

Agenda Item for Robbinsdale Chamber Luncheon – May 20, 2025
Presented by the Human Rights Commission

Overview:

The Robbinsdale Human Rights Commission (HRC) has been invited to present at the Chamber of Commerce luncheon on Tuesday, May 20th at 12:00 PM at Wicked Wort Brewing. The presentation will be an opportunity to introduce the HRC's mission and share a snapshot of upcoming community initiatives.

Goals for the Luncheon:

- Strengthen connections between the HRC and the Robbinsdale business community.
- Emphasize the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in local business culture.
- Highlight opportunities for collaboration around community events and education.

Support Needed:

- Attendance: One or more HRC members to join Courtney at the luncheon.
- Content: Feedback on the proposed newsletter write-up (see draft below) and final approval from the HRC.
- Outreach: Optional discussion around creating future touchpoints between the Chamber and HRC.

DRAFT Newsletter Blurb (Approx. 150 words):

The Robbinsdale Human Rights Commission is honored to speak at the May 20th Chamber Luncheon. We'll be sharing more about the Commission's mission to promote equity, inclusion, and accessibility throughout Robbinsdale, and how local businesses play a vital role in fostering a welcoming community for all. From neighborhood engagement to youth-focused initiatives, we're working to support meaningful change and uplift the diverse voices that make our city strong. We look forward to connecting with Chamber members to explore how DEI practices can strengthen local business culture and build a brighter future for Robbinsdale together.

MINUTES

ROLL CALL

Present: Lee, Ralston-Aoki, Nailon, Kirkeeng, Denise Beck (guest), Fox
Absent: Beahen, Smith
Staff: Joanna Brookes, Human Resources Manager

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion CK, second PN, approved

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Motion to approve: KF; second, RF, motion carried

CHAIR REPORT

- April is Earth Day/Earth Month, Arab-American Heritage Month, National Parks Week, Independent Bookstore Day, Autism Awareness Day, Cesar Chavez Day.
- The MultiCultural Advisory Committee (MAC) is hosting Police & Fire Appreciation Dinner on April 26, time and location tbd.
- Remember things are created out of chaos.
- Movie night event (Girl Rising) had decent turnout, inspiring movie. Exploring alternative venues for future events.

OLD BUSINESS

A. RPHC Work and Community Engagement

JRA: RPHC Subcommittee meeting set for 6:30 on Monday April 7th, Sanborn Park building. Community Engagement: Pastor Dan is interested in Restorative Justice/Beloved Community work.

Met with Jason Greenberg, who can connect HRC with Beach South as another site. Suggest that commissioners meet with their council members to engage them about HRC work.

Women's History Month: Check out display cases in Hennepin County Government Center basement as a possible site for the display.

Motion to explore possibility of featuring display in Hennepin County Government Center: CK, second PN.
Motion carried.

RF: Talking with OutFront MN about presenting at an Obergefell event to share their post-inauguration community guide. Golden Valley DEI commission may also participate. Reached out to Karen Thompson from the Kowalski Thompson case to discuss participation. RF will look into neighboring cities as well.

Motion to establish subcommittee for Obergefell Event: KL, second JRA. **Motion carried.**

JRA: Does not share memory or understanding of events as characterized in the recent Birdtown Pride post.

B. HRC Presentation to Council in April

Proposed agenda:

Introduce Pro-community resolution

Update on Obergefell event

Update on Community Outreach

Discuss idea of one-day dump event/waste disposal issues

Timely communication with council

Status of Park renaming policy

Other topics?

C. Pro-Community Resolution

Review of draft of the pro-community resolution prior to introducing at City Council work session Weds April 8 at 7 pm.

Motion to bring draft to work session and have JRA draft cover memo: PN, second RF. **Motion carried.**

D. Developing a communications plan for human rights related information and HRC activities

Table for next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Adopt-a-Park 2025

Motion to take a year off Adopt-a-Park: PN. Second, CK. **Motion carried.**

B. Impact of Waste Disposal Fees on Residents

KF will research possibility of one day dump event to bring to work session.

C. New Applicant for Commissioner

Two applicants didn't attend tonight, JB will follow up.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

KF: 7 staff cut at Noble. Supporting teachers that have been displaced or cut.

PN: Met with Mike Frieberg to discuss health care records

CK: Happy with turnout at Women's History Month reception. Lions will have booth at Wicked Wort on April 5th from 11-5 for Spring Saturday to support local vendors.

JB: Jury duty last week.

RF: Suggests 10:30 morning of 4/12 for subcommittee meeting. JB will book Sanborn building.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

9:04 PM

MINUTES

ROLL CALL

Present: Julie Ralston Aoki, Patrick Nailon, Kristyn Lee, and Courtney Kirkeeng

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion and planning of the following community outreach events:

- Reaching out to residents of apartment buildings
- Additional movie nights

Apartment building outreach:

1. Robbins Landing: Phillip Gray has been asking about setting up a next meeting.
2. HRC would like to bring a speaker to talk about disability rights, as requested by residents. Speaker ideas: Lee to reach out to US Attorney Justin Page; Homeline assistance, including assistance with tenant organizing; Kirkeeng has contact and will reach out to her to ask for a lead.
3. At last meeting, Nailon talked with Gray and a resident about a Cinco de Mayo event with salsa, could combine with a “heroes” celebration to recognize how the residents helped each other during the fire.
4. Possible dates: May 5, May 8, May 29 (aiming for 5:30 PM)
5. Parker Station Flats: Kirkeeng previously shared that she talked with building manager about doing an event there. She will follow up to schedule. Possible dates and HRC member availability:
 1. May 13, Lee, Nailon, Ralston Aoki, Kirkeeng
 2. May 21, Nailon, Kirkeeng, Ralston Aoki
 3. June 5, Kirkeeng, Nailon

Additional movie nights with Gray/the MAC and Elim Lutheran Church:

1. No capacity for April so propose we aim for May—focus on Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.
2. June: focus on transgender community; Nailon suggested a documentary NAME; mentioned that his daughter knows one of the youth featured
3. If possible, would like to try to highlight local filmmakers

B. Discuss and initiate planning of the "Beloved Community" engagement idea

Ralston Aoki working with Gray to set up a brainstorming meeting with Dan Doerrer (Elim) and contact at St. Joan's to discuss ideas. Ralston Aoki to get more info from Gray about the restorative justice group he mentioned working with—would like to learn more about them and what their role could be. Kirkeeng would like to do research too.

C. Discussion of communications plan proposal

Discussed ideas and challenges related to more timely communications to public about HRC activities and issues. Issues: lag in posting minutes, and there are gaps in the archived minutes with some months missing; would like to have the new strategic plan posted. Ralston Aoki to reach out to Rachel Leen (communications

person for City) about these Issues.

Leen had previously said that HRC could create a page for the Birdtown Brief. Discussed aiming for once a month—need to pick the week. Plan to start in June. Nailon will create a template for the page. Ralston Aoki to connect Nailon with Leen so he knows word limits, etc. Each piece must be drafted at least 2 months in advance to allow time for HRC to review and approve.

Initial content/topic ideas to propose:

- June: Obergefell case, LGBTQ+ rights (Ralston Aoki and Fox?); and movie night event
- July – Immigration rights (Lee)
- Aug—What is “DEI” and why it matters (Nailon and Ralston Aoki)

Other content/topics:

- Community spotlight
- Recap HRC events – to amplify interest in HRC activities
- Voting rights
- Religious freedom
- Freedom of speech
- Access to reproductive healthcare
- Mental health awareness
- Disability rights
- Trans awareness
- American Indian rights
- Demographics of Robbinsdale—what it is and how it changed over the years
- History of curfew sirens
- Attitudes towards health workers
- Dealing with discrimination
- How does local government work
- Transportation resources
- Local food shelf resources

OTHER BUSINESS

Kirkeeng talked with Chambers of Commerce member about HRC members coming to a Chambers lunch to talk about DEI and value of DEI—Kirkeeng to follow up and get dates

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned 8:30 PM.

MINUTES

ROLL CALL

Present: Ralston Aoki, Fox, Kirkeeng.

Guests: Aris Nason, Andrew Alberth, Josh Haman, Patty Bresser, Karen Thompson, Anja Wuolu

- A. Introduction of attending Commissioners of the Robbinsdale Human Rights Commission, the public, and guests.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. 3. Discussion of the possibility of sponsoring a community event regarding the Obergefell decision and the recent attempts to have the Supreme Court decision overturned.

Chair Ralston Aoki designated Commissioner Fox as the Chair pro-tem for the meeting. Fox began the discussion by posing the question of whether there was a need or desire for an event to discuss the current state of lgbtq+ rights, and would the public attend. The consensus in the groups is that there is a sense of uncertainty, and a desire for support within the lgbtq+ community to maintain human rights that have been fought for so long and hard. Thompson added that advocating for the rights of any group assists all those who have been discriminated against.

Nason stated that the initial emphasis needs to be on securing a venue and a date. Late July was considered the first choice. Commissioners and guests agreed to research possible venues for available dates, capacity and other considerations. There was agreement that when a venue and date are secured, at that point the details of the event format, the presenters, and a moderator could be finalized.

Fox stated that the Robbinsdale Human Rights Commission is a zero budget Commission, but in the past the Commission has received funds towards a small honorarium for event speakers. Nason said OutFront MN may have funds available for refreshments.

The Commissioners and guests agreed to continue working on planning the Obergefell event, and will meet again in on May 3, 2025 at 10:30 am.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT