

DRAFT - not yet accepted by commission

Duluth Human Rights Commission

Wednesday, January 14, 2026 @ 5:30 p.m.
Duluth City Hall Room 430

Public comment will be taken in person. Individuals may also e-mail or mail comments to the Commission prior to the meeting; see contact information at the bottom of the minutes for more information.

1. Call to Order and Introductions
 - a. Meeting called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Nomi Ostrander
 - b. Commissioners present: Chair Nomi Ostrander, Vice Chair Jen Harris, Secretary Amanda Shie, Markus Edgette, Carlyne Holt, Autumn Amadou-Blegen, Dan Maki, Tyra Jaramillo-Kraemer
 - c. Commissioners absent: Luis Islas
 - d. City staff: Matt Staehling, Laura Laaksonen
 - e. Community members: Eleanor Dolan, Pat Michals, Kathleen Spencer
2. Acceptance of November Meeting Minutes
 - a. Commissioner Shie moved to approve November minutes, seconded by Commissioner Edgette.
 - i. Abstention: Chair Ostrander.
3. Committee Reports
 - a. Executive Team
 - i. Executive team met January 13, 2026, via Zoom.
 - ii. In attendance: Chair Dr. Nomi Ostrander, Vice Chair Jen Harris, Secretary Amanda Shie
 1. Evaluating commission status and current events.
 2. Plan for February meeting to approve work plan.
 3. Upcoming officer elections.
 4. Vice Chair Harris and Secretary Shie attended the January 12 city council meeting due to the significance of current events, and advocate the Commission is a space to acknowledge community sentiment and take action.
 5. Vice Chair Harris' term ends March 31 and will not be returning.
 - b. Findings Committee
 - i. 6 cases since December.
 1. Former combat veteran with mental health issues was staying in a hotel with his disabled son. Due to a misunderstanding by hotel staff/guests, this individual became agitated, engaged in a verbal altercation with staff and guests, so DPD was called. The individual reports that DPD would not allow him to care for his

son's hygiene needs before they removed him and his son from the premises. A veteran's group covered costs of relocating to another hotel. Officer Lue will be in contact with DPD regarding the event and will possibly review body camera footage.

2. An older individual with a past felony reported a suspicious interview with a local company. He felt that they had researched him before his interview, as they emphasized that the company does not hire felons and that individuals must pass a drug test. The individual felt discriminated against for their age and felony record. He will be referred to the state for legal resources.
3. A Lake Superior College student with disabilities has run into issues with a professor not giving her accommodations and assuming that she cannot do her own work. The student believes she would have received a higher grade in the course if she received the proper accommodations. The student has escalated to the college's student support services, who reached out to the professor to no avail, so relevant Deans have emailed this professor and have received no reply. Officer Lue will collaborate with the proper Dean to help mediate. The Findings Committee also recommended the professor read *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*.
4. A woman of color has a complaint against her workplace, citing a lack of fair pay and equal treatment. She reports that pay raises are tied to her annual review, which keeps being postponed, and that she has not received raises for her past promotions. She also says she is not given the same information as her coworkers, including information about upcoming trainings and annual budgets, and was passed up for promotions, though given additional duties. The individual has been out of work following an accident, and is concerned that they have hired someone in her place. Officer Lue noted she has the right to request her personnel file and that she will be in touch with the individual and will offer to speak with the individual's supervisor and/or HR over the phone.
5. A mother of an individual with disabilities reported a complaint regarding their property managers. A neighbor has complained about the residents of their apartment, citing smoking by other occupants than the individual in question. The smoking allegations originally resulted in an eviction, but has been adjusted to an extended occupancy agreement, which is agreeable to the family. The Human Rights office will help the family get the extended occupancy agreement in writing so the property management cannot back out of the agreement.
6. A mother called on behalf of her son with disabilities and his wife. Her son's neighbor alleges that her son and daughter-in-law have

been throwing garbage into her yard, so the mother got a camera installed on her son's property to document any incidents. The neighbor has a history of calling about her son. The mother's concern is that when the son is upset, he faints. Officer Lue will try to work with DPD to help them mediate the situation when calls arise and to note calls coming from the neighbor's address to be treated with special care.

4. New Business

- a. Chair Ostrander asked for ways for the Commission to move forward in light of current events and suggestions for speakers to have at upcoming Commission meetings. Suggestions by Commissioners included a representative from the ACLU, the Twin Ports Rapid Response Team, Mayor Roger Reinert, Chief Ceynowa, and Sheriff Ramsey.
- b. Commissioners asked to edit a statement made by the Executive Team released informally on January 8 to encompass the full Commission. Original statement reads as follows:
 - i. While we do not speak for the entirety of the Duluth Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Commission Executive Team stands in solidarity with immigrant communities in our city, state, and country.

Words aren't enough in a time like this to address the pain of so many community members, not just in Minnesota, but across the nation.

Our hearts go out to the loved ones of Renee Nicole Good, to the immigrant communities across the country being targeted by aggressive and unlawful ICE activities, and to our neighbors in the Twin Cities. Our thoughts also go out to the victims of another needless shooting by immigration enforcement in Portland, Oregon.

The overzealous immigration enforcement activities across the country are reprehensible, endangering lives and uprooting families without provocation or warning. Furthermore, the silence coming from our city leaders in the wake of these recent events, and all the ICE raids that have happened in the Twin Ports region over the past month, is disheartening.

We applaud the community's rapid response teams and mutual aid efforts that have mobilized throughout the region to counter state-sponsored terrorism in our neighborhoods. Together, we keep each other safe.

Signed,
Nomi Ostrander, Chair
Jen Harris, Vice Chair
Amanda Shie, Secretary

Resources

➡ Twin Ports Rapid Response (TPRR) hotline for witnessing suspected unlawful immigration enforcement or active raids: (218) 213-5009
TPRR will show up to witness, document, nonviolently protest, and defend the Twin Ports community's right to live without fear and ensure no one faces intimidation, detention, or deportation alone.

➡ If anyone experiences racial profiling by immigration enforcement or harassment/intimidation as observers, please consider reporting it to the ACLU: <https://www.aclu-mn.org/ice-feds-form/>

Note: This confidential form does not set up people with an attorney, but what is inputted in these forms cannot be used against them in prosecution.

➡ Duluth Human Rights Discrimination Complaint Process:
<https://duluthmn.gov/.../discrimination-complaint-process/>

➡ Minnesota Human Rights Discrimination Complaint Form:
<https://mn.gov/mdhr/intake/consultationinquiryform/>

1. Commissioners asked for the first line of statement to be revised to reflect the entire Commission and language regarding the Twin Ports Rapid Response team to let individuals know they have legal resources on their website.
2. Commissioner Edgette proposed taking the revised statement, making resources accessible, and posting at local businesses.
- c. Commissioners proposed a press conference based on the statement to be held on January 23rd at 12 p.m. on the steps of City Hall. Groups proposed to involve Twin Ports Rapid Response, ACLU, Justice North, other commissions, Fond du Lac band, Duluth 50501, Duluth Indivisible, Twin Ports DSA, Law Enforcement Accountability Network, and city councilors.
 - i. Commissioners proposed to hold a special meeting on January 22nd at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall 430 to prepare for the conference. Working groups include:
 1. Logistics: Commissioners Maki and Jaramillo-Kraemer
 2. Community Outreach: Vice Chair Harris and Commissioners Edgette and Holt
 3. Communications: Secretary Shie and Commissioner Amadou-Blegen
5. Human Rights Office Report
 - a. Officer Lue has a delay in returning to work, may potentially return in February, though she can still be accessed through email. Human Rights Assistant Laaksonen is usually in office on Mondays, Wednesdays, and sometimes Fridays.
6. Announcements and Upcoming Events
 - a. MLK day events - all free and open to public.
 - i. Sunday, Jan. 18 - 4:00 pm; Community Worship Service at First United Methodist Church, 230 E Skyline Parkway, Duluth. The featured preacher

is Rev. Rev. Laquaan Malachi, pastor of [Brunswick United Methodist Church](#) in Crystal, MN.

- ii. Monday, January 19, 7:00-9:30 a.m. Community Breakfast at First United Methodist Church, 230 E Skyline Parkway, Duluth, with a large screen broadcast of the event at Minneapolis Convention Center. More information at [mlkbreakfast.com](#). Keynote speakers are: Soledad O'Brien & Freeman A. Hrabowski, III.
- iii. Monday, January 19, 10:30-11:45 a.m. Gather at Washington Center, 12 E 4th St, and march to DECC. March begins at approximately 11:00 a.m.
- iv. Monday, January 19, noon-1:30 p.m. at DECC Symphony Hall, 350 Harbor Dr. A collection of speakers and performers. The featured speaker is [Nicoshia Wynn](#), a former associate of Rev. Foy and founder of Relentless Academy, a nonprofit focused on youth, arts, and education in the Twin Cities.
 - 1. Commissioner Maki will be at the Community Breakfast and at the start of the march. Commissioners Edgette and Islas will be at the Community breakfast and march. Commissioner Holt will be at the march and rally.

- b. Monday, January 19, 7:45 a.m. at UMD Dining Center. Free MLK holiday breakfast open to UMD community and family members. [Registration](#) required.
- c. Saturday, January 10, 9:30-11 a.m. A monthly LGBTQIA+ parenting event at Washington Center. Free, with childcare provided.
- d. Monday, January 19, 2-3 p.m. Northern Waters Smokehaus is hosting a public reading of the Constitution outside of Northern Water Smokehaus. Pocket constitutions provided.
- e. Sunday, January 25, 3-5 p.m. ICMJ is hosting a documentary screening of "Running to Stand Still" at Zeitgeist. Free and open to the public.

7. Old Business

- a. Chair Ostrander met with representatives from St. Louis County including Commissioner Ashley Grimm following the county decision to remove materials relating to gender identity and sexual orientation from their resources. More counties are expected to take similar action as federal funding is dependent on these actions. Chair Ostrander has no further updates but notes Increased collaboration between College of St. Scholastica, University of Minnesota Duluth, and University of Wisconsin Superior for worker trainings.

8. Public comments

- a. Eleanor Dolan, a member of the Twin Ports Rapid Response Team, reports a high volume of calls to their hotline and shares concern about recent incidents. They describe an incident where they were supporting a friend following a suspected ICE vehicle, but when the vehicle returned to Arlington, DPD officers emerged, began to tail Dolan and friend, then blocked their exits so they could no longer follow the vehicle. They report a feeling of fear and lack of trust of DPD by observers. They also described feeling that Chief Ceynowa defended ICE agents following Dolan home at the January 12 City Council meeting. Dolan has filed a

complaint with the ACLU about this and feels disappointed by DPD's intervention and continued work with HSI.

- i. Administrator Staehling suggested Dolan submit a complaint to the CRB regarding their experiences and noted the CRB also takes public comments.
- b. Vice Chair Harris shared that she is a Rapid Response member. She described responding to an alert on Christmas Eve, when a large vehicle with tinted windows began to follow her. She identified that individuals in the car had on earpieces and possible patches on their arms and that they drove towards her apartment complex. Due to the intimidation, Harris stayed at home for 10 days following the incident. She notes reports of ICE swapping plates in the Twin Cities.
- c. Administrator Staehling acknowledged the gravity of the situation. He notes Duluth has HSI agents based in the community, and reiterated they have not and will not engage in immigration enforcement. He shares the concern and uncertainty as to if ICE will continue the escalation seen in the Twin Cities in Duluth.
 - i. Commissioner Edgette said he would like reiteration from Chief Ceynowa that DPD will confirm ICE agent identity and mediate for community safety in the case of masked and unidentified agents.
- d. Commissioner Jaramillo-Kramer shared that she has family in Minneapolis who have reported people taking advantage of the current situation and warns of masked people who are not ICE. She encourages calling cops for any unidentified individuals.

9. Adjourn

- a. Commissioner Jaramillo-Kraemer motioned to adjourn; Commissioner Carlyne seconds. The meeting ends at 6:45 p.m.
 - i. The next meeting is planned for 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at City Hall Room 430.

Minutes submitted by:

Amanda Shie, Secretary