



WILLMAR HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026 @ 5:00 PM

CITY HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM 1

333 6TH ST SW, WILLMAR, MN 56201

AGENDA

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Proposed Additions or Deletions to Agenda
4. Approve Minutes
 - A. Review and Approve the January 27, 2026, Minutes
5. Regular Business
 - A. Officers Appointments
 - B. Review of Bylaws
6. Adjourn

WILLMAR HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MINUTES
WILLMAR CITY HALL
WILLMAR, MINNESOTA

January 27, 2026
5:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Willmar Human Rights Commission was called to order by Vice Chair Jill Benson. Members present on a roll call were Allen Clark, Richard Engan, Peggy Karsten, Jill Benson and Heidi Ahmann. Absent: Chair John Salgado Maldonado. Present 5, Absent 1.

Also present; City Council Member Justin Ask, City Council Member Vicki Davis, Community Growth Director Pablo Obregon, and City Operations Director Kyle Box.

Member Benson asked for proposed additions or deletions to the agenda. Member Karsten requested to add item 5.C – Constitutional Observer Training to the agenda. Director Obregon requested to add item 5.D – Acknowledgement of Commission Member Jon Dahl’s Resignation. Motion by Member Engan, Seconded by Member Clark. All voted in favor.

Benson asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Motion by Member Engan, Seconded by Member Clark, to approve the minutes. 4-0-1 vote with Commission Member Karsten abstaining.

Director Box presented recommended meeting dates for 2026. All meetings will be held at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall. The proposed dates include March 24, 2026 (Organizational Meeting), July 28, 2026, October 27, 2026, and additional Special Meetings as needed. Motion by Engan to approve the 2026 meeting dates; seconded by Clark. All voted in favor.

Directors Box and Obregon provided a city update regarding federal immigration enforcement within Willmar, the January 20, 2026 City Council meeting (public forum), and the Council’s request for a draft response to be considered at its next regular meeting. The Commission continued discussion on federal immigration enforcement and available resources.

Member Karsten provided information on Red Cards and Constitutional Observer training.

Director Box informed the Commission of Commission Member Jon Dahl’s resignation. Commission Member Heidi Ahmann also informed the Commission of her resignation.

At 5:46 P.M., a Motion by Member Engan, Seconded by Member Karsten, to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor.

/s/ John Salgado Maldonado
Chair

Attest:

/s/ Pablo Obregon
Director of Community Growth



Human Rights Commission Action Request

Council Meeting Date:	March 24, 2026	Agenda Item Number:	5.A.
Agenda Section:	Regular Business	Originating Department:	Administration
Resolution:	No	Prepared By:	
Ordinance:	No	Presented By:	
Item:	Officers Appointments		

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

OVERVIEW:

- a. Chairperson (Recommendation to the Mayor)
- b. Vice-Chairperson (Recommendation to the Mayor)
- c. Corresponding Secretary

BUDGETARY/FISCAL ISSUES:

ALTERNATIVES TO CONSIDER:

ATTACHMENTS:

None

BYLAWS

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

CITY OF WILLMAR

ADOPTED: AUGUST 16, 1994

REVISED: JULY 16, 1996

REVISED: MAY 17, 2016

ARTICLE I: MISSION STATEMENT

- A. It is the policy of the City of Willmar to establish and maintain a Human Rights Commission.
- B. The mission of the Human Rights Commission is as follows:

It is the mission of the Willmar Human Rights Commission to facilitate equal opportunity and improve human relations for all citizens in the City of Willmar; further, to assist the Minnesota Department of Human Rights in implementing the Minnesota State Act Against Discrimination.
- C. To fulfill this mission the Commission will focus on the following areas:
 - 1. Motivate organizations and individuals to comply with the Minnesota Human Rights Act.
 - 2. Anticipate and identify changes in the social environment that affect human and civil rights issues.
 - 3. Actively work to create and strengthen its relationship with relevant public, private and community-based organizations, in order to share information and cooperatively recognize and address emerging civil rights issues.
 - 4. Devote resources to human rights education to promote an environment free of discrimination. Whenever possible, the Commission will attempt to prevent discriminatory situations from arising.

5. Promote, create and maintain an environment free from discrimination.
6. Maintain the confidence of the public by keeping the community informed of relevant changes pertaining to discrimination within the scope of all human rights issues.

ARTICLE II: AUTHORITY

The authority of the Commission is derived from the Willmar City Council pursuant to City Ordinance No. 1049, adopted on February 2, 1994, and any amendments thereto.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

- A. Composition: The Commission shall be composed of not more than fifteen (15) and not less than seven (7) members. All members must be residents of the City of Willmar. Members shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council. Membership on another City commission or committee, City employment or the holding of another City office shall not be a bar to membership on the Human Rights Commission.
- B. Terms: Commission members shall serve for a term of three (3) years.
- C. Leaves of Absence:
 1. A Commission member who will be temporarily absent from the community or otherwise unable to attend seven or more consecutive meetings, shall so submit his/her resignation from the Commission.
 2. A Commission member who, for good reason, will miss more than two consecutive meetings, and no more than four consecutive meetings, shall so inform the Commission Chairperson, and may be granted a leave of absence by the Executive Committee of the Commission. If the leave is not approved, the member shall resign.
 3. If a member requested or required to resign pursuant to this subdivision does not resign, the Commission may recommend to the City Council that this member be removed from the Commission and upon majority vote of the Council, such member shall be removed.

- D. Vacancies: Any vacant position may be filled for the unexpired portion of any term by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council. The Commission may make recommendations to the Mayor.
- E. Compensation: Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation. In the event a Commissioner is a City-elected official or employee, no additional compensation shall be paid for services as a Commissioner.
- F. Removal: The Council, by majority vote, may remove any member of the Commission with or without cause.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

- A. The Commission shall hold regular monthly meetings as determined by the current Commission and shall last no longer than ninety (90) minutes. Meetings may be canceled at the discretion of the Chairperson or the Executive Committee.
- B. A quorum consists of a majority of the membership. A majority vote of the members present shall be required to transact the business of the Commission. A lack of a quorum shall not prevent the Commission from meeting; however, no action of the Commission shall be official until ratified at a meeting where a quorum is in attendance.
- C. The Commission may hold special meetings to complete or initiate business at the call of the Chairperson, or upon the written request to the Chairperson by three members of the Commission.
- D. Each member shall be notified, in writing, by phone or in person at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the special meeting. This is to be done by the Recording Secretary.
- E. All meetings shall be open to the public.
- F. March shall be the month for the annual meeting. The agenda will include: appointment and election of officers for the following year, the annual report, reviewal of the Bylaws, and other appropriate business.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

- A. Officers: The officers of the Commission shall be: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Chair of the Budget Committee, and a Corresponding Secretary. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are appointed by the Mayor. The Commission may recommend to the Mayor individuals to serve as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The Chair of the Budget Committee and the Corresponding Secretary shall be elected by the Commission.
- B. Duties of the Chairperson:
1. Develop the agenda for the meetings, conduct and preside over meetings in a productive, time efficient manner.
 2. Monitor and ensure the progress and completion of projects and Commission activities within the approved time frame.
 3. Ensure that the Commission conducts its activities within stated Mission Statement and Bylaws.
 4. Serve as a liaison between the Commission and the Mayor, City Council, and City Administrator.
 5. Appoint ad-hoc committees for special projects.
 6. Serve as official spokesperson for the Commission.
 7. Make certain all new members receive a new member packet containing the following: Bylaws, City Ordinance, review of Human Rights Laws, and copies of the previous year's minutes.
- C. Vice-Chairperson shall:
1. Assist the Chairperson in above duties and perform the duties in the absence of the Chair.
 2. Orient new members to the Commission.
- D. Chair of the Budget Committee shall:
1. Develop annual budget request to the Commission by May.
 2. Report current status of allocated budget at the monthly meetings.

E. Corresponding Secretary shall:

1. Assist the Commission with internal and external correspondence.
2. In the absence of the Recording Secretary, record attendance and take the minutes of the meeting.

F. Recording Secretary (City staff assigned to the Commission) shall:

1. Take attendance at each meeting and keep a record of those present, absent, or excused.
2. Record the minutes of the Commission meetings and keep all records of the Commission.
3. Send minutes of the meetings together with the notice of the next meeting to all members.
4. Assist with other Commission documents.

ARTICLE VI: STAFF ASSISTANCE

The City Administrator will coordinate and assign staff to assist the Commission as the City Administrator may deem appropriate. Commission requests for staff assistance shall be made to the City Administrator.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

- A. Commission committees are advisory to the Commission unless they have been specifically empowered to act on behalf of the Commission.
- B. The purpose and duties of each Commission committee shall be specified in writing at the time of its establishment. The Recording Secretary shall keep a copy of said written purpose and duties.
- C. The Commission can create ad-hoc committees as needed.
- D. There is hereby an Executive Committee consisting of the following members:
 1. Chairperson

2. Vice-Chairperson
3. Chair of the Budget Committee
4. Corresponding Secretary
5. One Commission member at large - elected by the Commission

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Bylaws shall be presented at a regular meeting for a hearing the month before they are to be voted on. Adoption of an amendment to the Bylaws shall require a two-thirds vote of a quorum.

ARTICLE IX: BYLAWS AND ORDINANCE REVIEWAL

The Bylaws and Ordinance shall be reviewed every year by the Executive Committee or a committee appointed by the Chairperson.

ARTICLE X:

The rules contained in "The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure" by Alice Sturgis, Newly Revised, shall govern the conduct of business in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Commission or the provisions of the Ordinance.