



# 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, September 09, 2024

Time: 5:30 PM

Location: City of Topeka Holliday Building, 620 SE Madison St. Topeka, Kansas

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## Meeting Agenda

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call
- II. Agenda and Prior July and August Meeting Minutes
- III. New Business
  - a. Commission Retreat – HRC
  - b. Commission Webpage Review – HRC
- IV. Old Business
- V. Staff Update
- VI. Committee Reports:
  - i. Planning and Events Committee
  - ii. Advocacy Committee
  - iii. Education and Outreach
    1. AARP Survey
- VII. Commissioners Update
- VIII. Public Comment
- IX. Important Dates/Events
  - a. National Welcoming Week – September 13-22, 2024
  - b. National Hispanic Heritage Month – September 15 - October 15, 2024
  - c. Citizenship Day – September 17, 2024
  - d. LGBT History Month – October 1- 31, 2024
  - e. Native American Heritage Month- November 2024
  - f. Human Rights Day – Sunday, December 10, 2024
- X. 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 785-368-3797 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 8, 2024  
**Time:** 5:30 pm  
**Location:** City Hall 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room and Zoom

**Call to Order.** Chair Carmen Romero-Nichols called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

#### **Roll Call.**

**Present:** Chair Carmen Romero-Nichols; Vice Chair Roberts; Commissioner Luc Bensimon; Commissioner Marisol Marcelo, Commissioner Michaela Kerls, Commissioner Zachary Surritt, Commissioner Pamela James, Commissioner Alexis Simmons, Commissioner Jaron Balderes,

**Absent:** Commissioner Marcelo

**Visitors:** Taylor Bugg,

**Staff:** Director of Community Engagement & Interim DEI Officer Monique Glaude', DEI Senior Coordinator Zaynah Afada,

**Adoption of March 11 and May 13 Meeting Agenda: Commissioner Kerls motioned to adopt the agenda, and Vice-chair Robert seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **New Business.**

- **New Commissioner Introductions**—Commissioner Jaron Balderes introduced himself as the new Commissioner from District 3, describing his role in the community and his work. All members of the HRC present introduced themselves.
- **Language Access Survey & Survey Results**—Commissioner Surritt motioned to move the language survey discussion to the August meeting, and Chair Romero-Nichols seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- **HRC Marketing Plan: Communications Plan**—Taylor Bugg provided a detailed overview of the HRC marketing plan based on the discussion during the May HRC meeting and recommendations on the next steps.
  - Chair Romero-Nichols asked when the Commission would review the logo; Zaynah responded that logos would be shared in the August meeting.
  - Commissioners shared their excitement for the plan and look forward to the future content the HRC will share with the public.
- **National Night Out Event Outreach**—Monique Glaude'-information regarding National Night Out, which will take place on August 6 at West Ridge Mall from 4–7 pm. She asked if the HRC would be interested. Members of the HRC expressed interest in tabling at the event. Chair Romero-Nichols expressed interest in tabling. Other Commissioners will follow up by emailing Monique.

- **HRC Subcommittee Expectation** – Chair Romero-Nichols shared the importance of monthly subcommittee meetings to continue the HRC's work. She expressed that recommitment needs to be assisted to make sure all members have a subcommittee that meets regularly. Discussion was held to reassign subcommittees.
  - Commissioner Surritt motioned to combine the AARP Survey Committee with the Education and Outreach Subcommittee; Vice Chair Roberts seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Subcommittee assignments are below.
    - **Education and Outreach/AARP:** Vice Chair Roberts, Commissioner Bensimon, Commissioner Balderes.
    - **Event Planning:** Chair Romero, Vice Chair Roberts, Commissioner James, Commissioner Marcelo,
    - **Policy Advocacy:** Commissioner Kerls, Commissioner Simmons, Commissioner Surritt
- **Taste of Topeka**—Chair Romero-Nichols shared that planning for Taste Topeka will resume after the HRC receives the community's survey feedback regarding what event to plan.
- **Newcomers Academy**—Zaynah shared that if commissioners are interested in hosting the Newcomers Academy, the planning process needs to begin during the summer so the classes can take place in the Fall. She shared that the staff does not have direction from the City Manager's Office regarding services to the immigrant community. After careful deliberation, the Commissioner has decided to continue this conversation in 2025.
- **Holiday Posada** – The Holiday Posada will take place on December 9 from 5:30-7:30 pm at Governor's Roe House. Commissioners hope to have more extensive participation than last year and encouraged other commissioners to add this event to the calendars. Monique Recommended that advertising should start start in October, Including he HRC being featured on the Red Couch and the KSNT morning show. The DEI Office and Community Engagement will cover the food cost.
- **Committee Reports.**
  - **Planning and Events**
    - None at this time
  - **Advocacy**
    - **NLC Commitments**
      - Zaynah provided an update regarding the Anchor Procurement Initiative and the Supplier Diversity Vendors Expo on July 10, 2024, from 9 am -2 pm at Washburn Memorial Union.
  - **Education and Outreach/AARP**
    - None at this time
- **Commissioners Updates**
  - The Chair and Vice-Chair attended the Kansas Hispanic Commission Gala
  - Many commissioners attended the Pride Palooza

- Commissioner James asked if the commissioners were interested in attending an MLK banquet; the commissioners expressed interest in attending should any event become available.
- Chair Romero-Nichols share information on the Culture event
- **Public Comment.** No public comment.

**Important Dates/Events.** Chair Romero-Nichols noted the important dates and events for the rest of the year.

**Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 6:39 pm.

**\*\*Next Meeting: September 9, 2024\*\***

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# CITY OF TOPEKA

## HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

### MEETING MINUTES DRAFT

**Date:** August 12, 2024  
**Time:** 5:35 pm  
**Location:** City Hall 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room and Zoom

**Call to Order.** Chair Carmen Romero-Nichols called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

#### **Roll Call.**

**Present:** Chair Carmen Romero-Nichols; Vice Chair Roberts; Commissioner Luc Bensimon, Commissioner Michaela Kerls, Commissioner Zachary Surrirt, Commissioner Alexis Simmons, Commissioner Jaron Balderes,

**Absent:** Commissioner Marcelo, Commissioner Pamela James,

**Visitors:** Eduardo Herrera

**Staff:** Director of Community Engagement & Interim DEI Officer Monique Glaude', DEI Senior Coordinator Zaynah Afada,

**Before approving the agenda and meeting minutes, Commissioner Kerls Motioned to add staff updates after old business. Commissioner Zurrit seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Adoption of March 11 and May 13 Meeting Agenda: Commissioner Zurrit motioned to adopt the agenda, and Commissioner Kerls seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **New Business.**

- **Language Access Survey & Survey Results**—Eduardo Herrera presented on Language Access. His presentation included an overview of language access, its framework, and actions the city is taking to create a language Access Policy, which consists of a community survey.

#### **Old Business**

- **Holiday Posada**—Zaynah shared that the Holiday Posada will take place on December 9 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Governor's Roe House. Because of the size of the space, participants will be capped at 75 people. Conchi's Cuisine will provide food for the event. Advertisement for the Holiday Posada will begin in Late September.

#### **Staff update**

- Zaynah shared information she received from Major Jana Kazor from the City of Topeka Police Department, inviting members of the HRC to participate in the Police Academy Active Bystander Training for Law Enforcement. A separate date and time will be

created for the training should commissioners want to participate. The commissioner expressed interest, and Zaynah will follow up with Major Kazor.

- Zaynah shared the HRC logo created by the Communications Department and asked for a vote on which logo they'd like to use. Commissioner Zurrit motioned to accept logo option two as the official logo for the HRC. Vice Chair Roberts seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Committee Reports.**
  - **Planning and Events**
    - The committee shared they have been meeting monthly to plan the holiday posada and decide on the food to be provided.
  - **Advocacy**
    - The committee met and shared the idea they are interested in pursuing. This includes the Crown Act, Voting, Voters Registration, and other resources.
  - **Education and Outreach/AARP**
    - The committee met and reviewed the AARP survey for the public, making notes on what should be added or revised. Director Glaude suggested including the Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging (JAAA) to assist with the conversation and help create the survey, which can be advertised to individuals visiting that organization.
- **Commissioners Updates**
  - Chair Romero shared that Commissioner James has submitted her resignation letter for the HRC. Commissioner James will not reapply after her term ends in December.
  - Vice-chair Robert shared that a few commission members attended the National Night Out Event on August 6. Commissioners shared a table with the ADA Advisory Board. They provided light bulbs as swag.
- **Public Comment.** No public comment.

**Important Dates/Events.** Chair Romero-Nichols noted the important dates and events for the rest of the year.

**Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

**\*\*Next Meeting: October 14, 2024\*\***

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