



CITY OF YPSILANTI
REGULAR HUMAN RELATIONS MEETING
Thursday, March 20, 2025 @ 6:00 PM
Council Chambers
One South Huron, Ypsilanti, MI 48197
[Launch Meeting - Zoom](#)

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. February 20, 2025 Human Relations Commission Meeting Action Minutes

V. PUBLIC COMMENT - 45 MINUTES TOTAL (3 MINUTES/EACH SPEAKER)

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- B. Brought forth by Chair Layton -
Discussion on an opinion analysis article distributed to HRC commissioners
by Commissioner Munro at the November 14, 2024, meeting.
(Note: The article was not brought forth by Commissioner Munro at the November 14,
2024, meeting, nor part of any prior agenda, and not previously discussed)
"Supreme Court strikes down affirmative action programs in college admissions" by Amy
Howe ([article linked here](#))
- C. Brought forth by Chair Layton -
Review legal opinion of City Attorney Barker, Re: Inquiries of members of the Human
Rights (sp) Commission (HRC) after 1/16/2025 meeting, dated January 21, 2025
Provided to Commissioners at the February 20, 2025, HRC meeting
- D. Brought forth by Chair Layton-
Discussion of Washtenaw County's Public Safety and Mental Health
Preservation Millage to create local restrictions on funds use for mental health
and non-traditional forms of public safety
- E. Brought forth by Chair Layton -
Resolution Requesting that Millage Funds be spent on Mental Health and Non-
traditional Forms of Public Safety
- F. Brought forth by Chair Layton -
Resolution that Inaction is Discriminatory

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- G. Discrimination Complaint Tracking System - provided by City Attorney - reported to HRC by Clerk's Office

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT - CONTINUED (3 MINUTES/EACH SPEAKER)

IX. PROPOSED BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

- H. Please click [here](#) to access the City Council Contact Form. This form can be used to submit any comments/concerns you might have about this agenda.



**MINUTES
REGULAR HUMAN RELATIONS MEETING
6:00 PM - Thursday, February 20, 2025
Council Chambers
One South Huron, Ypsilanti, MI 48197**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers at 6:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

Commissioner Harper
Commissioner Layton
Commissioner Munro
Commissioner Myers

On Zoom:

Commissioner St. John
Commissioner Doulos

Absent:

Commissioner House (excused)
Commissioner Jackson (excused)

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Harper moved to TABLE to the next HRC meeting, Old Business C and New Business D and E. Commissioner Munro seconded the motion.

Yes: (4) Harper, Layton, Munro, Myers

No: (0)

Absent or ZOOM: (4) St. John, Doulos, House, Jackson

PASSED

Commissioner Harper moved to Approve the agenda. Commissioner Munro seconded the motion.

Yes: (4) Layton, Munro, Myers, Harper

No: (0)

Absent or ZOOM: (4) Doulos, House, Jackson, St. John

PASSED

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 16, 2025 Human Relations Commission Meeting Action Minutes

Commissioner Harper moved to Approve the January 16, 2025 Human Relations Commission Meeting Action Minutes. Commissioner Munro seconded the motion.

Yes: (4) Munro, Myers, Harper, Layton

No: (0)

Absent or ZOOM: (4) House, Jackson, St. John, Doulos

PASSED

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

One member of the public spoke.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

B. Discrimination Complaint Tracking System - provided by City Attorney - reported to HRC by Clerk's Office

C. Response from Randolph T. Barker, Ypsilanti City Attorney, regarding the request for opinion and/or additional information regarding the following subjects posed by the HRC at their January 16, 2025, meeting:

1. Is there an appeal process in response to the City Attorney's determination regarding whether probable cause exists to substantiate a complaint of discrimination? Relatedly, can forms and information related to filing of discrimination claims be included on websites and social media accounts?
2. May boards and commissions established by the City Charter establish subcommittees and appoint non-members to those subcommittees?
3. Administration of Washtenaw County's Public Safety and Mental Health Preservation Millage.

Tabled to March 20, 2025 meeting.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- D. Resolution Request brought by Chair Layton: A Resolution Requesting that Millage Funds be spent on Mental Health and Nontraditional Forms of Public Safety
Note: Resolution requests will need to be supported by another Commissioner to be discussed. If supported, the resolution can be discussed. Sections can also be amended by vote of all Commissioners. Lastly, it would be voted on for possible Pass/Fail of resolution by vote of all Commissioners to be sent to City Council.

Tabled to March 20, 2025 meeting.

- E. Resolution Request brought by Chair Layton: A Resolution titled, "Inaction is Discriminatory."
Note: Resolution request will need to be supported by another Commissioner to be discussed. If supported, the resolution can be discussed. Sections can also be amended by vote of all Commissioners. Lastly, it would be voted on for possible Pass/Fail of resolution by vote of all Commissioners to be sent to City Council.

Tabled to March 20, 2025 meeting.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

IX. PROPOSED BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING

Tabled Old Business: C

Tabled New Business: D & E

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm

- F. Please click [here](#) to access the City Council Contact Form. This form can be used to submit any comments/concerns you might have about this agenda.**

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE CITY OF YPSILANTI TO ESTABLISH LOCAL RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS FROM THE WASHTENAW COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY AND MENTAL HEALTH PRESERVATION MILLAGE TO ENSURE ALLOCATION TOWARD MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND NON-TRADITIONAL FORMS OF PUBLIC SAFETY

WHEREAS, in November 2017, Washtenaw County voters approved an eight-year Public Safety and Mental Health Preservation Millage to generate \$12 to \$15 million annually for mental health services and public safety, with a renewal approved on November 5, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the millage allocates 38% of funds to Washtenaw County Community Mental Health, 38% to the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, and 24% to cities and townships with their own police force, including Ypsilanti, based on proportional taxable values; and

WHEREAS, the stated purposes of the millage funds include crisis services, stabilization, mental health treatment, prevention programs, jail services, and public safety infrastructure improvements; and

WHEREAS, since Fiscal Year 2018-2019, the City of Ypsilanti has received approximately \$375,000 annually in millage reimbursement funds, accumulating over \$2.4 million; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ypsilanti has allocated significant portions of these funds to police-related expenditures, including police salaries, equipment, operational costs, and capital improvement projects, rather than prioritizing mental health services and alternative forms of public safety; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ypsilanti's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report states that special revenue funds, such as the Public Safety Fund (205), must be restricted to specific programs and projects, and should not be transferred to debt service or capital improvement projects; and

WHEREAS, Black residents in Washtenaw County are disproportionately impacted by the criminal legal system, being five times more likely to be arrested, three times more likely to die from an overdose, and comprising over 50% of those experiencing houselessness despite only making up 12% of the county's population; and

WHEREAS, the Ypsilanti City Council has passed resolutions requesting Washtenaw County allocate funds for an unarmed crisis response program (Resolution No. 2025-008) and toward the establishment of a permanent shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness (Resolution No. 2025-007); and

WHEREAS, the Human Relations Commission (HRC), per Section 58-35 of the Ypsilanti Code of Ordinances, serves as an advisory body to the City Council to study discrimination and

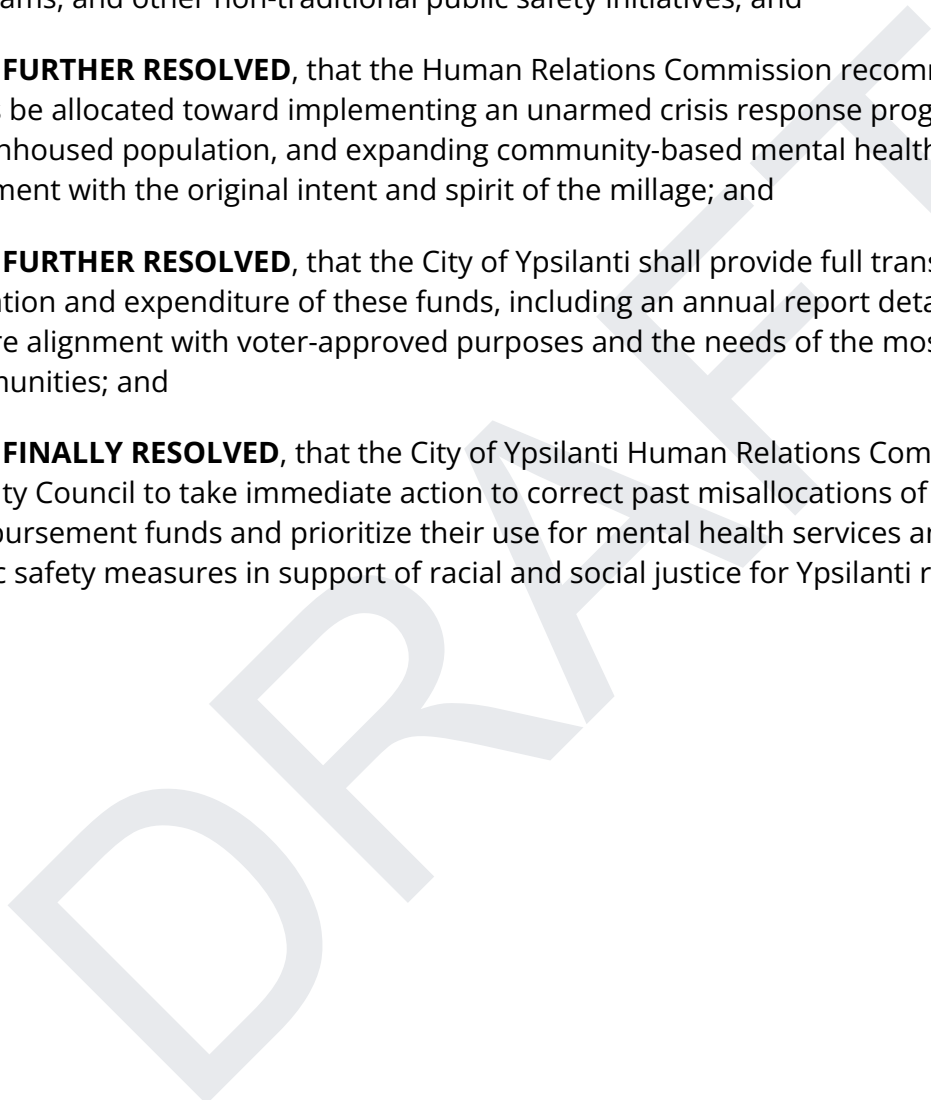
make recommendations to promote equity and mutual understanding within the community; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Ypsilanti Human Relations Commission urges the City Council to enact local restrictions on the use of Washtenaw County Public Safety and Mental Health Preservation Millage reimbursement funds to ensure they are directed toward mental health services, non-police crisis response programs, and other non-traditional public safety initiatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Human Relations Commission recommends that these funds be allocated toward implementing an unarmed crisis response program, supporting the unhoused population, and expanding community-based mental health services in alignment with the original intent and spirit of the millage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Ypsilanti shall provide full transparency in the allocation and expenditure of these funds, including an annual report detailing their use, to ensure alignment with voter-approved purposes and the needs of the most impacted communities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the City of Ypsilanti Human Relations Commission calls on the City Council to take immediate action to correct past misallocations of millage reimbursement funds and prioritize their use for mental health services and alternative public safety measures in support of racial and social justice for Ypsilanti residents.



A RESOLUTION DECLARING CITY COUNCIL INACTION AS DISCRIMINATORY

WHEREAS, the City of Ypsilanti recognizes that prejudice and discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, disability status, familial status, educational association, source of income, height, weight, and criminal conviction history pose significant threats to peace and public welfare, as affirmed in Section 58-31 of the Ypsilanti Code of Ordinances; and

WHEREAS, the Human Relations Ordinance mandates that the City Council and the Human Relations Commission proactively address discrimination through patterns of action or nonaction that cause social tensions, disparities, or harm, as outlined in Section 58-36; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has failed to act on pressing issues impacting marginalized communities, including but not limited to:

- The removal of the Planning Commission subcommittee Housing Affordability and Accessibility Report and Recommendations from the City Plan in 2020;
- The delayed passage of the Driving Equality Ordinance, which would address discriminatory traffic enforcement practices;
- The failure to advance a resolution in support of drug-checking services and other harm reduction efforts, which are critical to public health and safety;
- The introduction of language referring to people with disabilities and unhoused individuals as a "subsection of the population," which is contrary to the principles of equity and inclusion established in the Human Relations Ordinance; and
- The refusal to allocate over \$2.4 million from the Public Safety and Mental Health Millage reimbursement funds toward mental health and social services, despite the ordinance's recognition that systemic discrimination affects access to resources; and

WHEREAS, per Section 58-70, no governmental body may adopt, enforce, or allow policies that result in discriminatory effects, including those that create unequal opportunities for marginalized groups in housing, employment, or public accommodations; and

WHEREAS, per Section 58-35, the City's Human Relations Commission is tasked with recommending policies that prevent and rectify patterns of discrimination, including those perpetuated by inaction; and

WHEREAS, inaction by the City Council on these critical matters constitutes de facto discrimination by failing to remedy systemic inequities and by disproportionately harming vulnerable communities in Ypsilanti;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Ypsilanti recognizes its failure to act on these matters as a form of institutional discrimination; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council commits to immediate and measurable action, including:

1. The expedited passage of the Driving Equality Ordinance;
2. The introduction and passage of a resolution supporting drug-checking services and other harm reduction efforts;
3. The removal of language that dehumanizes people with disabilities and unhoused individuals from all city documents and resolutions; and
4. The commitment of Public Safety and Mental Health Millage funds to mental health and social services as part of an equitable approach to public safety; and
5. A request to amend Sections 58-76 and 58-77 of the Ypsilanti Code of Ordinances to hold public officials, city staff, and commission members accountable for discriminatory actions and to remove existing protections that shield them from personal liability in cases of discrimination.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the City of Ypsilanti affirms its duty to uphold the Human Relations Ordinance by actively working to eliminate systemic discrimination and by ensuring that public policy reflects the principles of equity, justice, and inclusion.

DRAFT

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March 11, 2025

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Ms. Lorrie L. Thomas
Deputy City Clerk, HRC Liaison
One South Huron Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

RE: Human Relations Commission Report
2025-03

Dear Ms. Thomas:

Section 58-67 of the Ypsilanti Code of Ordinance provides in relevant part:

(a) All persons claiming to be aggrieved by a discriminatory or unfair practice may, by themselves or by counsel, file with the city attorney a verified, written complaint which shall state the details, name and address of the person or entity alleged to have committed the discriminatory or unfair practice.

...

(d) After sufficient review and determination, the city attorney shall issue a written opinion to the human relations commission whether probable cause exists to believe a discriminatory practice or practices occurred as alleged by the complainant.

Consistent with the foregoing ordinance provisions:

The City Attorney's Office has not received any complaints alleging discriminatory or unfair practices since its last report to the Commission on February 18, 2025.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

CONLIN, MCKENNEY & PHILBRICK, P.C.

March 11, 2025

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Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'RTB', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Randolph T. Barker
City of Ypsilanti Attorney

RTB/jam