

Owatonna Human Rights Commission Minutes – April 8, 2025

The Owatonna Human Rights Commission (OHRC) met on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, in the Meeting Room of the Charles S. Crandall Center. Chairman Gunderson called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. Commissioner Hansen took a roll call, present were Commission Members Jessica Bjore, Jim Gunderson, Jennifer Hansen, Sherry Hill and Edgar Esquivel, City Administrator Busse and Administrative Coordinator Clawson. Commissioner Members Mustafe Ismael and Julia Seykora were unable to attend.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Gunderson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Commissioner Hansen made a motion to approve the agenda, Commissioner Bjore seconded the motion, and all members present voted aye in approval. After review of the March OHRC, Commissioner Hansen made a motion for approval as presented, Commissioner Bjore seconded the motion, and all members present voted aye in approval.

ITEM OF DISCUSSION – 2025 OHRC Activities

- 1) Downtown Thursday Event (DTE) – Commissioner Hansen commented she spoke with Main Street Director Cochran regarding OHRC request for space in the 100 block of N Cedar for the September DTE on September 4th. Advised to apply for additional event dates if OHRC plans to participate at the June, July or August DTEs.
Commissioner Bjore commented she has received the OHRC tent with plans to bring to the May OHRC Meeting.
- 2) Commissioner Hansen presented the check received from Hometown Credit Union (HTCU). This \$500 donation will be used towards cost of the Human Library by the OHRC> Commissioner Gunderson, Hansen and Bjore attended HTCU Annual Meeting on March 18th to receive the check. HTCU Board Director, Ethan Cords requested the OHRC receive these funds, and a group picture was taken to promote this.
- 3) Community Connect, April 30th at the Four Seasons Centre from noon to 4:00 pm. Commissioner Gunderson plans to be there for the full event, Commission Members Hansen, Seykora, Bjore, and Ismael also plan to attend and assist in hour increments.
- 4) Commissioner Hill shared draft prepared as a Guest/Opinion Column in the local paper, the Owatonna People's Press. Suggestion to prepare an article to introduce new OHRC members or new officers after the Election of Officers during the May OHRC Meeting.
- 5) Commissioner Bjore showed samples of the proposed OHRC banner. After discussion it was decided to order banner 8' by 30" with use of an upper/lower case format.

She commented Cory at Legacy Signs recommended securing the tent with weights and the banner with bungee cords when using at events. Commissioner Hansen commented Rainbowatonna purchased water weights for their tent and will share a link for use to purchase.

- 6) 2026 MLK Jr. Day Event – Commissioner Hansen commented she recently attended the Twin City Pride event and has pursuing potential speakers. She has sent messages to several speakers asking about their availability for MLK Jr Day in January and what their speaker fee would be.
- 7) Commissioners Esquivel and Ismael will organize the soccer game for the Welcome Week in September. Planning for Saturday, September 6 with event similar to last year at Daiken Soccer Fields. Will plan to use two fields, will need to contact the Soccer Association to confirm the availability of Daiken Fields and file an Event Permit. Participant T-shirts and additional plans will be discussed at future OHRC Meetings.

Commissioner's Comments:

Commissioner Gunderson commented that AGE will host a Sneaker Dance on May 31st at Torry's. This is a fundraiser event for AGE and hoping OHRC commissioners plan to attend. He then thanked everyone for their participation the OHRC; he is confident he is leaving OHRC in good hands as he has been greatly impressed with the work done by all commission members over the last year. He has enjoyed working with everyone and is pleased to see ideas suggested by prior OHRC members were developed for current activities. Will be attending OHRC events, not planning to become plain old Jim on the street.

City Administrator Busse thanked Commissioner Gunderson for his years of service and leadership during the last seven plus years, first appointed to OHRC in November 2017. He has been willing to stand up to see that things get done and represent many within the community.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:05 p.m., Commissioner Hansen made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Bjore seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned. The next OHRC Meeting is planned for Tuesday, May 13th at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Coordinator