

Brookings Human Rights Commission Minutes

Tuesday, 20 January 2026, 5:30pm

Brookings City/County Government Center and Zoom

Attendance:

	Commissioners	Liaisons and Staff
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keely Eagleshield, Chair ● Dianne Nagy, Past Chair ● Carla Gatzke, Recorder ● Mark Aberle ● Kamerra Brown ● Elena Friedman, SDSU ● Sydnie Peters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Casey Bell, Staff ● Erin Lavender-Stott – LGBTQ Liaison ● Midge Christensen, Police Dept Liaison ● Lawrence Novotny, CLEAR Partners ● Matilda Alex, SA Diversity ●
Absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teri Johnson, School District ● Marjoanne Collins, SDSU

Quorum was achieved.

Agenda: Motion duly made and seconded to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously

Minutes: Motion duly made and seconded to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

No public comment.

New Business

- Legislative Issues: Lawrence reported on bills he’s tracking. HR 7001 has already passed regarding acknowledgement of the 250th birthday of the United States. There were amendments changing the description of people involved in the founding, including the descriptions of Native Americans, which resulted in Democrats voting against.
- From Dianne – a person at the New Year’s Eve party requested that HRC do some kind of campaign regarding ICE activities. The Commission discussed this, and concurred to move forward with making Know Your Rights signs available:
 - Concurred on sign design and the ACLU site for the QR code.
 - Discussed printing costs. For 2026, our current budget shows \$3,000 for events and \$1,500 for merchandise plus \$20,000 for a consultant to help us develop a DEI action plan. And \$17,385 revenue from carryover, City Council, and donations. We believe we have sufficient merchandise and could re-allocate that \$1,500 to signs.
 - Sydnie made a motion to approve the Education committee to spend up to \$1,500 on Know Your Rights signs, seconded by Mark. Motion passed unanimously.



Old Business

- HRC membership: Still 3 open positions. Will start advertising soon.
- Budget: reviewed in new business
- New Year's Eve party: HRC had a table. The Commission asked Casey to get feedback on usage from the transportation vendor which the HRC funded. The Multicultural Center appreciated our partnership. An attendees asked HRC to present at the Optimists Club; Dianne offered to do that.

Liaison Reports

- Police Department: Midge reported that Chief Drake has been appointed interim chief at University PD, which has prompted a temporary rearrangement of responsibilities in the leadership team. City of Brookings continues to consider sites for a new PD building. PD provided coverage for the recent Brookings Indivisible vigil. The recent Prairie Thunder operation had 22 highway patrol officers; PD was not involved. HRC requested contact info at Highway Patrol to learn more about the impact of Prairie Thunder in Brookings.
- SDSU: Matilda reported on the MLK Parade. Club 71 was full, including all the athletic teams and 100+ community members. The Student Association is reallocating the General Activity Fee to increase funding for student organizations by \$1.83 per credit hour. SA is also sponsoring a Tunnel of Awareness and the Soul Food Luncheon in Feb; HRC will advertise on social media.
- Dianne shared a request from a community member for HRC to support an historical marker for the building that was a hotel/motel in the "Green Book". Dianne referred them to the Historic Preservation committee.
- LGBTQ+: Erin reported the Pride committee is planning a GSA event on Saturday at the Cottonwood backroom, and then will start planning for the Pride event on June 27.

Task Forces

- Peak: no commission members actively working this. The Commission to consider next steps next month.
- DEI initiative from the City's Economic Development Plan: No update.

Working Groups

- Advocacy: Legislative session update previously shared.
- Education: Meeting tomorrow. Bystander to Upstander training is 6pm on 19 May at the City Council. HRC suggested having food available and advertising that.
- Outreach: Mark reported on meeting today. Upcoming events that Outreach wants to amplify: Black History Month, Pride, Hispanic Heritage, Indigenous Peoples Festival, and MLK. Will connect with Michaela at the library to help with their Black History Month activities.
- Communication: Sydnie reported on the working groups process and recent posts. And their experiments with different platforms in an effort to connect with different age groups. See their calendar in our shared folder.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.