



Human Relations Committee

MEETING
August 19, 2026

**4th Floor Mayor's
Conference Room**

**City/County Office Building
221 N 5th Street**

4:00 PM

HRC Mission

The purpose of the Bismarck Human Relations Committee is to create an atmosphere of inclusion, equality, and accessibility through education and outreach to recognize the value of a diverse community.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. [Public Comment](#)
3. Consider Approval of Minutes
4. Community Conversations Forum
5. Community Events
 - A. Walk for Down Syndrome - September 26, 2026
 - B. Other Upcoming Events
6. Other Business

ADJOURN

The next regular meeting date is scheduled for September 16, 2026, at 4PM in the Mayor's Conference Room on the 4th floor of the City/County Building at 221 North 5th Street.



MEETING OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

7/15/2026 - MINUTES

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The Human Relations Committee met at 4:00 PM on Wednesday, April 15, 2026, in the 4th Floor Mayor's Conference Room, 221 N. 5th St. Committee members present included Vice Chair Joan Klein, Members Sargianna Wutzke, Betsy Zarr, and Thea Jorgensen.

2. [Public Comment](#)

No public comment was received.

3. Consider Approval of Minutes

Member Wutzke motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Member Zarr seconded, all voted aye. M/C

4. Community Conversations

The Community Conversations Subcommittee identified mental health or human trafficking as choices for the next Community Conversations Forum. Member Wutzke motioned to have mental health as the next Community Conversations topic, Member Zarr seconded, all voted aye. M/C

The committee discussed potential dates in October or November, and Dream Center as the tentative location, but decided to wait until the next meeting to discuss further when more members are present.

5. Humanitarian Award Presentation - Debrief

Member Wutzke expressed how well the presentation of the awards went. The committee discussed how to encourage more youth nominations for next year and the possibility of going to schools to speak about the Human Relations Committee.

6. HOBY Student Leadership Presentation - Debrief

The committee stated it was a great opportunity, and it went well with how engaged the kids were with the Human Relations Committee.

7. Community Events

A. Junteenth - Debrief

Member Zarr shared that the event went and there was good participation from the community for the event.

B. Walk for Down Syndrome - September 26, 2026

Member Wutzke talked with Designer Genes about how the HRC could participate in this year's event. Member Wutzke shared that Designer Genes is looking for volunteers to help hang event posters on August 18th, put event bags together September 21st, and to help with registration the day of the event on September 26th. Member Wutzke motioned for the HRC to give a \$250 sponsorship to Designer Genes of North Dakota, Member Jorgensen seconded, all voted aye. M/C

The committee agreed that they will discuss whether or not they want to have a table at the event at next meeting when more members are present.

C. Other Upcoming Events

North Dakota Asian-American Arts and Culture Initiative (NDAAACI) Kids Culture Series will be at the Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library for the following events:

India — July 23rd at 11 AM

South Korea — July 30th at 10 AM

Philippines — August 4th at 10 AM

Taiwan — August 11th at 10 AM

Mongolia — August 13th at 10 AM

Out of the Darkness Walk - North Dakota State Capitol Grounds - September 13th at 2 PM

8. Other Business

The committee and Commissioner Hull discussed what the committee expects from him as the new portfolio holder for the Human Relations Committee.

Member Wutzke encouraged everyone to listen to the newest These Are Your Neighbors episode since Member Fettig-Loftesnes was the guest.

ADJOURN

The next regular meeting date is scheduled for August 19, 2026, at 4PM in the Mayor's Conference Room on the 4th floor of the City/County Building at 221 North 5th Street.

Meeting adjourned at 4:37 PM.



MEETING OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

6/17/2026 - MINUTES

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The Human Relations Committee met at 4:00 PM on Wednesday, April 15, 2026, in the 4th Floor Mayor's Conference Room, 221 N. 5th St. Committee members present included Chair Katie Houle, Vice Chair Joan Klein, Members Sargianna Wutzke, Betsy Zarr, Mirabela Punga, and Denise Fettig-Loftesnes.

2. [Public Comment](#)

The Bismarck Integration Facilitator, Heather May, suggested notifying Mandan nominees that they were nominated for the Bismarck Humanitarian Award, and to let City of Mandan Administration know there may be interest for a Humanitarian Award for Mandan.

3. Consider Approval of Minutes

Chair Houle noted Levi Engelstad's last name was misspelled. Member Wutzke motioned to approve the minutes with the change in spelling, Vice Chair Klein seconded. M/C

4. Community Conversations

Vice Chair Klein gave an update from the subcommittee. The subcommittee suggested the next topic still be related to homelessness, but focusing more on what resources are available, such as medical, housing, food, and transportation, and the importance of making sure those resources are known. The committee discussed how they can make all the resources we have in the community known to the people who may need them. Member Wutzke suggested focusing on a topic that hasn't previously been talked about, such as mental health and substance abuse. It was proposed that the subcommittee meet again and form a list of potential topics and then send that list out to the rest of the committee to vote on.

5. Humanitarian Award

Chair Houle reported that all three of the nominees for the three categories for the Humanitarian Award will be present at the June 23 Commission Meeting to receive their award. Chair Houle and Member Jorgensen will be presenting the awards to the nominees.

6. HOBY Student Leadership Presentation

Chair Houle, Vice Chair Klein and Members Wutzke and Jorgensen will be presenting at the HOBY Seminar on Saturday, June 20, showcasing who the HRC is and how members of the Human Relations Committee show leadership within the community.

7. Community Events

A. NDAAACI Cultural Expo - Debrief

Member Fettig-Loftesnes reported that event went well, with a lot of interest in the HRC booth.

B. Capital City Pride - Debrief

Chair Houle reported that the event went well, with a lot of attendees approaching the HRC booth. The committee discussed coming up with talking points about the HRC for when they have booths at events.

C. Juneteenth - June 19, 5PM-9PM

Chair Houle and members Jorgensen and Zarr will be volunteering for the Juneteenth event at Dykshoorn Park in Mandan.

8. Other Business

Member Wutzke encouraged watching/listening to Know Your Neighbors podcast since Member Fettig-Loftesnes was a guest on the most recent episode.

Chair Houle will be absent for the next meeting, so Vice Chair Klein will be leading the July 15 meeting. Member Punga will also be absent.

ADJOURN

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Meeting adjourned at 4:47 PM