



# CITY OF TOPEKA

Human Relations Commission  
City Hall, 215 SE 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Topeka, KS 66603

Tel: 785-368-4470  
[www.topeka.org](http://www.topeka.org)

## Upcoming Meeting Information:

Date: Monday, October 13, 2025

Time: 5:30 PM

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

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## Meeting Agenda

### **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

### **II. Agenda Approval**

### **III. Meeting Minutes Approval**

### **IV. New Business**

- Executive Director, Central Topeka Grocery Oasis – Nadia Arbelo
- City of Topeka Assistant City Manager – Avery Moore
- City of Topeka Police Chief – Chris Vallejo

### **V. Old Business**

- 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 Hispanic Heritage Month – September 15 - October 15, 2025
- b. LGBTQ History Month – October 2025
- c. Native American Heritage Month- November 2025



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## XI. Adjournment

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**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](mailto: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:** September 8, 2025

**Time:** 5:30 pm

**Location:** Zoom

**Call to Order.** Chair Zachary Surratt called the meeting to order

**Roll Call.**

**Present:** Chair Zachary Surratt, Vice Chair Carmen Romero-Nichols; Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Luc Bensimon, Commissioner Michaela Kerls, Commissioner Alex Buzicky,

**Absent:** Commissioner Jaron Balderes (Excused)

**Visitors:** N/A

**Staff:** Director of the Office of Inclusive Communities

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** Commissioner Vice Chair Romero-Nichols motioned to approve the August meeting Minutes and the September agendas with an amendment to include reviewing a memo from the legal department in the old business section. Commissioner Kerls seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- **New Business**

- Chair Surratt shared that the Assistant City Manager, Avery Moore, and the Police Chief, Chris Vallejo, were not able to attend the September meeting but will be present during the October meeting.

- **Old Business**

- Memo from Legal Office: Commissioners thanked the legal team for creating the memo. At this time, no further action will be taken by the commissioners.
- AARP Survey Updates: Zaynah shares that there are 454 survey responses from members of the community, with over 90 surveys being from individuals who are not residents of Topeka. The August gift card winner has been contacted and will pick up her gift card by the end of the week. The survey ends on October 31<sup>st</sup>. The Office of Inclusive Communities will send postcards to churches for more advertising.
  - Chair Surratt shared he will be on KSNT and WIBW to share more about the AARP. He also shared a tabling opportunity at JAAA in October. He will follow up in an email to request the commissioner's availability to table at JAAA in October. At this time, October 20<sup>th</sup> has been identified as the best date to table.

- **Staff Update:**

- Zaynah reminded Commissioners to review and sign the conflict of interest form provided by the Mayor's office and Legal staff.

- **Committee Reports.**

- **Planning and Events**
  - **Nothing to report**
    - Requested staff to reach out to the event location for a reservation
- **Advocacy**
  - **Nothing to report**
    - Next meeting is scheduled on October 12.
- **Education and Outreach**
  - **Nothing to Report**
- **Commissioners Updates**
  - Commissioner Kerls shared that she attended a play titled A Raisin in the Sun by a new theater company in Topeka. She encouraged commissioners to attend one of the plays
  - Chair Surrit encouraged commissioners to begin thinking about what they'd like to see for the end of the year and for 2026. What is something they'd like to present to the governing body? He also encouraged commissioners to begin thinking about selecting an HRC chair for 2026.
  - Commissioner Buzicky requested updates on the sales tax pool. Chair Surritt shared that he had reached out to Kaitlyn in the City Manager's Office for information, but would also send an email to staff to follow up with the City Manager's Office for further information.
- **Public Comment.** No public comment.

**Important Dates/Events:** The chair went over the important dates listed on the agenda.

**Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

**\*\*Next Meeting:** October 13, 2025\*\*

To request an ADA Accommodation, please get in touch with 785-368-3725 between the hours of 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, no later than three working days in advance of this meeting.