

**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 14, 2025**

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**DATE:** Tuesday, October 14, 2025

**TIME:** 4:30 PM

**LOCATION:** Multicultural Family Center, 1157 Central Avenue, Dubuque, IA 52001

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 pm.

**Commissioners Present:** Jake Kurczek, Michaela Freiburger, Traci Phillipson, Nikki Nutter, David Heiar

**Commissioners Excused:** Rick Baumhover, Matthew Zanger,

**Commissioners Absent:** Luzelena Bravo, DeLano Cain Watson

**Staff Present:** Ann Marie Jannette, Human Rights Specialist; Jason Lehman, Interim Chief of Human Rights

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes as corrected from the September 9, 2025, meeting. Motioned by Heiar, seconded by Freiburger, all in favor.

Minutes received and filed from the September 16, 2025, subcommittee meeting regarding the update of the Human Rights Commission Handbook.

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted from the September 16, 2025, special commission meeting. Motioned by Heiar, seconded by Phillipson, all in favor.

**Public Input**

No members of the public were in attendance.

**Reports**

**Caseload Report**

- Complaints filed – number of complaints that were signed during the month
  - September amount: 0
- Active investigations – investigations that are currently active but in various stages (active, administrative review, initiated, on hold, etc.)
  - September amount: 15
- Incidents in mediation – complaints currently in mediation
  - September amount: 0
- Incidents in full hearing – complaints in full hearing process
  - September amount: 0

- Inquiries – calls/inquiries that don't result in an official complaint being filed (including outreach events)
  - September amount: 11
- Complaints closed during the month – signed complaints that were closed during the month (doesn't include inquiries or complaints that were never filed)
  - September amount: 0
- Total inquiries and complaints FY26 – signed complaints filed in FY26
  - September amount: 32

## **Director's Report**

Aitken-Shadle resigned her position as Chief of Human Rights. Jason Lehman will be the Interim Chief of Human Rights until a new Chief can be hired. Lehman introduced himself.

Jannette reported on the IAOHRA conference she attended in Anchorage last week. She also reported that the department was facilitating Belonging training for new staff. She submitted the budget for FY27 and goal setting was completed.

Jannette provided an update on the Dubuque Community Support and Empowerment Grant which will be open for applications in January 2026. It was suggested that the language of the grant be amended to allow for grants "up to" \$5,000 which would allow for more than two recipients. Lehman is to review and update the grant language.

Jannette reported on recent outreach events including the Senior Expo, BBQ in DBQ, Latinx Fiesta, and the upcoming Landlord Association conference. Commissioners were invited to attend the Cedar Falls Human Rights Commission's Fall Summit on October 24.

Lehman reported the discrimination cases are still being worked on by a third party contractor out of the City Attorney's office.

## **Chairperson's Report**

Nothing to report.

## **Old Business:**

The subcommittee updating the binder/handbook is still in progress.

Kurczek reminded the commission to look for partnerships that will fulfill the commission goals and planning.

## **New Business:**

Update and input on the Chief of Human Rights job description – the previous job description was provided. The City Attorney's office is in the process of updating it to remove language associated with the HF856 bill. Commissioners were asked to review the job description and provide any feedback to Jannette by Thursday, October 16.

Review of Improvement Package and Policy Book - Commissioners were asked to review the these documents and provide any feedback to Jannette by Thursday, October 16.

Office of Human Rights Mission Statement - Commissioners were asked to review the options and provide any feedback to Jannette by Thursday, October 16.

Review of legislative priorities recommendations – A motion to approve the recommendations was made by Heiar and seconded by Freiburger, all in favor

Letter of gratitude to previous Chief of Human Rights – The letter was presented to the commission. A motion to approve was made by Heiar and seconded by Phillipson, all in favor. Jannette to deliver the letter to Gisella Aitken-Shadle.

### **Upcoming Outreach Events**

None

### **Upcoming Cultural Events**

None.

### **Reflections and Updates**

None.

### **Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn by Nutter, seconded by Freiburger. All in favor. The meeting ended at 4:59 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 11, 2025, at 4:30 p.m., at the Multicultural Family Center.

Minutes approved as submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Minutes approved as corrected:  \_\_\_\_\_