde Arenas