

Brookings Human Rights Commission Minutes

Tuesday, 21 April 2026, 5:30pm

Brookings City/County Government Center and Zoom

Attendance:

	Commissioners	Liaisons and Staff	
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dianne Nagy, Past Chair• Mark Aberle, Vice Chair• Elena Friedman, SDSU• Logan Hoffman• Keely Eagleshield, Chair• Shola Aromona• 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• Marjoanne Collins, SDSU• Matilda Alex, previous SA Diversity• Brenda Khatthanam, new SA Diversity	
Absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carla Gatzke, Recorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teri Johnson, School District	

Quorum was achieved. The Commission began the meeting with introductions of the new Commissioners and new SA Diversity Liaison.

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

- May Meeting Time: The Commission agreed to begin the May 19th meeting at 5pm and end at 6pm to account for the Bystander to Upstander training.
- Creating Narratives Together: HRC partnered with Jacks Stand Together to host a Crafting Narratives Together, a conversation about how we can co-create narratives that are unifying, enabling, and empowering. The event will take place on Tuesday April 28th from 6pm - 7:30pm in the Lewis Room - Student Union. The Commission discussed ways to promote the event including sharing a Facebook post and creating an email distribution list.

Old Business

- The Backroads Tour: A representative of this event will attend the May Commission meeting to share more details with the group.
- Safe Zone Training: Waiting on response from Margo's Place.
- PEAK: The School is unable to support this campaign at this time due to competing priorities (focused on school boundaries). Without current support by the district, the HRC is considering sunsetting this initiative.

- Know Your Rights: Signs are available to the public.
- HRC membership: The HRC welcomed two new Commissioners: Shola and Logan. Elena announced she will not renew her appointment. The Commission thanks Elena for all her work and contributions to the group. Two vacancies remain: County appointment and Student Representative.
- HRC's Response to Video: Chief Drake spoke with students and faculty at SDSU and explained this was an ongoing investigation and explained the PD's process for investigating. The Commission had a fruitful discussion on next steps including proactive vs reactive approaches, more training/education, considering pledges from business owners, and hanging informational posters at businesses. The group also discussed the Creating Narratives Together event at SDSU.
- Budget: Nothing new to report. The Commission has enough funds to support their upcoming initiatives.

Liaison Reports

- Police Department: Midge reported on Chief Drake's presentation at SDSU, the peaceful No Kings demonstration, and PD presence at the Juneteenth event.
- Brookings School District: No report
- SDSU: Marj reported on Chief Drake's presentation, an upcoming Jacks Stand Together event - Unity Walk on April 29th @6pm, and finding commencement volunteers.
- SDSU SA: Matilda reported Chief Drake's presentation, election of new president - Brenda ?, passed resolution. The resolution recommends any 18+ events at SDSU be hosted at the Performing Arts Center. Brenda will be taking over Matilda's position on the HRC. The Commission thanks Matilda for her contributions and participation with the group.
- LGBTQ+: Pride has started planning for the Pride event on June 27 from 11am - 3pm. The planning committee requested \$800 from the HRC which was approved by the Commission. The Commission discussed challenges in previous years with hanging Pride Flags downtown - specifically near Rays Corner. The Pride Committee will discuss how they would like to address this challenge and may consider resending a letter to the business owner or police involvement.

Task Forces

- DEI initiative from the City's Economic Development Plan: No update.

Working Groups

- Advocacy: Lawrence reported the City Attorney reviewed HB 1181 (defines woman and man) and concluded it would not affect the discrimination ordinance.
- Education: Bystander to Upstander training is 6pm on 19 May at the City Council.
- Outreach: Mark reported there was low attendance at the Race Amity event. He also reported progress made on the upcoming Juneteenth event.
- Communication: Sydnie reported the group is considering creating a newsletter. The Commission agreed a distribution list would be helpful to share information.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.