



Royal Oak

Agenda

Royal Oak Human Rights Commission Meeting

Monday, June 3, 2024, 6:30 p.m.

City Hall, Room 122

203 S. Troy Street

Royal Oak, Michigan 48067

Anyone planning to attend the meeting who has need of special assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is asked to contact the city clerk's office at 248-246-3050 at least two (2) business days prior to the meeting.

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Royal Oak

Minutes

Royal Oak Human Rights Commission Meeting

**May 6, 2024, 6:30 p.m.
City Hall, Room 122
203 S. Troy Street
Royal Oak, Michigan 48067**

Present: Rachel Andrews
 Annie Urasky
 Tiekeya Smith
 Bob Luxon
 Ashley Morel
 Brett Tillander
 Gerardo Aponte-Safe

Non-Voting Members Tessa Abrutyn

Present: Susan Barkman

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm.

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Agenda

Rachel will read her speech to the group for the May 29th Naturalization ceremony.

Moved by: Brett Tillander

Seconded by: Gerardo Aponte-Safe

Motion to approve the agenda.

Motion Adopted

4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: Bob Luxon
Seconded by: Gerardo Aponte-Safe

Motion to approve of April meeting minutes.

Motion Adopted

5. Public Comment

Lisa Neason: Eager to see the HRC start to take some actions to move the group forward.

Introductions were made for the newest member Gerardo Aponte-Safe.

6. Business

6.a Date Change for August Meeting

Cancelling August meeting

Resolution Number: Motion to cancel August's meeting

Moved by: Brett Tillander
Seconded by: Bob Luxon

Motion Adopted

6.b Update on Juneteenth Event

Lisa Neason gave an update on this year's Juneteenth event. The group has confirmed they would like to have a table banner for the Naturalization event, Juneteenth, Family Pride, and the Farmer's Market.

A Survey Subcommittee will be formed to begin work on that. So far Brett and Gerardo are interested in participating.

The group decided on also forming an Events Subcommittee.

6.c Discussion of Action Steps

Discussion on HRC putting out an article in the quarterly Insight magazine. The next issue comes out in the fall. This could be a good kick-off for the launch of the community survey. Annie will need the exact deadline date and word count to write up the article. Annie is asking the group to send her a short bio about themselves to include in the article.

Susan talked about setting the group up with an editorial calendar to plan ahead of time what information we want to put out to the public. Susan will include this in future agenda packets for members to access.

The group will do a group photo at next month's June meeting.

7. Public Comment

Lisa Neason: Suggests that those who do tabling events collect some data on who/how many people they speak to. And we should bring up at upcoming events that we will very soon be looking for another high school student to be a part of the HRC.

8. Commissioner Reports

9. Announcements

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Resolution Number: Motion to adjourn

Moved by: Bob Luxon

Seconded by: Ashley Morel

Motion to adjourn.

Motion Adopted

Consensus Workshop for the Human Rights Commission, City of Royal Oak January and February 2024

A report prepared by The Rev. Dr. Gerardo Aponte-Safe, Facilitator

Workshop Question: How do we effectively advocate for human rights in Royal Oak?

- Rational Aim: Identify **priorities** among the needs for advocacy **here and now**
- Experiential Aim: **Feel empowered and energized** to work with colleagues (ownership)

About the Process

In the Consensus Workshop, participants moved between concrete examples of how they sought to advocate for human rights, which might not be shared by all members, and the underlying principles and values guiding their ideas. It is these principles and values, the emerging themes, which were agreed upon by all. These principles and values can be the pillars for the development of short-term and long-term projects of the Commission, including a strategic plan.

Emerging Themes of Consensus

Theme 1: Create, measure, evaluate healthy and accessible human-centered systems.

Ideas that led to this theme were:

- Create mutual aid programs
- Create the healthy system that supports human rights
- Hire DEI person
- Restorative practices at the government and citizen level
- Support ADA accessibility beyond the minimum standard
- We measure our effectiveness

In the discussions to identify this theme, participants emphasized the importance of measurement and evaluation as a way to track progress. They emphasized human-centered systems to counter the punitive focus of many social institutions which exacerbate social inequity. Participants wrestled with how this theme might come to fruition: Who would implement these? Is it realistic given the voluntary nature of Commissioners? Is this within the scope of the commission? For this last question, a key concern was both whether this falls within the purview of the Commission as well as whether it is the Commission who should be leading in creation of systems instead of the people themselves, especially from minoritized communities.

Theme 2: Raising awareness built on equity

Theme 3: Build relationships reflecting the community (inclusive)

Initially, there were two clusters of ideas; through deliberation, these two themes were selected as interconnected. Ideas that led to this theme were:

- Co-sponsor library programs
- Build on successful programs (library)

- Create relationships; sponsorships
- Togetherness
- Support local groups doing this work already
- Welcome statement and/or magnet +
- Collaborate with school district to diversify curriculum
- Engage residents on education
- Build relationships within the community
- By speaking to “othered” communities & amplify their voices
- Survey the community
- I’m here because I’m Black to make a difference

These two areas emerged connected, with a sense that the Commission should play a role of listening and receiving information from marginalized/minoritized members of the community as well as raising awareness in other sectors of the community by disseminating information. Participants had a lot of energy around **listening and building relationships and partnerships**. Additionally, there was significant agreement that education should come from minoritized communities themselves rather than the Commission as the education specialist.

Work that remains

There were additional big ideas mentioned that did not make it into the final themes. The Commission might consider how to incorporate these ideas in future strategic planning.

- Some ideas clustered around race and racism, particularly in connection to policing and building trust.
- Others centered around accessibility of resources, program review, and embracing the homeless.
- Finally, there were ideas for how the Commission should work, embracing the need for change, being disciplined and avoiding distractions.

In the course of the dialogue, participants named and wrestled with the tension between what they hope to see in the community and the realities and limitations of their scope. On the one hand, they were grateful for the ambition for change demonstrated in the ideas. On the other hand, they recognized the enormity of the work and the significant need for structures that would make these goals into reality. Questions raised included, “How do we accomplish these goals?” “What’s reasonable within our timeframe?” “Who’s going to do this—Commissioners, paid staff, a DEI person?”