

## Brookings Human Rights Commission Minutes

**Tuesday, 25 October 2025, 5:30pm**

Brookings City/County Government Center and Zoom

Attendance:

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

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.

Public comments – None

**New Business**

- City Manager Report: has been for staff and will now start to be for HRC as well; City Liaison will forward to HRC Liaisons
- Park and Rec: the National Parks and Recreation body is offering a community for up to \$6000 (\$2000 per event - max of 3 events) grants if communities offer events around racial healings, by 9 Feb 2026. City P&R director is encouraging the P&R, HRC, and Multicultural Center to try something and apply for a grant. The Commission discussed different ideas for collaborative events. The discussion was that our contribution should be something that furthered one of HRC’s purposes like education and also fulfilled the purpose of the grant. Diane, Keely and Mark volunteered a join a small planning group, with Sydnie as backup.

**Old Business**

- City Council Retreat: HRC presented our activities, and the Council was very supportive. They requested a Bystander to Upstander for the Council.
- HRC membership: Sydnie has joined HRC. We have two vacancies and one candidate.
- Budget: Casey reported that we’ve spent \$5,108 this year and have \$12,284 remaining. The Commission anticipates hiring a consulting service to help complete the DEI Action Plan per the [City’s Economic Development Master Plan](#) and for replacement Pride flags.

- Working Groups: The Commission previously reviewed a draft proposal for 4 Working Groups: Advocacy, Education, Outreach, Communication. The Commission discussed and updated the draft. Motion by Carla and seconded by Mark to approve the Working Groups. The Commission approved the groups. A poll will be sent to volunteer for one or more; Commissioners will be expected to serve on at least one group.
- Hate crimes ordinances: Midge reported on research in SD state law and Brookings City ordinances for hate crimes, including the protected groups and the types of activities. Midge also reported on add'l ordinance protections allowed by the state, and that ordinance penalty is fines only. The Commission discussed advocacy for city ordinance and/or state law protections for LGBTQ+ groups, and supported asking the Advocacy Working Group to begin this initiative.
- Awards: Lawrence shared the history of the HRC and other Commission awards. We would like a news release for the HRC Butler award recipient prior to the Mayor's Awards event, which would be published by the City's public information office. The Commission discussed asking one of the Working Groups to review the award process and make a recommendation to continue/change the process, in advance of next year's process.

#### Liaisons

- Police department: Midge reported that the new deputy chief would like to come to HRC at a future meeting to meet the group. The department has been busy with Hobo Day and other activities happening in Brookings. The department is nearing full staffing and looking ahead to its initiatives.
- School district: Casey reported that Michele is stepping down as a liaison and school board member Teri Johnson is our new liaison.
- SDSU: Marj reported that the President's office sent a memo from the Board of Regents for guidelines on civil discourse when identifying with the university. Marj also reported on several activities happening on campus.
- CLEAR: Lawrence reported that a meeting is scheduled with the Sheriff's department on involvement with ICE.
- SDSU SA: Matilda shared about several student events planned in support of diversity and inclusion, and the SA focused on ensuring that university fees are spent within the guidelines.
- LGBTQ+: Erin reported on Pride events that are upcoming or in planning. And on activities in support of the MEI scorecard.

#### Task Forces

- No reports

#### Working Groups

- Africans in the Diaspora: Keely reported on the MLK task force and activities to plan the activities HRC might offer, including whether/how to offer the essay and poster contests. Marj offered the SDSU Multicultural Center's services to review submissions.

- LGBTQ Awareness: no further updates.
- Indigenous People: Keely reported on upcoming activities, including the Nov 12 Indigenous People's event.
- Training: Marc reported on the Bystander to Upstander training on Thursday 25 September; there were 25+ attendees and the event went long due to attendee engagement. We have received at least one request to offer the training again.
- Social Media/Communication – no updates.
- Inclusivity: no updates
- Complaint Process: Casey reported that one report was received, and Casey supported them through the appropriate process.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.