
CITY OF KALAMAZOO
Civil Rights Board
Wednesday, April 1, 2026 – 5:00 p.m. • City Commission Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Madison Lukeman (Excused), Sandra Calderon, Eursla Moore-Doyle, Joshua DeBoer, Willow Sipling, and Cathy Phason

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Lal Tluangi (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Specialist).

The Civil Rights Board meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by Chair Phason.

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

Minutes: Director DeBoer motioned to approve minutes from February 4th, 2026, supported by Vice-Chair Sipling. Motion approved by unanimous vote. February 4th, 2026, minutes approved.

Public Announcements and Communications: None.

New Business:

Education Subcommittee Update – Vice-Chair Sipling reported that the subcommittee has begun holding one-on-one, face-to-face meetings between individual subcommittee members and impacted community members, rather than scheduling full group sessions. The subcommittee has also shifted to meeting once per month and has advertised its interest in welcoming additional community members to join. Chair Phason inquired whether Director Moore-Doyle remained interested in serving on the subcommittee, and Director Moore-Doyle confirmed that she is still interested.

Ordinance Review Subcommittee Update – Chair Phason thanked City Manager Hankins for attending the previous board meeting and noted that she and Vice-Chair Sipling also met with him individually. Chair Phason inquired about the existence of investigative training and whether a manual was available. She then asked Director Calderon if she recalled any investigative training; Director Calderon stated that she did not recall any such training. Accordingly, Chair Phason indicated that the board would like to see such training provided in the future.

Board Member Nomination – Chair Phason reported that the Nominating Committee interviewed one candidate and has nominated her to move forward for board discussion and vote. The board was provided with the nominee's résumé and application materials. Director DeBoer requested confirmation that the committee was recommending the nominee for advancement. Chair Phason then asked Director Calderon, a member of the Nominating Committee, to provide additional details about the candidate. Director Calderon noted that the nominee has experience in government, including work with the County Road Commission, as well as a history of collaboration, including managing her own business and other initiatives that would make her a strong addition to the board. Director Moore-Doyle moved to advance the nominee, seconded by Director Calderon. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. The nomination will be forwarded to the City Commission.

Navigating City Platforms – Chair Phason reported that community members have provided feedback regarding difficulties navigating the City's website and locating information. DEI Specialist Tluangi shared that, in discussions with the Chair and Vice-Chair, the primary concern was the accessibility of meeting agendas and minutes. At their request, all meeting minutes from 2023

onward were removed from the City's webpage to reduce confusion, as the City has transitioned to CivicClerk as the platform for posting meeting agendas and minutes. The CivicClerk platform is directly linked on the City's website and includes filtering options that allow users to select specific boards when searching for agendas and minutes. The platform also features a calendar function that enables users to search by date and year. The City Commission has fully transitioned to this platform, while other boards have been slower to streamline their use of it.

Vice-Chair Sipling thanked the City for implementing the requested changes and for clarifying where agendas and minutes can be found on the website. She also encouraged community members to continue providing feedback to improve website accessibility.

Civil Rights Complaint Updates – DEI Specialist Tluangi reported that two formal complaints have been received in 2026 to date. One complaint, related to KDPS, requires additional review. The second complaint was determined to fall outside the scope of the ordinance and was forwarded to the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) as it involved a violation subject to a fine.

A third matter involved three unhoused individuals who stated that they had submitted a complaint; however, no physical complaint form has been received by City staff to date. The individuals raised similar concerns, including allegations of favoritism, unfair bans, and misconduct by a worker at a local service organization. One complainant later reported additional serious allegations involving harassment and solicitation at the facility and was advised to contact KDPS to report the incident. At this time, DEI staff are awaiting resubmission of formal complaints and any additional information from the individuals.

DEI Specialist Tluangi noted that communication with the individuals has occurred via phone, and documentation of these interactions is being maintained in the complaint log. Director Calderon requested clarification regarding the third matter, specifically the absence of submitted complaint forms. DEI Specialist Tluangi explained that first-floor staff were asked whether any forms had been received, and drop boxes were checked, but no forms were found. The individuals were informed that DEI staff are available to assist in completing complaint forms. All three individuals have DEI Specialist Tluangi's contact information, and she has returned calls and left voicemails when possible.

Public Comments:

Caleb Leonard – Shared that the City's website is hard to use and not accessible and requested that the microphones' volume needed to be increased. Also stated that he has health issues and that the county jail does not provide those in jail with their prescription and that he will be working with others to file a complaint. Shared that traffic safety for children needs to be taken serious as there have been accidents recently and that we are discriminating against our children. Highlighted that Director Lukeman is a stain to the board and is nicknamed the slumlord.

Kaleb Beiter – Shared that the board's page, specifically the Civil Rights Board, has many steps to find recordings of board meetings, agendas, and minutes, and suggested that all these links need to be readily on the website. Stated that there are 6 names listed for board members and no information on vacancy, term information, or non-resident or resident status.

Charlae Davis – Thanked the board and members of the subcommittee and appreciates the opportunity to give feedback on the City's website. Hopes the board can be in more collaboration with the City Commission for enforcement ability and asked what the community can do to support the work of the board more. Stressed the importance of complaints being reviewed and having a resolution as it strengthens trust and accountability.

Miscellaneous Board Comments: Vice-Chair Sipling thanked those who spoke during public comment and stated that public comment is what the community can do to contribute, as more

voices make a difference. She provided an update on the brochure, noting that once additional feedback from impacted community members is received, printing can begin.

DEI Director Hewitt-Smith noted that City Commission Liaison Commissioner Hoffman was not in attendance. She thanked those who provided public comment, emphasized that DEI staff take pride in communication, and stated that the work requires a collective effort. She also thanked DEI Specialist Lal for her hard work.

Chair Phason thanked board members and staff who support the board, expressed appreciation for the growing attendance and public comment, even when not directly related to civil rights, and thanked City Manager Hankins for meeting with her and Vice-Chair Sipling. She also highlighted the upcoming board vacancy.

Closing Comments: None

Next Meeting: June 3rd, 2026, at 5:00 pm

ADJOURNMENT: 5:41 pm

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

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