



**CITY OF YPSILANTI**  
**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Wednesday, November 10, 2021 @ 7:00 PM**  
**ZOOM MEETING**  
**One South Huron, Ypsilanti, MI 48197**

Page

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ROLL CALL**

Commissioner Abdo  
Commissioner Choudhuri  
Commissioner Hagenauer  
Commissioner Hill  
Commissioner McLaughlin  
Commissioner Robinson  
Commissioner Sharon  
Commissioner Smith

**III. AGENDA APPROVAL**

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**3 - 5**

- A. Approving the minutes of October 13, 2021.  
[HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION - 13 Oct 2021 - Minutes](#)

**V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE**

**VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- A. Social Equity and Data Collection Presentation - Alize Ashberry-Payne, Racial Equity for Washtenaw County

Data Presentation - Commissioner Choudhuri

- B. Creating a system to receive social equity data
- C. Information regarding App Presentation- Commissioner Hagenauer and Commissioner Smith
- D. Meet the Commissioner Campaign - Commissioner Hill

**7 - 11**

- E. Youth position voting on the Commission
- Youth seats may only be "honorary"

- Would not have voting power  
[Age requirement for office -boards and commissions](#)  
[Opinion various Qs from HRC chair 0-22719](#)

**VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE**

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

**IX. PROPOSED BUSINESS**

**X. NEXT MEETING DATE**

- A. December 8th, 2021

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**



# MINUTES HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION Meeting

7:00 PM - Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
ZOOM MEETING

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The HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION of the City of Ypsilanti was called to order on Wednesday, October 13, 2021, at 7:00 PM, in the ZOOM MEETING, with the following members present:

**PRESENT:**

**ABSENT:**

## 1 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM

## 2 ROLL CALL

**PRESENT:**

Commissioner Hagenauer (Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County),  
Commissioner Sharon (Rosedale, Ramsey County, Minnesota), Commissioner Abdo  
(Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County), Commissioner Choudhuri (Ypsilanti, Washtenaw  
County), Commissioner Smith (Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County), Commissioner  
Robinson (Romulus, Wayne County)

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Hill, Commissioner McLaughlin

## 3 AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Abdo moved, seconded by Commissioner Hagenauer to  
approve the agenda as submitted. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

## 4 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Approving the minutes of September 8, 2021.

Commissioner Hagenauer moved, seconded by Commissioner Abdo to  
approve the minutes of September 8, 2021.

Yes - 6    No - 0    Absent - 2

## 5 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

None

## 6 DISCUSSION ITEMS

### Reports from Commissioners

- Commissioner Choudhuri
  - Contacted Alize Ashberry-Payne, Racial Equity Officer from Washtenaw County. She will send data on statistics on personal wellbeing and use of social service needs. Pulling data specifically for Ypsilanti. Will receive by the end of next week.
    - Commissioner Choudhuri and Alize Ashberry-Payne will present data at the next meeting.
    - They are developing policies around the same issues as the Ypsilanti Human Relations Commission.
  
- Commissioner Hagenauer
  - Talked briefly about the app that is being built by Commissioner Smith
  - Talked about how to expand information and resources to residents of the city, kiosks/apps, and trying to get those who do not have internet access.
  - Outreach to groups regarding youth commissioner positions to get the word out
  
- Commissioner Smith
  - Reported on the development of an app that will link together a wide range of data about Ypsilanti
  - Cost and fees of app
  
- Will distribute flyer to schools to get more involvement from the youth

## 7 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

None

## 8 OLD BUSINESS

- a) Clarification regarding HRC Priorities from the September 8, 2021 Meeting.

## 9 PROPOSED BUSINESS

### Next Agenda Items for next meeting

- Commissioner Hagenauer and Commissioner Smith will present information around the app
- Commissioner Choudhuri and Alize Ashberry-Payne - presentation regarding social equity and data collection
- Youth position voting on the commission
- Commissioner Hill - Meet the commission campaign
- Creating a system to receive social equity data

**10 NEXT MEETING DATE**

- a) November 10, 2021

**11 ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Abdoo moved, seconded by Commissioner Choudhuri to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. On a voice vote, the motion carried.





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Gilbreath,  
P.C.**

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William F. Anhut ~ Of Counsel – Retired  
Jane A. Slider ~ Legal Assistant

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Robert Bruner, Asst Ypsilanti City Manager  
**FROM:** John M. Barr  
**DATE:** July 29, 2005  
**SUBJECT:** Eligibility to hold office

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You have requested my opinion as to whether a minor (person under the age of 18) may hold office as a member of a board or commission in the city of Ypsilanti.

The Ypsilanti City Charter sets out the requirements to hold elective office of Mayor or Council member in section 202 (c) as a "qualified elector" and resident of the ward of the office for 30 days. The Charter is silent on the qualifications of members of boards and commissions.

The City Charter in section 3.02 requires an elector to be a resident of the city and meet the requirements of state law.

State law as determined in the case of Attorney General v Abbot 121 Mich 540 (1899) provides that the minimum qualification for holding any office in the State of Michigan is being an elector.

The Michigan Constitution in Article II, Section defines elector as being a citizen, 21 years of age, residing in the state for 6 months and meeting the requirements of local law. The 26<sup>th</sup> amendment to the U.S. constitution lowered the voting age to 18 years of age, and thus an Ypsilanti elector must be age 18 or older, a U.S. citizen and city resident.

The city gets all power from the state and lacks power to change the age of an elector to less than 18.



**Barr,  
Anhut &  
Gilbreath,  
P.C.**

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Therefore it is my opinion that persons under the age of 18 may not hold "legal" city office in the city of Ypsilanti. Persons under the age of 18 may be not be elected to city officer or voting members of boards and commissions, but may be appointed to be "honorary" members of boards and commissions with the right to attend meetings and debate, but not to make motions or vote.





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## MEMORANDUM

**To: Andrew Hellenga, Ypsilanti Deputy City Clerk**  
**From: John M. Barr, Ypsilanti City Attorney**  
**Date: February 27, 2019**  
**Re: Questions from HRC**

Pursuant to your recent request, here are the questions proposed by the HRC chair and my answers:

- 1) Does the Mayor and City Council have a right to appoint individuals to the Human Relations Commission who are not qualified to be electors in the City of Ypsilanti?

Answer: On April 19, 1996 I wrote an opinion for Interim City Manager Robert A. Slone, Jr. on the subject mentioning that there was no state or local requirement (code or charter) for residency for appointed office. I invited City Council to amend the City Code if residency was required.

This situation continued until December 21, 2010 when City Council passed ordinance No. 1139, City Code Section 2-111, the present law, requiring residence for appointment to a city board or commission, and allowing an override with 5 votes.

- 2) Does the City Charter's language setting the number of the Human Relations Commission at nine prohibit the statutory addition of more than nine members to the Human Relations Commission?

Answer: Yes. If the commission desires to add more than 9 members the City Charter must be changed. The Charter reads:

9.02. Human Relations Commission. A Human Relations Commission consisting of nine members shall be established within six (6) months of the effective date of this Charter. The Commission



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as a whole shall be representative of the diversity of the entire community. The Commission shall endeavor to increase mutual understanding among the residents of the community and eliminate discrimination, and shall be assigned, by ordinance, such powers and responsibilities as will enable it to carry out these tasks. The City shall make an annual appropriation for the effective operation of the Commission, and the City Manager shall designate a staff person to assist the Commission

- 3) Does the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act's provisions on age discrimination prohibit the City of Ypsilanti from refusing a person 16 or over from being seated as a regularly appointed member of a Board or Commission established under ordinance or charter on account of age?

Answer: No. A minor does not have full legal status until reaching the age of majority, in Michigan, 18 years of age. MCL 722.51. The same is true of the sale or purchase of liquor.

- 4) Does the City Charter's language stating: "A Human Relations Commission consisting of nine members shall be established within six (6) months of the effective date of this Charter" require the appointment of qualified individuals with reasonable speed to fill vacancies on the Commission?

Answer: No. The 6-month provision was the time to establish the commission. There is nothing in the charter or ordinance that provides a time limit for appointments.

- 5) Does the order of application into the City Charter and non-mention of the Human Relations Commission from 9.03's first clause which reads: "the Council may create or discontinue, by ordinance, boards and commissions as the Council deems necessary or of benefit to the City of Ypsilanti. Council will provide for the duties and functions of boards and commissions, subject to law. The boards and commissions shall not administer any activity, department, or agency of the City government unless specifically required to do so by State statute, but shall serve solely in an advisory capacity or in the capacity of a quasi-judicial appeal board." exempt the Human Relations Commission from the provisions of that first clause?



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Answer: The City Charter was amended to add the words "or discontinue" to section 9.03 after the original Charter was adopted. Pursuant to the statutory rule of construction that the law "later in time" controls, it is my opinion that City Council has the authority under the amended City Charter section 9.03 to discontinue the Human Relations Commission by ordinance.