

Brookings Human Rights Commission Minutes

Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 5:30pm

Brookings City/County Government Center and Zoom

Attendance:

	Commissioners	Liaisons	
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dianne Nagy, Chair• Denia Warne• Keely Eagleshield• Carla Gatzke, Recorder• Nick McNab• Rhiannon Nedland•	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Casey Bell, Staff• Lawrence Novotny, CLEAR Partners• Chief, Police Department• Marjoanne Collins, SDSU•	
Absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Denia Warne• Nieema Thasing• Behnoosh Amandi, County rep, Vice Chair•	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Michele Vande Weerd, School District• Oscar Garcia, SA Diversity•	

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

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

Public comment:

- Sandra McNeese, resident – expressed concern criminalization of women who have pregnancy loss. She shared about the “Grace Act” in Austin, TX, which addresses investigations based on citizen complaints and use of city funds for investigations. She also talked about a training called Confronting Pregnancy Criminalization. Both documents will be shared with HRC.
- Lawrence Novotny – shared about concerns from two people at a Multicultural Center meeting about their coworkers asking them about their immigration status. He had previously shared this incident with the Complaint Working Group and Denia had communicated these concerns with the employer’s HR.

New Business

- City Council study of immigration concerns: Diane was approached by City Manager about an HRC representative joining a meeting with City Council to talk about immigration concerns in the community. Rhianna volunteered to join the meeting, 18 February 2025.
- HRC Ordinance: Casey presented the updated ordinance from the Complaint Working Group. The updates are focused on removing investigation obligations and streamlining language. Committee members made suggestions for changes to the language. The updated ordinance has been sent to all members. The Working Group requested that suggestions be clarified as edits in the updated ordinance and forwarded to Casey in the next two weeks. The Working Group will further update the ordinance for consideration at the March HRC meeting.
- Vice Chair: Behnoosh has resigned from the HRC. Election for Vice-Chair will be held at the March HRC meeting. HRC members are asked to self-nominate for the position.

- LGBTQ+ liaison: The City had completed a search. Casey, Diane, and Lawrence (former LGBTQ liaison) interviewed candidate Erin Lavender-Stott and recommend approval. Motion by Carla and seconded by Denia to recommend Erin for City Council approval. Motion passed unanimously.
- MLK street sign: The sign for the newly named Martin Luther King, Jr Street in Pioneer Park will be installed at 5pm Tuesday 25 February. Dianne encouraged HRC to foster community awareness by publicizing the installation of the street sign. Keely volunteered to draft a communications and share with City Communications and with HRC members to share through our networks. Casey volunteered to add the event to the Visit Brookings community calendar.

Old Business

- Budget – Diversity Stickers for Laptops: HRC had previously supported maintaining an inventory of diversity stickers and signs. We need to replenish our inventory of laptop stickers and Casey has received a quote of \$480 for 1500 ‘Diversity Is What Makes Brookings Great’ stickers. Motion made by Carla and seconded by Denia to approve the purchase. Motion passed unanimously.

Liaison

- Brookings Police Department: Chief Drake had nothing to report and invited questions. The Commission engaged him in discussion.
- SDSU: Marj shared about activities at SDSU, including the Black Student Association’s activities during Black History Month.
- CLEAR: Lawrence report on CLEAR’s meeting with the Sheriff and Police Chief on deportation concerns. CLEAR recommended that the city hold an informational meeting to alleviate citizens fears on deportation.

Task Forces

- Legislation: Lawrence updated HRC on legislation progress and outcomes at the current session in Pierre. HRC has authorized the subcommittee to publicly advocate on behalf of HRC. Others in attendance informed HRC about other bills to follow.
- Social Media / Communications – Keely has volunteered for continue this work.
- LGBTQ Awareness: Lawrence reported that Brookings Pride celebration has been set for Saturday 21 June in Pioneer Park.
- Training: Rhiannon reported on a community training on human trafficking to be scheduled in late March.
- Africans in the Diaspora: Keely reported briefly.
- Indigenous Peoples: Keely reported on upcoming activities, and on development of a letter to the Summer Arts Festival regarding guidelines for booths selling products or using language related to indigenous peoples.

The meeting adjourned at 7pm.