



CITY OF TOPEKA

Human Relations Commission
City Hall, 215 SE 7th Street
Topeka, KS 66603

Tel: 785-368-4470
www.topeka.org

Upcoming Meeting Information:

Date: Monday, August 11, 2024

Time: 5:30 PM

Location: City of Topeka Cyrus K. Holliday Building, 620 SE Madison Avenue, 2nd floor. Topeka, Kansas

Meeting Agenda

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

II. Agenda Approval

III. Meeting Minutes Approval

IV. New Business

- Income Protection – Alex Buzicky

V. Old Business

- DEIAB, Affirmative Action, and HRC Updates - Staff
- AARP Ongoing Discussion
 - i. Survey Updates

VI. Staff Update

VII. Committee Reports:

- i. Planning and Events Committee
- ii. Advocacy Committee
- iii. Education and Outreach

VIII. Commissioners Update

IX. Public Comment

X. Important Dates/Events

- a. National Welcoming Week – September 12-21, 2025
- b. National Hispanic Heritage Month – September 15 - October 15, 2025
- c. Citizenship Day – September 17, 2025



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- d. LGBTQ History Month – October 2025
- e. Native American Heritage Month- November 2025

XI. Adjournment

Public Comment Notice: To honor safety mandates surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person public comments will be limited; please contact Brenda Younger, City Clerk, at cclerk@topeka.org regarding meeting attendance or to submit written public comments. Written comments may also be mailed to: 215 SE 7th Street, Room 166, Topeka, Kansas 66603. All attendance requests and comments must be received 2 business days prior to the meeting.

To request an ADA Accommodation, please contact 785-368-4470 between the hours of 8:00 am – 5:00 pm no later than 3 working days in advance of this meeting.



CITY OF TOPEKA

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES DRAFT

Date: July 14, 2025

Time: 5:30 pm

Location: City Hall 3rd Floor Conference Room and Zoom

Call to Order. Chair Zachary Surritt called the meeting to order

Roll Call.

Present: Chair Zachary Surritt, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Luc Bensimon, Commissioner Buzicky, Commissioner Jaron Balderes

Absent: Commissioner Michaela Kerls (excused), Vice Chair Carmen Romero-Nichols (excused);

Visitors: N/A

Staff: Sr. Coordinator Zaynah Afada, Director of the Office of Inclusive Communities Monique Glaude'

Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes: Commissioner Buzicky motioned to approve the July meeting agenda and June meeting minutes; Commissioner Jaron Balderes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

• **New Business**

- DEIAB, Affirmative Action, and HRC Updates – Zaynah shared an update stating that the question asked by chair Surritt regarding DEIAB, Affirmative Action, and how it relates to the HRC was shared with legal. A memo was provided as a response to the question from DEIAB and Affirmative Action, as the legal staff were unable to attend the meeting.
 - Commissioner Buzicky asked if the Policy and Finance Committee is working on amendments to the changes? Chair Surritt responded, stating they voted to repeal language around DEI and Affirmative Action to protect federal funding. The committee is working to determine ways to help the city maintain its funding.
 - Monique encourages the commissioner to visit the Policy and Finance Committee webpage on the city website to review the video for a better understanding of the information.
 - Commissioner Buzicky shared that she is interested in asking legal if there will be a conflict with including protection for Immigration status. Chair Surrit will share the inquiry to staff via email.

• **Old Business**

- AARP Ongoing Discussion: Zaynah shared that staff have received almost 50 hard copies of responses to the AARP surveys. Staff is continuing to advertise the survey

virtually and in person on the first floor of the Holiday building. She also shared that the survey will need to end on September 30 to give staff enough time to create a year-end report. Commissioners are encouraged to volunteer to table on the first floor of the Holiday building on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of every month. Due to the upcoming event, staff will not have time to table for the surveys.

- Staff will make the request to the Communications Department about having the chair and vice chair on the media to share more about the survey.
- Monique encourages commissioners to reach out to their contact who may assist with advertising of the survey.

- **Staff Update:**

- Zaynah shared that legal has drafted and finalized the conflict of interest waiver for boards and commissions. The form has been shared with all members present. She requested that the form be reviewed and signed by the commissioners; it will then be forwarded to the mayor's office. She recommends the form be signed by July 25th.

- **Committee Reports.**

- **Planning and Events**
 - **Nothing to report**
- **Advocacy**
 - **Nothing to report**
- **Education and Outreach**
 - **Nothing to Report**
 - Chair Surritt asked if commissioners are interested in hosting a town hall for the Housing Department. It would also be a great way to talk about the HRC. And to discuss the office of inclusive communities, which has undergone changes this year, and how both can collaborate.
 - Commissioner Robert shared that Carrie Higgins suggested hosting a Bookless Library. The information will be shared with Zaynah for the commissioners. Commissioner Buzicky expressed her interest and support for the Bookless Library.
 - Commissioner Baldores: Shawnee County sheriff's office entered into a task force model in partnership with ICE. Although TPD is not participating in the task force, he is curious about the implications of the task force for residents in the city of Topeka.
 - Monique recommended that commissioners ask the chief of police to come to a meeting to answer that question. In the meantime, the question can also be asked at the Crime Summit taking place on July 23 from 6-8 pm at the Hillcrest Community Center, 1800 SE 21st St.

- **Commissioners Updates**

- Chair Surritt encourages commissioners to reach out to Zaynah and let her know of any agenda items to add to the upcoming meetings and any events taking place to be shared with commissioners.

- **Public Comment.** No public comment.

Important Dates/Events

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

****Next Meeting: August 11, 2025****

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