



**Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
January 15, 2026
City Space, 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902
6:30 pm**

1. WELCOME

- a. CALL TO ORDER
 - i. Chair, Heather Roberson Gaston, called the meeting to order at 6:35pm
- b. ROLL CALL
 - i. Present
 - 1. Heather Roberson Gaston
 - 2. Callum von Schill
 - 3. Elizabeth Stark
 - 4. Mariane Asad Doyle
 - 5. Suzanne Lynn
 - ii. Absent
 - 1. Dawn Lawson
 - 2. Jayson Whitehead
- c. MISSION (recited by all): *Act as a strong advocate to justice and equal opportunity by providing citywide leadership and guidance in the area of civil rights.*

2. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - i. None
- b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC
 - i. None

3. MINUTES

- a. Review of minutes from 10/16/2025
 - i. Vote
 - 1. In favor: 3
 - 2. Opposed: 0
 - 3. Abstained: 2
 - ii. Motion to approve minutes passes
- b. Review of minutes from 11/06/2025
 - i. Vote
 - 1. In favor: 2
 - 2. Opposed: 0
 - 3. Abstained: 3
 - ii. Motion to approve minutes passes

4. BUSINESS MATTERS

- a. CHAIR UPDATE
 - i. Chair discusses commissioner engagement and ways to increase collaboration with the City
 - 1. Commissioners discuss contacting other Human Rights

- Commissions in the State to collaborate
 - 2. Commissioners discuss inviting City management staff and/or Council members to a future HRC meeting
 - ii. Chair asks about Commissioners' preferences for frequency and platforms for HRC meetings
- b. OHR STAFF REPORT
 - i. Policy & Impact Analyst asks Commissioners to consider whether they would like to do a public poll prior to the Annual Planning Meeting
 - 1. Commissioners would like to do a public poll
 - ii. Director shares that amendments to the Human Rights Ordinance are being drafted and will be shared with the HRC at the February Regular Meeting for review
 - 1. Director provides an overview of proposed changes, which may include changes to the board composition requirements for the HRC, changes to eligibility requirements for Human Rights Commissioners, and provisions to allow staff to hire services related to receiving and investigating housing complaints if the City does not have a contract with the federal Housing and Urban Development agency

5. WORK SESSION

- a. HRC Officer Elections
 - i. Motion to nominate Heather Roberson Gaston for Chair is seconded
 - 1. Vote
 - a. In favor: 5
 - b. Opposed: 0
 - c. Abstained: 0
 - 2. Motion to elect Heather Roberson Gaston as Chair of the Human Rights Commission passes
 - ii. Staff member suggests postponing Vice Chair election until more commissioners are present to nominate and vote
 - 1. Motion to postpone the election for the Vice Chair to the February Regular Meeting
 - a. Vote
 - i. In favor: 5
 - ii. Opposed: 0
 - iii. Abstained: 0
 - b. Motion to postpone the Vice Chair election passes
- b. Discussion of HRC Annual Planning Meeting
 - i. Commissioners discuss availability and scheduling for the Annual Planning Meeting
 - 1. The meeting will be held March 5th, 2026 at 5:45pm. Location to be determined.
- c. Work Plan check-in
- d. New Business
 - i. None

6. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. Public comment
 - i. None
- b. Commission response to Matters by the Public

7. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

- a. Commissioner shares that the annual Point in Time Count will be held on January 28th and 29th and encourages commissioners to volunteer
- b. Commissioner shares updates regarding increased federal enforcement activity and a proposal to build a large federal detention center in Ashland, Virginia
 - i. Commissioners discuss contacting the City Attorney's Office and/or the Commonwealth Attorney to understand local implications of federal enforcement activity

8. NEXT STEPS

- a. None

9. ADJOURN

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:51pm