City of Albert Lea
Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes

May 14 2026 Meeting – 6:00pm
City Council Chambers - 221 E. Clark Street

Members Present: Charles Alkula, Peggy Olson, Cesar Victorino, Angie Hanson, Jeremy Corey-Gruenes, Student Representative Rice Boettcher and Ex-Officio Keith Van Beek

Angie Hanson arrived at 6:07pm

Members Absent: Aruna Evenson and Irasema Hernandez

Staff in Attendance: City Manager Ian Rigg, Human Resource Director Mike Zelenak and Administrative Assistant/Deputy Clerk Karla Tukua

Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order by Chair Alkula

Adopt Agenda:
Olson made motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting and Victorino seconded the motion. Commission members present voted in favor of said motion, 5-0. Motion declared passed.

Approval of Minutes:
Corey-Gruenes made the motion to approve the minutes from the April 9, 2026 meeting and Olson seconded the motion. Commission members present voted in favor of said motion, 5-0. Motion declared passed.

New Business: None

Old Business:
A. Guest Column Article Introducing HRC Members – Peggy Olson
   - Olson stated she will send out a questionnaire to board members to learn more about each member and will have a rough draft by next meeting.

B. Report on Governor's Council on Recording the Truth of Operation Metro Surge – Jeremy Corey-Gruenes
   - Corey-Gruenes spoke with the Chair from the Governor's Council and was informed that the Albert Lea HRC role will be to host a safe place for interviews

to be held. The Governor's Council has trained interviewers that would come and conduct interviews with individuals. Corey-Gruenes stated the Governor's Council's priority is that we provide a safe environment with identities being protected.

- Corey-Gruenes asked for anyone that could be part of the zoom meeting tomorrow, May, 15, from 12:00pm to 1:00pm. The call will give more details on the program. Peggy, Angie and Ian will all be available to be on this zoom meeting.
- Corey-Gruenes answered questions and gave additional information on the process with the 15 member commission.
    - Boettcher asked what will be done with the interviews once completed, to which Corey-Gruenes explained the primary purpose is to create a historic record of what happened and it may affect policy in the future.

C. Resource Directory Link follow up – Aruna Evenson (tabled from last meeting)

- Zelenak explained that the Resource Directory Link is published on the Freeborn County Public Health Website. If someone wanted to add a resource, they would send to Freeborn County Public Health. Rigg said after Evenson reviews the listing and it's determined to be a complete list; it can be linked on the Human Rights Commission page on the City of Albert Lea website.

D. Law Enforcement Transparency Recommendation and Follow up (tabled from last meeting)

- Corey-Gruenes thanked Rigg for his response to his e-mail regarding his Law Enforcement Recommendation. Corey-Gruenes asked the difference between an Ordinance and a Policy and Rigg gave an example of both. Main difference is, an ordinance means enforcement through legal action, the policy would be a guidance for how the City and City staff would act or statement of goals the City would like to accomplish regarding this. Rigg gave an example where some police organizations don't have body worn cameras, and wouldn't be able to follow the Law Enforcement Transparency recommendation. Rigg also gave different scenarios where this recommendation is not enforceable, due to other police agencies not having the tools to follow the recommendation. There was continued discussion in regards to the recommendation and ordinance. Rigg also stated he's had a lot of conversations with the Police Chief and Deputy Chief and what happened with Metro Surge was out of the norm.
- Rigg stated his suggestion would be to update the city's standard operation procedures and to publicize what we are doing rather than drafting an ordinance.
- Corey-Gruenes would still like to see an ordinance drafted and asked the commission members their thoughts. Zelenak stated speaking as an employee of the city, there is no value in having an ordinance that can't be enforced. It puts a strain on city employees when they have to try to enforce something that is

unenforceable. Zelenak gave examples of other ordinances that's hard to enforce. There was continued discussion between members on if/how it can be enforced.

- May need to continue to discuss stipulations within the documents
- Corey-Gruenes asked that Rigg continue to look into this, specifically addressing face coverings and requirement for outside agencies to notify us. Rigg stated he'd bring more information to the next meeting.

E. Wind Down Wednesday Updates – Aruna, Angie & Ian

- United Way Partnership – this was not discussed.
- Hanson showed her example of the magnet she'd like to hand out at Wind Down Wednesday. Cost was $350 for 250 magnets, Hanson stated she checked other companies and cost was mostly the same. Rigg stated he will have Teresa in Communications take care of getting the magnet made to Hanson's specifications.
- Discussion in regards to having a dunk tank, resulted in Rigg stating He will discuss with Hanson and Evenson after the meeting.
- There was discussion on different items for handouts to which, Rigg mentioned that the City can provide additional swag items that we have on hand to bring to Wind Down Wednesday.
- Rigg stated he'd talk to Konrad with the CVB regarding what the decision will be on having a dunk tank and maybe it will be for a future Wind Down Wednesday, possibly in July.

F. Budgeting for Equity in Regards to City's Strategic Plan – follow up on Ian's e-mail with article links.

- Rigg stated he wanted to get the commissions thoughts on the article links he sent to them and wanting to look at the City budget process from a Human Rights perspective.
- Looking at it in regards to income status, age, veteran status, sexual orientation and race. Just general thoughts and guidance as how equity can be part of the budgeting process.
- Hanson mentioned that she could understand the article from Salt Lake City where they used a scoring matrix in regards to their budget planning.
- Discussion regarding equitable expenses as it relates to lower income or elderly population. One example given was - is it more equitable to spend $90,000 to pick up junk items in a person's yard and then assess them for it, or more equitable for the City to pay $90,000 for bulky waste pickup on the curb for residence to use. Rigg gave other examples of resources and options for certain groups of our population to limit possible fines/taxes.
- Corey-Gruenes brought up an article from the National League of City and identifying equity gaps, and creating a checklist that departments can use to see

if they need to go through a matrix. Corey-Gruenes stated he likes the idea of establishing what the equity gaps are and to go through a checklist approach.
- Rigg noted he will discuss with staff and cover at the budget meetings.

Board Member Items:

- Hanson brought up the fact that Albert Lea still has the old Minnesota Flag flying at our Government Buildings. She has had a few residents ask her about it. Corey-Gruenes mentioned he read an article that State law does not require anyone from flying the state flag.
- Rigg mentioned that some Cities are not putting up the Minnesota flag to not draw attention to it negatively or positively. It's become more of a partisan issue.
- Corey-Gruenes would like to see the city adopt the new flag, Hanson and Olson agreed.
- Hanson explained that flags have changed, giving different examples of this. Once the flags have changed the new flag should be flown. Adding the old MN flag is no longer our flag.
- Rigg stated he will have a conversation with Council regarding the flag.

Staff Communications:

- Rigg stated that he will share with the commission any updates to the Strategic Plan once it is finalized.

Adjournment: 7:25PM

Motion to adjourn was made by Hanson and seconded by Corey-Gruenes at 7:25pm. On a voice vote, all members present voted in favor of said motion, 6-0. Meeting adjourned. Next meeting will be Thursday, June 11, 2026, at 6:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Karla Tukua
Human Rights Commission Secretary

Approved:



Charles Alkula
Human Rights Commission Chair