

CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

CITY OF DAVENPORT, IOWA

Tuesday, June 9, 2026; 12:00 PM

Virtual Via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84869608008?pwd=MUhuMUNSUUnp4WIZndk9tbXZiMIY1UT09>

I. Roll Call

Virtual Via Zoom:

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II. Approval of Agenda

III. Approval of Minutes

A. May 2026 Minutes

IV. Director's Report

A. May 2026 Director's Report

B. May 2026 Case Status Report

V. New Business

A. E-0040-0021-17

VI. Old Business

VII. Public Comment and Presentation

VIII. Adjourn

IX. Next Meeting

City of Davenport
Civil Rights Commission

Department: Civil Rights
Contact Info: |
Subject:
May 2026 Minutes

Action / Date
6/9/2026

Attachments:

1. DCRS Reg Meeting May 12, 2026

DAVENPORT CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Tuesday, May 12, 2026; 12:30 PM

The Davenport Civil Rights Commission (DCRC) met at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 12, 2026, online using Zoom. Commission Vice Chair Frank Holley presided over the meeting.

Commission Vice Chairman Holley had Commissioner Transou take the roll call.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ethelene Boyd
Michael Guster (Joined at 1:13 p.m.)
Frank Holley
Charlene Upchurch-Taylor
Jeff Transou

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Commission Chair Guster until 1:13 p.m.

OTHER PERSONS PRESENT:

Director Lacey
Basha Gerlach
Nicole Gleason
Alderman Dunn
Judith Herrman
Others from the community

AGENDA

Commissioner Holley called for the approval of the agenda. Commissioner Boyd made a motion to approve the agenda; Commissioner Upchurch-Taylor seconded the motion. Commissioner Holley recommended the Commission move the finance presentation scheduled for today to first item so the presentation could be given first. All Commissioners voted Aye to approve the agenda with the finance presentation first.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Commissioner Upchurch-Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Boyd, minutes of the regular meeting of March 10, 2026, were approved. All Commissioners voted yes.

FINANCE PRESENTATION

A City Finance presentation was given by Basha Gerlach, along with Nicole Gleason and Alderman Dunn. City Finance outlined the budget calendar and process: fiscal year July 1st through June 30th, departmental submissions via Munis beginning in September, reviews and Council workshops in January-February, adoption required by April 30th, and a 600-page budget book posted online and submitted for GFOA recognition in June. Finance emphasized conservative, Council-guided budgeting that matches restricted and general fund revenues to expenditures and noted recent state legislation limiting general fund growth while allowing recognition of new property tax growth.

The Civil Rights budget presentation showed total budget growth from about \$682,000 to \$893,000 (=30%) driven by allocated expenses (software) and increased general fund support for salary costs. Fair housing revenue estimates were reduced to \$100,000 to reflect historical contract receipts; salary and benefit budgeting practices (vacant positions budgeted at family insurance rates) inflate trust-and-agency accounts during vacancies. The presenters agreed to share detailed charts and reconcile a November 14th transfers question and a previously discussed staffing conversion that was not reflected in Council materials.

Ms. Gerlach stated she would check whether demographics are provided for the citizen survey respondents and inform Director Lacey of those demographics if they are available and provide the information by the end of the week. She also stated that she would review November 14 emails about transfers and verify the sequence of transactions and any reasons for transfers related to the Fair Housing fund.

It was decided that meeting participants will submit any specific budget questions to Director Lacey or Director Gerlach for compilation and response. Director Lacey will forward the previously submitted questions to Ms. Gerlach for follow-up. The Commission will compile and resubmit the Commission's specific issues and request scheduling for a later session to address those items. The Commission will compile and package specific questions for the next session so the department can address them directly. Follow-up memos will be resent regarding the independent contractor funding, one-time carryover request, and office relocation status.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director reported one right-to-sue letter issued in March, and a conciliation settlement of \$30,000 for a complaint alleging race and disability discrimination in employment.

The Director described follow-up meetings with City leadership regarding unresolved items including staffing-position clarifications, independent contractor funding, a requested one-time carryover, and the status of office relocation and vacation-hours policy changes. Director Lacey stated the office has updated fair housing training materials and upgraded case-management software to automate document generation and deadline tracking so the system can send notices and reduce manual deadline management.

The Director summarized immediate-effect state legislation requiring changes to intake processing, notice language about the option to file with the state, mandatory cross-filing with the Iowa Civil Rights Office, 300-day tracking, and a 12-month transfer option initiated by either party, plus a state-mandated two-year Commissioner term. The state has declined to issue rules and directed processes with internal legal counsel, leaving unresolved questions about handling complaints actionable only under local ordinances and raising due-process and liability concerns.

The Director reviewed April case activity, noting one right-to-sue and three mediation settlements including housing and employment outcomes with monetary relief and public-interest remedies.

Director Lacey described follow-ups from the prior meeting including a commitment for the Finance Director to attend and delivery of fair housing training materials; staffing updates noted an interim housing analyst and the senior analyst handling intake and investigations. The Director raised uncertainty about two approved full-time hires due to unresolved FY27 budget funding and said document updates for new case-processing procedures are ongoing because a new law took effect immediately.

NEW BUSINESS

B. H-0123-0043-23

The Commission considered this housing case and found probable cause, voted to send it to public hearing. A motion was made by Commissioner Upchurch-Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Boyd, and approved by all Commissioners.

The Commission then considered two companion housing cases alleging discriminatory lending and retaliation and voted to combine them into one joint public hearing.

C. H-0017-0060-22, and D. H-0083-0117-22

This case involved race and retaliation claims. The Director advised a joint public hearing on both cases. A motion was made by Commissioner Boyd, seconded by Commissioner Upchurch-Taylor. All Commissioners approved the motion.

E. E-0073-0038-17

The Director described this case as an employment matter alleging sex discrimination and hostile work environment and recommended against sending it to public hearing because of limited hearing capacity. Commissioner Transou moved that the Commission does not take this case to public hearing, Commissioner Boyd seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposing votes.

OLD BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT AND PRESENTATION

An attorney for the respondent, Judy Herman, requested that E-0073-0038-17 be transferred to the Iowa Office of Civil Rights under a new Iowa law that mandates transfer for cases unresolved within 12 months and asserted the Commission lacked jurisdiction to vote on a public hearing for the case. The attorney also recounted substantive delay concerns and case facts regarding the complainant and the testing issue underlying the allegation.

The Director and Commissioners confirmed that the transfer process to the Iowa Office of Civil Rights had been initiated and that the office will follow internal procedures developed with the state agency while continuing normal case work, noting compliance with EEOC contract requirements. Commissioners stated they would address any further procedural matters as needed.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Boyd made a motion to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded by Commissioner Holley, all Commissioners voted yes to adjourn the meeting. The meeting ended at 1:47 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Commission is June 9, 2026, at 12 noon.

Submitted by Commission Secretary, Jeff Transou

City of Davenport
Civil Rights Commission

Department: Civil Rights
Contact Info: |
Subject:
May 2026 Director's Report

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1. June 2026 Director's Report

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT FOR THE DAVENPORT CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION FOR
May 2026**

I. CASE STATUS

1. Three “right to sue” letters were issued in the month of May.
2. No cases settled in mediation or conciliation in the month of May.

II. OTHER ACTIVITY

1. The Director worked on the annual report.
2. The Director completed case processing documentation.
3. The Director worked on the requested followup packet from the budget presentation and submitted it to City Administrator Gleason, Alderwoman Newton, Chairperson Guster and Vice Chairperson Holley to followup on the matters that have remained unresolved from prior meetings.
4. The Director worked with staff on the updated proposal on the property proposed for the office relocation tailored to the specific requests submitted by the Commission.
5. The Director conducted a fair housing training for a local organization.
6. There remains no resolution to the internal complaint regarding the interception of the Commission’s confidential mail, it was submitted on December 20, 2023.
7. The Director worked on case resolution documents.
8. The Director worked with outside counsel on the review and submission of documents.
9. The Director worked on litigation.
10. The Director continues to pause review of applications for the open positions pending an update on FY27 budget.
11. The Director met with our EEOC monitor regarding processing procedures.
12. The Director continues to work on the update of training materials and professional development opportunities relating to the staffing realignment following the forced departure of the Asst. Director/Housing Programs Manager.
13. The Director and Administrative Assistant continued to work on reviewing and updating templates documents to reflect changes to case processing procedures.
14. The Housing Analyst position continues to be staffed on an interim basis by the Civil Rights Intake staff member.
15. The Civil Rights Intake Specialist worked on housing investigations.
16. The Civil Rights Intake Specialist worked on housing inquiries.
17. The Civil Rights Intake Specialist worked on case resolutions.
18. The Senior Civil Rights Analyst worked on case intakes.
19. The Senior Civil Rights Analyst worked on investigations.
20. The Senior Civil Rights Analyst worked on case resolutions.

III. OLD BUSINESS

1. Ongoing discrimination, harassment and bullying of Commission staff.
 1. Retaliatory actions against Commission staff and further examples of different treatment.
2. Legal Department refusal to accept Commission referral.
3. Use of racial slurs in City Hall. City’s failure to initiate complaint investigation.

4. The investigation of hostile working environment, still no findings over two years after the initiation of the investigation.
5. Continued refusal to process vacation correction, despite the subsequent resolution directing the reversal of any decisions infringing on the Commission's decision making authority.
6. Constructive discharge of Commission employees.
7. The Commission continues to face delays and obstructive actions by City Administration that have hindered resolution of matters previously presented to the City Council. These actions appear to be intended to undermine the Commission's mission and reflect ongoing retaliation and retaliatory harassment in response to substantiated complaints of discrimination and harassment.
8. Office Relocation - Still awaiting updates on the funding and viability of this project.
9. Council Resolution - The resolution was passed July 23, 2025 however past actions have not been corrected.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

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Civil Rights Commission

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None

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None