

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Fargo Human Relations Commission

**FROM:** Willard Yellow Bird, Cultural Planner, Community Development

**DATE:** October 2, 2017

**RE:** Human Relations Commission 2018 Goal Setting Session

The Human Relations Commission's 2018 Goal Setting session will be held Tuesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Downtown Fargo Public Library. If you are not able to attend, please contact staff at 701.241.1474 or [planning@FargoND.gov](mailto:planning@FargoND.gov).

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**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION  
2018 Goal Setting Session  
Tuesday, October 3, 2017 5:30 p.m.  
Community Room, Downtown Fargo Public Library  
AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. History of the Human Relations Commission and Dinner
3. Review draft of strategic plan
4. Prioritization/Timeline for doing
5. Bylaws
6. Adjourn

Human Relations Commission meetings are broadcast live on cable channel TV Fargo 56 and can be seen live by video stream on [www.FargoND.gov/streaming](http://www.FargoND.gov/streaming). They are rebroadcast each Thursday at 12:00 p.m.

People with disabilities who plan to attend the meeting and need special accommodations should contact the Planning Office at 701.241.1474 or TDD at 701.241.8258. Please contact us at least 48 hours before the meeting to give our staff adequate time to make arrangements.

Minutes are available on the City of Fargo Web site at [www.FargoND.gov/humanrelations](http://www.FargoND.gov/humanrelations).

## **Ordinance Creating the Fargo Human Relations Commission**

Article 15

Section

15-0201. Creation of Human Relations Commission.

15-0202. Number of members--Term of members--Appointment of members--Filling vacancies.

15-0203. President of commission--Meetings--Record to be kept.

15-0204. Goals of the Human Relations Commission

15-0205. Powers and duties of commission.

15-0206. Commission advisory in nature.

### **15-0201. Creation of Human Relations Commission.**

There is hereby created and established a body to be known as the Human Relations Commission, whose purpose is to promote the acceptance and respect for diversity through educational programs and activities and to discourage all forms of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, the presence of any mental or physical disability, status with regard to marriage or public assistance, participation in lawful activity off the employer's premise during nonworking hours which is not in direct conflict with the essential business-related interests of the employer or sexual orientation.

### **15-0202. Number of Members--Term of Members--Appointment of Members--Filling Vacancies.**

The Human Relations Commission shall consist of nine members, who shall be appointed by the president of the board of city commissioners, subject to confirmation by the Board of City Commissioners. The terms of office of such commissioners shall be as follows, to wit: three members who shall serve until July 1, 2001; three members who shall serve until July 1, 2002; and three members who shall serve until July 1, 2003. At the expiration of the terms of the members as aforesaid, members shall be appointed for three-year terms. If a vacancy occurs otherwise than by expiration of a term, it shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired portion of the term. Notwithstanding the expiration of a member's term, such member may serve until his or her successor has been appointed and qualified.

### **15-0203. President of commission--Meetings--Record to be kept.**

The Human Relations Commission shall elect its president for a term of one year from among the appointed members and shall hold regular monthly meetings. The commission shall keep a record of its resolutions, findings and the determinations and such record shall be a public record. The commission

may appoint such subcommittees from among the appointed members as it may be necessary for its work.

**15-0204. Goals of the Human Relations Commission.**

The goals of the Human Relations Commission are:

- A. To provide leadership in the areas of civil rights.
- B. To encourage and educate the public in the promotion of civil rights.
- C. To identify issues of principal concern to members of the community in the area of civil rights and to recommend priorities and objectives to the board of city commissioners.
- D. To encourage adherence to federal and state laws regarding civil rights, including Chapter 14-02.4 of the North Dakota Century Code, through education, conciliation and mediation.

**15-0205. Powers and Duties of Commission.**

The Human Relations Commission shall:

- A. Recommend to the board of city commissioners, from time to time, action and programs in furtherance of the purpose of the Human Relations Commission as described in this article.
- B. Consult and advise with public officials and agencies and with private individuals and organizations to provide education regarding civil rights. The commission may, in its discretion, assist aggrieved individuals, but such assistance shall consist of information, guidance and, in its discretion, conciliation and mediation services.

**15-0206. Commission advisory in nature.**

The Human Relations Commission shall be advisory in nature and shall submit all reports and determinations to the board of city commissioners of the city of Fargo. Final authority shall be in the board of city commissioners.

Source: 4081 (2000).

## FARGO HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION – STRATEGIC PLAN

### **Purpose**

The Fargo Human Relations Commission (HRC) is dedicated to promoting positive human relations in an increasingly diverse community. The HRC works to proactively address racism, homophobia, religious prejudice, bias, anti-immigrant sentiment, and other divisive attitudes that can lead to discrimination, tension, hate crime, and violence. Teaming up with law enforcement, schools and universities, area cities and counties, local organizations, communities of faith, youth, policy makers, businesses, individuals and leaders, the HRC can help bring people together.

### **Mission and Goals**

The mission of the Fargo Human Relations Commission is *to promote acceptance and respect for diversity and discourage all forms of discrimination*. The Human Relations Commission has three main goals. The functions and duties of the Human Relations Commission are specified in Ordinance 4081, Article 15-02 of the Fargo Municipal Code.

1. Measure and monitor community relations and civil rights issues
2. Educate the community on civil rights
3. Encourage adherence to Federal and State civil rights laws

The HRC's vision is that everyone in Fargo is connected through communication, compassion, creativity, understanding, justice, equity, opportunity, accountability, respect, and human dignity.

### **Commission**

The Fargo Human Relations Commission is part of local government with a 9-member volunteer board, appointed by the City Commission. The City's Cultural Planner staffs the HRC's programmatic work. Members serve 3-year terms with the chairperson being voted on by the membership. Generally, the HRC meets monthly and Individual Commissioner's serve on various committees and/or task forces. The HRC's signature projects include an annual event recognizing the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, presenting the Fargo Human Relations Awards to recognize effective practices in human rights/relations work, and supporting local organizations and activities that make up the community-wide infrastructure for human relations resources.

### **History**

In May 2000, Mayor Bruce Furness organized a group of residents to discuss the need for an organization that would address human relations issues in Fargo. Over that period of time, the study group met with a number of local stakeholders in addition to specialists at the state and national level. The study group found that a human relations commission in Fargo would be beneficial. On October 16, 2000, the Fargo City Commission created the Fargo Human Relations Commission to serve as an advisory board. A first in North Dakota. Shortly after, nine commissioners were appointed and met for the first time on November 17, 2000. In January 2001, an assistant planner was assigned to serve as the City staff liaison to the HRC. In addition, the Commission developed a specific set of objectives and strategies that would best allow it to communicate human relations issues to individuals and groups in Fargo.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

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The City of Fargo embraces the values of human diversity in its access to housing, employment, and social climate. Going forward, the HRC should focus on developing a detailed understanding of its purpose, improved communication, and commitment enhancing human relations by:

### **GOAL 1: Measure and monitor community relations and civil rights issues**

The Human Relations Commission must routinely measure and monitor community relations in an effort to show contributions and involvement and report the status of human relations to the community. The first goal seeks to provide a means for gathering and sharing information in order to encourage healthy relationships and facilitate human relations development in Fargo.

Objective A: Assessment. Utilize data to give the HRC information needed to prioritize, evaluate, and report

Objective B: Operations. Establish a process that the HRC can use to conduct its business in an open and understandable manner

### **GOAL 2: Educate the community on civil rights**

In the FM metropolitan area, there are a number of individuals and organizations that work to ensure that citizens have the opportunity to live unhampered by unlawful discrimination. The Fargo Human Relations Commission is part of that effort. The second goal seeks to provide all members of the community resources and activities that energize efforts to increase acceptance and build inclusion.

Objective A: Understanding & Acceptance. Promote awareness through education on human relations issues and increasing resources available to the public

Objective B: Events. Assist in the participation, creation and implementation of human relations awareness events and cultural activities that emphasize strength in diversity and the positive aspects in the community (i.e., MLK Day, Welcoming Week, picnics, festivals, fair housing education)

### **GOAL 3: Encourage adherence to Federal and State civil rights laws**

The most effective way to address divisiveness is to build coalitions and form support for actions that promote inclusiveness. The intent is to create welcoming communities and address the needs of people who are isolated because of discrimination. The third goal seeks to secure effective avenues of community sustainability by encouraging adherence to civil rights laws.

Objective A: Partnerships. Identify new and existing human relations resources and stakeholders, maintain relationships, and strengthen existing laws and enforcement mechanisms

Objective B: Recognition & Response. Acknowledge and encourage positive human relations activities and promptly respond to hate and critical issues as they arise in the community

**WHO CAN MAKE THIS MORE THAN JUST A PLAN**

A community that is serious about implementing ideas and strategies must also be willing to accept the responsibility for action. This happens when everyone works toward goals. The following table lists the proposed goals and objectives and identifies the people and groups who have accepted responsibility for coordinating implementation.

<b>GOAL 1:</b>	<b>What We Need to Do</b>	<b>Resources/Goal in Time</b>	<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Leadership</b>
<b>Measure and monitor community relations and civil rights issues</b>				
<b>A) Assessment</b>				
<b>Utilize data to give the HRC information needed to prioritize, evaluate, and report</b>	Offer resources to support civil rights and legislative initiatives			
	Collect and present data visually			
<b>B) Operations</b>				
<b>Establish a process that the HRC can use to conduct its business in an open and understandable manner</b>	Develop a resource for commissioners that details the HRC's mission, vision and plan, as well as meeting protocol, calendar, and contact information			
	Update the City Commission on the HRC's work annually			
	Prepare presentations that can be offered to service groups & organizations			
	Create a board handbook and process for development and new member orientation			

GOAL 2:	What We Need to Do	Resources/Goal in Time	Current Status	Leadership
<b>Educate the community on civil rights</b>				
<b>A) Understanding &amp; Acceptance</b>				
<b>Promote awareness through education on human relations issues and increasing resources available to the public</b>	Write letters to editors and publish on City website			
	Develop HRC page on City website to enhance understanding of the HRC and members			
	Bring the public together for community discussions and continue to conduct special meetings as issues arise			
	Create committees re New Americans, accessibility, media relations, legislative issues			
<b>B) Events &amp; Activities</b>				
<b>Assist in the participation, creation and implementation of human relations awareness events and cultural activities that emphasize strength in diversity and the positive aspects in the community</b>	Serve as a reference for speakers on various topics dealing with diversity and discrimination			
	Create a community calendar of multi-cultural events			
	Continue MLK Day, Welcoming Week, picnics, festivals, fair housing education			

GOAL 3:	What We Need to Do	Resources/Goal in Time	Current Status	Leadership
<b>Encourage adherence to Federal and State civil rights laws</b>				
<b>A) Partnerships</b> Identify new and existing human relations resources and stakeholders, maintain relationships, and strengthen existing laws and enforcement mechanisms	Develop a partnership with Fargo's private and public schools  Strengthen relationships with liaisons and stakeholders (Moorhead Human Rights Commission, ND Department of Labor and Human Rights, High Plains Fair Housing Center, NDSU, Fargo Police Dept, community organizations)			
<b>B) Recognition &amp; Response</b> Acknowledge and encourage positive human relations activities and promptly respond to hate and critical issues as they arise in the community	Record and report the success and performance of the HRC  Update the hate crime/hate literature prevention and response  Prepare materials/templates to be used when responding to critical issues (letters, contacts)  Continue Fargo Human Relations Awards			

- Other example activities
- Conduct primary research on local human relations issues (focus groups/survey)
  - Work towards the development of a cultural center



## Human Relations Commission's 2018 Project Timeline



### Proposed Added Events

- Tabling at a pow (1-3 days per year)
- Inclusion Planning (12 months)
- African American History Month with Jered Pigeon
- Hate Crime Planning (6-8 months)
- Tabling at Pangea (1 day per year)
- American's with Disabilities Event - Partner with Freedom
- High Plains Fair Housing Training Event
- Tell us your story nights - strategic locations
- On-Going Strategic Planning via the Executive Committee



**City of Fargo**  
**Human Relations Commission**  
**Ordinances and Bylaws**

**City Ordinances**

Powers and Duties. The Human Relations Commission of the City of Fargo was established by Fargo Municipal Code Article 15-02, which includes the powers granted and providing that the Human Relations Commission shall:

- A. Recommend to the board of city commissioners, from time to time, action and programs in furtherance of the purpose of the Human Relations Commission as described in this article.
- B. Consult and advise with public officials and agencies and with private individuals and organizations to provide education regarding civil rights. The commission may, in its discretion, assist aggrieved individuals, but such assistance shall consist of information, guidance and, in its discretion, conciliation and mediation services.

FMC §15-0205.

Advisory Role. The Human Relations Commission shall be advisory in nature and shall submit all reports and determinations to the board of city commissioners of the city of Fargo. Final authority shall be in the board of city commissioners. FMC §15-0206.

Purpose. The purpose of the Human Relations Commission “...is to promote the acceptance and respect for diversity through educational programs and activities and to discourage all forms of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, the presence of any mental or physical disability, status with regard to marriage or public assistance, participation in lawful activity off the employer's premise during nonworking hours which is not in direct conflict with the essential business-related interests of the employer or sexual orientation.” FMC §15-0201.

Number of Members—Term of Members—Appointment of Members—Filling Vacancies. The Human Relations Commission shall consist of nine members, who shall be appointed by the

president of the board of city commissioners, subject to confirmation by the Board of City Commissioners. The terms of office of such commissioners shall be as follows, to wit: three members who shall serve until July 1, 2001; three members who shall serve until July 1, 2002; and three members who shall serve until July 1, 2003. At the expiration of the terms of the members as aforesaid, members shall be appointed for three-year terms. If a vacancy occurs otherwise than by expiration of a term, it shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired portion of the term. Notwithstanding the expiration of a member's term, such member may serve until his or her successor has been appointed and qualified. FMC §15-0202.

President of Human Relations Commission—Meetings—Record to be kept. The Human Relations Commission shall elect its president for a term of one year from among the appointed members and shall hold regular monthly meetings. The commission shall keep a record of its resolutions, findings and the determinations and such record shall be a public record. The commission may appoint such subcommittees from among the appointed members as it may be necessary for its work. FMC §15-0203.

Goals of Commission. The goals of the Human Relations Commission are:

- A. To provide leadership in the areas of civil rights.
- B. To encourage and educate the public in the promotion of civil rights.
- C. To identify issues of principal concern to members of the community in the area of civil rights and to recommend priorities and objectives to the board of city commissioners.
- D. To encourage adherence to federal and state laws regarding civil rights, including Chapter 14-02.4 of the North Dakota Century Code, through education, conciliation and mediation.

FMC §15-0204.

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Upon motion made, seconded and approved by the members of the Human Relations Commission, and upon approval of the same by the Board of City Commissioners of the City of Fargo, the following are the Bylaws of the Human Relations Commission.

# Bylaws

## **Article I – Mission Statement:**

The Fargo Human Relations Commission works to promote acceptance and respect for diversity and discourages all forms of discrimination.

## **Article II – Human Relations Commission Meetings**

- 2 Regularly scheduled meetings of the Human Relations Commission shall be held on the third Thursday of every month at 12:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at Fargo City Hall or such other location as may be established by the Chair of the Commission or by the staff liaison.
  - 2.1 All Meetings of the Commission will be open to the public as is defined by the North Dakota Open Meeting Law, N.D.C.C. §44-04-17.1 *et seq.*
  - 2.2 All meetings shall be governed by Robert’s Rules of Order and these bylaws. In the event of an interpretive conflict between Robert’s Rules of Order and the bylaws, the bylaws take precedence.
  - 2.3 Action by the Commission can only be taken if there is quorum present. For purposes of taking action by the Commission, a quorum shall consist of a majority of appointed members of the commission. [For purposes of meeting the North Dakota Open Meeting Law requirements, a quorum is one-half, or more, of the appointed and seated Commissioners. N.D.C.C. 44-04-17.1subs. 15.]
  - 2.4 Decisions of the Commission shall be determined by a vote of the majority of those members present at the meeting.

### Special Meetings:

- 2.5 Special meetings may be convened by the Commission to conduct urgent business to a request by the Mayor or City Commission.
- 2.6 In addition, special meetings may be called by the Chair, the Vice Chair in the Chair’s absence, or upon request of three (3) members of the Commission.

## **Article III – Attendance**

- 3.1 Commission members shall attend all meetings. In the event that a member cannot be present, that information shall be communicated to the city staff liaison, at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.2 In the event a member has three unexcused absences within a calendar year, the Commission, by majority vote of the remaining members, may recommend the termination of the appointment of said member to the Board of City Commissioners.

**Article IV – Amendment of Bylaws**

- 4.1 Proposed amendments to these bylaws may be presented at any meeting of the Commission for consideration at the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting.
- 4.2 The bylaws may be amended by an affirmative vote of a majority of seated members of the Commission and subsequent approval by the Board of City Commissioners.