



# City of Northfield

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

## Meeting Minutes - Draft Human Rights Commission

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Wednesday, February 26, 2025

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

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

*Acting Chair Veronica Gamino called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.*

**Present:** 7 - Commissioner Veronica Gamino, Commissioner Bruce Morlan, Commissioner Schuyler Vogel, Commissioner Jess Toft, Commissioner Kelli Podracky, Commissioner Adam Gebler and Commissioner Rihanna Gonzalez

**Absent:** 1 - Commissioner Emy Farley

*Also present: Spanish Translator Claudia Garcia, Commissioner Hannah Pape, Commissioner Alec Vatter, Commissioner Ben Parish, and Meeting Associate Kirsten Fjeld Zillmer.*

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. [24-691](#) October 23, 2024 HRC Meeting Minutes

**A motion was made by Commissioner Bruce Morlan, seconded by Commissioner Schuyler Vogel, to approve the minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 7 - Commissioner Gamino, Commissioner Morlan, Commissioner Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Commissioner Podracky, Commissioner Gebler and Commissioner Gonzalez

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**A motion was made by Commissioner Rihanna Gonzalez, seconded by Commissioner Bruce Morlan, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 7 - Commissioner Gamino, Commissioner Morlan, Commissioner Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Commissioner Podracky, Commissioner Gebler and Commissioner Gonzalez

### OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

*Wendell Refior of 1619 Independence Drive, representing the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northfield, spoke about the congregation's concerns about the treatment of transgendered and gay residents and the need for protection of undocumented residents from ICE.*

### REGULAR AGENDA

2. [25-103](#) 2025 Board and Commission Onboarding and Refresher.

*Acting Chair Veronica Gamino confirmed that returning and new commissioners had reviewed the 2025 Onboarding and Refresher videos and documents.*

3. [25-104](#) Election of Human Rights Commission Officers of Chair and Vice-Chair.

*Acting Chair Veronica Gamino opened the nomination for chair. Commissioner Schuyler Vogel indicated he would be willing to serve as chair.*

**Acting Chair Gamino called for a vote to elect Commissioner Vogel as chair.  
Commissioner Vogel was elected chair by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 7 - Commissioner Gamino, Commissioner Morlan, Commissioner Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Commissioner Podracky, Commissioner Gebler and Commissioner Gonzalez

*Chair Schuyler Vogel opened nominations for vice chair. Commissioner Bruce Morlan nominated Commissioner Adam Gebler and Commissioner Gebler indicated he would be willing to serve.*

**Chair Vogel called for a vote to elect Commissioner Gebler as vice chair.  
Commissioner Gebler was elected vice chair by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 7 - Commissioner Gamino, Commissioner Morlan, Commissioner Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Commissioner Podracky, Commissioner Gebler and Commissioner Gonzalez

4. [25-105](#) 2025 Subcommittees.

*Chair Schuyler Vogel discussed the need for subcommittees to show up for events and, even more importantly, focus on community engagement and provide support for marginalized voices. Commissioners discussed the needs and focus of each subcommittee.*

*Spanish Translator Claudia Garcia emphasized that no more than three voting board members can serve on any one subcommittee and the need to start planning for Pride in the Park.*

*Discussion was held about the particular need to address the concerns of the LGBTQ+ community, expanding the focus of the Pride in the Park Subcommittee to address those issues, and renaming the Pride in the Park Subcommittee to reflect this wider agenda.*

*Commissioners also discussed expanding the focus of the Hispanic Heritage Subcommittee to address the wider needs, concerns, and support of the Hispanic community.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Adam Gebler, seconded by Veronica Gamino, to rename the Pride in Park Subcommittee to the LGBTQ Support Subcommittee and the Hispanic Heritage Subcommittee to the Hispanic Support Subcommittee.**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Gebler, seconded by Commissioner Gamino, to amend the motion to change the rename to the LGBTQ+ Support Subcommittee and to keep the Hispanic Heritage Subcommittee as is.**

*Commissioners discussed the best name for the subcommittee.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Gebler, seconded by Commissioner Gamino, to amend the motion to change the rename to LGBT+ Support Subcommittee. The amended motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 7 - Commissioner Gamino, Commissioner Morlan, Commissioner Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Commissioner Podracky, Commissioner Gebler and Commissioner Gonzalez

*Commissioners discussed leaving the name of the Hispanic Heritage Subcommittee as is and establishing a new subcommittee to address the needs of all immigrant groups.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Gebler, seconded by Commissioner Gamino, to establish an Immigration Subcommittee. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 7 - Commissioner Gamino, Commissioner Morlan, Commissioner Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Commissioner Podracky, Commissioner Gebler and Commissioner Gonzalez

*Commissioners discussed tabling the Economic Subcommittee until the next meeting.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Morlan, seconded by Commissioner Gebler, to table the Economic Development Subcommittee. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 7 - Commissioner Gamino, Commissioner Morlan, Commissioner Vogel, Commissioner Toft, Commissioner Podracky, Commissioner Gebler and Commissioner Gonzalez

## STAFF UPDATES

### 5. [25-106](#) Staff Report.

*Spanish Translator Claudia Garcia reviewed city services, highlighting the Northfield Strategic Planning Community Survey and informing commissioners about a mandatory Boards and Commission Training to be held on Tuesday, October 28, 2025.*

## BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

*Chair Vogel asked that all subcommittees meet and be ready to report back by the next meeting on April 28, 2025.*

## ADJOURNMENT

**A motion was made by Commissioner Adam Gebler, seconded by Commissioner Jess Toft, to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m.**