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Melrose Human Rights Commission

Melrose City Hall, 562 Main St, Melrose, MA 02176

[Human Rights Commission Official Website](#)

humanrightscommission@cityofmelrose.org | Hotline: (781) 979-4140

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MAY 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Josh Shortlidge (Chair), Randall Carter, Jay Stapp, Brian Kochanowski, Laurie Chomko, Linda Thompson

Members Absent: Laura Bergsten

Members of Public: None

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Chair Shortlidge at 6:12 pm with a quorum of 6 Commissioners present.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Prior Meeting Minutes:

- Chairperson Shortlidge entertained a motion to accept minutes of previous meeting
 - Commissioner Stapp moves; seconded by Commissioner Thompson
 - Motion passes unanimously

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- The Chair noted that 1 member(s) of the public were present.
 - Present: Lizzy Barr, former HRC Chair
- The Chair entertained a motion to open public comment
 - Moved by Commissioner Stapp; Commissioner Carter seconds
 - the motion passes without objection
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 - Handoff of responsibilities; other transition
 - hotline
 - need to establish coverage meeting to meeting to field voicemails
 - will require each Commissioner to have access to HRC inbox
 - need login details, and MS Authenticator app
 - Inbox duty entails daily monitoring of inbox between meetings
 - account in question: humanrightscommission@cityofmelrose.org
 - HRC Instagram
 - To do: Commissioner Chomko to reach out to Lizzy re: transferring Facebook/Meta account
- The Chair entertained a motion to open public comment
 - Moved by Commissioner Stapp; Commissioner Carter seconds
 - the motion passes without objection
- Chairperson's Report
 - Chair Shortlidge has been working on transition with now former Chair Barr and with Commissioner Stapp
 - Interested potential new member: Dionysios Kaskarelis

- Chair Shortlidge provided them with information about how to apply
- Treasurer's Report
 - On May 14, Commissioner Stapp and Chair Shortlidge attended budget meeting meeting
 - Informed City Council as to what the HRC would use its budget, were it restored
 - Voting on restoration advanced to next stage of deliberation
 - Donation account balance: \$2,425.01
 - Outstanding payments/approved obligations:
 - MLK Day of Service (up to \$280): check issued
 - Chair Stapp still working on working with recipient to get funds disbursed by City
- Regular Business
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- Updates
 - Commissioner Stapp
 - received inquiry from City Council re: whether the HRC had contacted MPD about Flock camera(s) in City
 - Chair Shortlidge has contacted the City Councilor
 - Seeking more information about the nature of data collection, MPD sentiments about potential legislation to restrict Flock camera use
 - Commissioner Thompson volunteered to reach out to MPD for discussion, after meeting with city councilor
 - Commissioner Kochinowski
 - will be picking up MHRC magnets from Bo Tsang DiMatteo, who designed MHRC logo
- New Business
 - Sharing Google Docs with Laurie Chomko and Linda Thompson
 - for Laurie: OK to send links to her Yahoo account
 - Winthrop School Student Death from falling tree on May 4th
 - Pathways to Restorative Communities (P2RC) invite them to come attend a meeting
 - Beth Hampson and Rebecca Taplin, both of Melrose
 - <https://www.pathways2rc.com/our-team>
 - Chair Shortlidge spoke to Beth and Rebecca, who have stated they are working with the Mayor on a community response to the tragic death of the student
 - Looking to expand their presence in Melrose, and are interested in potentially working with MHRC
 - Could discuss possibility of HRC hosting/sponsoring a community event
 - Discussion around inviting them to a subsequent meeting to speak during public comment period
 - Setting up meeting with Beth Hampson and Rebecca Taplin of P2RC
 - Set up and co-host public educational event(s) for:
 - active/aware bystander trainings with community partners
 - de-polarizing and building trust between community residents
 - To do: Chair Shortlidge to invite them to HRC meeting
 - Next Meeting Date CONFIRMATION June 8th (2nd Monday each month cadence)
 - Need to reschedule as HRC cannot meet quorum

- June 15 chosen as next meeting date
- Other and/or Unfinished Business
 - Commissioner Shortlidge entertained a motion to adjourn
 - Commissioner Chomko moves; Commissioner Thompson seconds
 - motion passes without objection
 - Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm