
CITY OF KALAMAZOO
Civil Rights Board
Wednesday, December 3, 2025 – 5:00 p.m. • City Commission Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Madison Lukeman, Sandra Calderon, Eursla Moore-Doyle, Joshua DeBoer, and Cathy Phason

MEMBERS ABSENT: Willow Sipling (Excused)

Ex-Officio Members: Tanya Hewitt-Smith and Commissioner Hoffman (Absent)

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Marcia Jones (Assistant City Attorney), Lal Tluangi (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Specialist).

The Civil Rights Board meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m. by Chair Phason.

Agenda: Vice-Chair Lukeman motioned to approve the agenda. Director Moore-Doyle seconded the motion. Motion approved by unanimous vote. Agenda adopted.

Minutes: Director Moore-Doyle motioned to approve minutes from October 1, 2025, supported by Vice-Chair Lukeman. Motion approved by unanimous vote. October 1, 2025, minutes approved.

Public Announcements and Communications: None.

New Business:

Board Chair Nomination and Election – Chair Phason stated that her term as Chair expires after one year, as all Chair terms are one year in length. She noted that nominations and elections will take place in February 2026, including the nomination and election of a Vice-Chair. She further clarified that a Chair may be re-elected to serve consecutive terms; however, a vote is required each year since the Chair term is limited to one year.

Board Roles and Participation Discussion – Chair Phason emphasized the importance of participation and attendance in subcommittees for both board members and community members. Vice-Chair Lukeman added that DEI staff have announced they will be stepping back from their roles in the subcommittees, meaning that subcommittee members will now be responsible for meeting notes, coordination, agendas, and other administrative tasks. DEI Specialist Tluangi clarified that staff will continue to be available for support, questions, and assistance as needed by the board. Chair Phason noted the importance of subcommittees becoming familiar with Microsoft Teams, as it is the current platform in use, or identifying alternative platforms if preferred. Vice-Chair Lukeman thanked DEI staff for their continued support and the administrative work they have provided.

Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 Presentation – DEI Specialist Tluangi provided a brief presentation on Imagine Kalamazoo 2035, outlining the timeline beginning with the “Imagine It” and “Plan It” phases, and introducing the upcoming “Design It” phase. She noted that city staff plan to hold focus groups and community meetings to help finalize Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 by Spring 2026. DEI Specialist Tluangi also inquired about the Board’s interest in selecting a volunteer to serve as a Board liaison, who would be responsible for attending at least one community event during the Imagine Kalamazoo “Design It” phase. Chair Phason stated that, following the resignation of Director Burpee, who previously served as the Board liaison, a volunteer from the Board will be needed to fill this role.

Board Membership and Subcommittee Appointment – Following the resignation of Director Burpee, Chair Phason asked Director Moore-Doyle if she was interested in participating in the Education Subcommittee. Vice-Chair Lukeman provided an update on the Education

Subcommittee, including the number of meetings held, participating agencies, the goal of including a community-impacted member, and recent developments such as the establishment of co-leadership. The Subcommittee also requested the creation of media materials for community education purposes, with two Subcommittee members providing feedback on content focus. Chair Phason and Vice-Chair Lukeman noted that media materials will be developed for both tenants and landlords.

Discussion followed regarding the Education Subcommittee meeting time, with consideration given to adjusting the schedule to better accommodate members' availability. DEI Specialist Tluangi shared that she made several suggested options, including having members submit their availability to staff for survey creation or using SharePoint Forms to collect responses, noting that the decision rests with the Subcommittee. Chair Phason encouraged the Subcommittee to identify a workable meeting time to ensure continued progress.

Director Moore-Doyle stated she would not be able to commit to the Education Subcommittee meeting schedule. Director DeBoer indicated that either he or Director Willow would be interested in joining the Education Subcommittee, with Chair Phason advising that one of them reach out to Vice-Chair Lukeman. Director Calderon shared that there is currently a strong applicant who may be suitable for interview to fill the open Board position. Vice-Chair Lukeman asked Director Moore-Doyle if she would be interested in serving on the Nominating Committee, and Director Moore-Doyle confirmed her interest.

2026 Civil Rights Board Meeting Schedule – Vice-Chair Lukeman motioned to approve 2026 Civil Rights Board Meeting Schedule, Director Moore-Doyle seconded. Motion approved by unanimous vote. 2026 Meeting Schedule adopted.

Public Comments:

Shona Espinoza – shared concerns regarding communication from the Education Subcommittee. She stated that she was aware of a meeting but had not been contacted directly and had not received any information about the meeting. She expressed dissatisfaction with the overall lack of communication related to the subcommittee.

Tobi Hanna-Davis - shared that she has continuously supported the Board and expressed hope that a Board member will be involved in the Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 initiative to advocate for equity being included as a key aspect of the plan. She also thanked the Board for the progress made by the Education Subcommittee regarding brochures.

Dawn Miller – participant in the NACD Imagine Kalamazoo meetings expressed interest in the next phase of the Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 plan. The participant suggested that the City use SurveyMonkey to schedule Education Subcommittee meetings and emphasized the importance of having a laundromat in the Northside community.

Miscellaneous Board Comments: Vice-Chair Lukeman addressed Shona and noted that DEI Specialist Lal emailed the Education Subcommittee requesting Shona's email address. As Ms. Espinoza had to leave the meeting, Vice-Chair Lukeman suggested that community members reach out directly to DEI Specialist Lal to make contact.

Director Eursla asked whether interview times had been set or if dates were still being determined. Director Calderon responded that the Nomination Committee coordinates availability via email among committee members, staff, and applicants, and emphasized the importance of clear communication between board members, staff, and the public.

Chair Phason addressed Ms. Espinoza and stated that she believed she had already shared her email address and would ensure it was provided. Chair Phason also emphasized the importance of advocacy and community attendance at meetings, particularly regarding the Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 initiative, noting that community input is essential and that a board liaison will be involved in the Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 process.

Closing Comments: None

Next Meeting: February 4th, 2026, at 5:00 pm

ADJOURNMENT: 5:56 pm

Lal Tluangi, Recording Secretary
Tanya Hewitt-Smith, Staff Liaison
Stephanie Hoffman, City Commission Liaison
Cathy Phason, Chairs