



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, January 12, 2026

Community Design Studio
7506 E. Indian School Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

PRESENT: Cynthia Romagnolo, Vice-Chair
Ashley Adams (arrived at 5:24 p.m./MS Teams)
Veronica Aguilar
Muhammad Babur (arrived at 5:45 p.m./MS Teams)
Mason Gates
Shiry Sapir
Chass Onkst

STAFF: Joy Racine, Community Involvement Manager
Holly Peralta, Interim Senior Director

Call to Order

Vice-Chair Romagnolo called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present as listed above.

Land Acknowledgement

Public Comment

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

- 1. Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes from December 8, 2025**

VICE-CHAIR ROMAGNOLO MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 8, 2025, HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER GATES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0). VICE-CHAIR ROMAGNOLO, COMMISSIONERS AGUILAR, GATES, ONKST AND SAPIR VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. COMMISSIONERS ADAMS AND BABUR NOT PRESENT. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

2. Adoption of the 2025 Annual Report

Commissioners reviewed the 2025 Annual Report.

VICE-CHAIR ROMAGNOLO MOVED TO APPROVE THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION 2025 ANNUAL REPORT. COMMISSIONER GATES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0). VICE-CHAIR ROMAGNOLO, COMMISSIONERS AGUILAR, GATES, ONKST AND SAPIR VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. COMMISSIONERS ADAMS AND BABUR NOT PRESENT. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

3. Discussion and selection of a Commission Chair and Vice-Chair to serve for 2026

Nominations were made during the December 8 meeting.

Nominees for Chair gave a brief overview of their background and the reasons they were interested in serving in the position.

ELECTED CHAIR: VERONICA AGUILAR, ELECTED BY THREE (3) VOTES VIA ANONYMOUS TIE-BREAKER PAPER VOTE. COMMISSIONER AGUILAR RECEIVED THREE VOTES, COMMISSIONER GATES RECEIVED TWO VOTES, AND COMMISSIONER ONKST RECEIVED ONE VOTE. COMMISSIONER BABUR WAS NOT PRESENT.

ELECTED VICE-CHAIR: CHASS ONKST WAS UNOPPOSED AND WAS APPOINTED TO THE POSITION OF VICE-CHAIR OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION. NO VOTE WAS TAKEN. COMMISSIONER BABUR WAS NOT PRESENT.

4. Presentation on recruitment efforts and programs currently in place

Commissioner Sapir gave an update on the progress she has made towards developing a City apprentice program for high school students. She said she had the opportunity to present her plan to the City Manager's office. They told her the City Manager has been working on a similar plan and expressed interest in incorporating aspects of her program ideas into their current efforts. They hope to work with City departments, Scottsdale Community College, Scottsdale Unified School District schools, EVIT, and the Mayor's Youth Council to implement citywide apprentice programs.

Holly Peralta, Interim Senior Director, gave an overview of strategic communication plans focused on recruitment and employment opportunities. She said the Communications Office was tasked six months ago to work with the Human Resources Department to develop a strategic communications plan. Ms. Peralta reviewed the elements of the plan, which focuses on how employment opportunities are communicated, who communications are intended to reach, and how communications reflect the City's values as a public service organization. She

said the hope is to increase awareness of City job opportunities, especially for those individuals who may not normally consider public sector employment, and to present Scottsdale as a professional, stable employer where employees understand how their work supports the community. The plan is to target local job seekers, veterans, and students. Commissioners commented throughout her presentation.

5. Discussion and possible action regarding the Unity Walk

Commissioner Aguilar said that the Unity Walk is scheduled for January 24, 2026, with a program starting at 4:30 p.m. and the walk beginning at 6:00 p.m. Vice-Chair Romagnolo will reach out to the Mayor's Youth Council staff liaison Kristy Hahn-McDonald to confirm plans.

6. Discussion, recommendations, and possible action regarding the Human Relations Commission's strategic plan

Commissioners expressed interest in moving forward with the following areas:

- Discussion regarding updating the 2026 strategic plan.
- Promoting events through social media, blogs, and reaching out to the City Council.
- Coordinating with other City commissions, in particular the Human Services Commission.
- Reaching out to youth through increased interaction with the Mayor's Youth Council.

7. Identification of Future Agenda Items

Future meeting agenda items could include:

- Presentation by Jewish Community Center Director Oded Kraus
- Strategic plan 2026 discussion

Commissioner Aguilar announced that the Commission has three passes available for the Martin Luther King Dinner on Thursday January 15, 2026, at Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts. She asked anyone interested in attending to contact her.

Adjournment

VICE-CHAIR ROMAGNOLO MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER GATES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0). VICE-CHAIR ROMAGNOLO, COMMISSIONERS ADAMS, AGUILAR, BABUR, GATES, ONKST AND SAPIR VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Recorded and Transcribed by eScribers, LLC.