



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 19-908, **Version:** 1

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**Human Rights Commission Meeting Date:** June 13, 2019

**To:** Human Rights Commission

**From:** Beth Kallestad, Program Coordinator

Review of Quorum and Voting Members.

**Action Requested:**

The Northfield Human Rights Commission reviews bylaws to verify quorum and considers possible changes regarding voting members.

**Summary Report:**

Quorum - As of May 2019 there are 13 voting members of the HRC (9 regular, 4 advisory) and 4 youth members who have 1 vote for a total of 14 voting members. The question was raised at the May 2019 meeting with regard to quorum given addition of advisory members.

Per City Code:

**Sec. 2-337. - Members.**

(a)

The human rights commission shall consist of up to 14 [https://library.municode.com/mn/northfield/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=PTIINOCO\\_CH14BU](https://library.municode.com/mn/northfield/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIINOCO_CH14BU) voting members to be appointed by the mayor by and with the advice and consent of the council. In addition to the nine regular commission members, there shall be one youth voting member and up to three youth ex-officio non-voting members on the commission. In addition, annually the mayor may appoint with the advice and consent of the council up to four additional voting or non voting advisory members. The voting or non voting designation shall be at the discretion of the mayor. These voting or non voting advisory members shall have a term of one year and shall have substantial education or training in human rights, or have some other unique perspectives or qualifications for the purpose of dealing with discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or familial status under the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

HRC Bylaws (as of March 2018) define a quorum as a **simple majority of voting members**. Currently that would mean 8 members (14/2+1) must be present for a quorum to be reached and a meeting to be held and votes taken. The definition of quorum cannot vary from meeting from meeting. Standard procedure across boards and commissions is for quorum to equal simple majority of voting members. As advisory members are added they have the option to choose voting or non-voting and should consider availability with regard to meeting attendance when making that decision.

Additionally, HRC bylaws have not been updated since the City Code changed to allow for advisory members. It should be updated to reflect advisory member language.

Youth Members - The question was raised regarding asking Council if all youth members across Boards and Commissions could each be given a vote. At this time there are 4 youth members on the HRC. If all of these youth were added as voting members then the total number of voting members would be 17. In order to achieve quorum, there would need to be 9 voting members present for the meeting to be held and voting to occur.

City Administrator Martig is going to reach out to Meleah Follen, Youth Engagement Director with Northfield Healthy Community Initiative (HCI) who leads the Youth on Boards program and assisted on the initial development of the program including voting rights. There are unique rules and laws related to each City board and there may be other reasons the voting was established as it was.

**Alternative Options:**

NA

**Financial Impacts:**

NA

**Tentative Timelines:**

NA