



Melrose Human Rights Commission

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

[Human Rights Commission Official Website](#)

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[@MelroseHRC](#) [@Melrose_HRC](#) [@MelroseHRC](#)

June 9, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Lizzy Barr (Chair), Joe Phillips, Randall Carter, Jay Stapp, Kelsey Lima, Brian Kochanowski, Linda Thompson, Elizabeth Kowal, Laura Bergsten

Members Absent: Rev. Dr. Susanne Intriligator (Clergy Liaison), Lizbeth DeSelm (City Council Liaison), Manjula Karamcheti (City Council Liaison)

Members of Public: none

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Chair Barr at 7:05 pm with a quorum of 8 Commissioners present.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Prior Meeting Minutes:

- Chairperson Barr entertained a motion to accept minutes of previous meeting
 - Commissioner Phillips moves; seconded by Commissioner Carter
 - Motion passes unanimously

- Guest Speaker – Sam Hammar, on behalf of Melrose Creative Alliance
 - Hispanic Heritage Month: Sep 15, 2025 – Oct 15, 2025
 - possibility of having an event in September, partnering with MCA
 - Interest from La Qchara, Molly's Bookstore, others
 - beer garden, party in parking lot behind Molly's
 - melrosecreativealliance@gmail.com

- **Public Comment**
 - The Chair noted that 0 member(s) of the public were present. The Chair tabled a motion to open public comment.

- **Regular Business**
 - Chairperson's Administrative Report
 - [Halo Studios Spotlight](#)
 - NO HRC meeting in July or August
 - But Commission will have actions to complete over the summer
 - e.g., distribute red cards; refine intake/referral process; social media posting
 - Treasurer's Report
 - PO needed for banner; reimbursement pending
 - FY purchasing must be made by 6/15

- Chair Barr has reached out to city solicitor re: moving money from general account to donation account; awaiting response
 - Discussion of spend down—buying more red cards, in English
 - \$55 for 250 cards
 - Commissioner Phillips moves to approve purchase of card holder for red cards (on the condition that funds cannot be transferred from general account to donation account); seconded by Commissioner Kochanowski
 - Motion passes unanimously
- Updates
 - Red Cards
 - Farmers Market distribution
 - Commissioner Kowal reached out, FM will start offering cards for distribution
 - City Hall distribution
 - Commission to pursue card holders for easier organization/access
 - Other suggested potential locations: hospitals, laundromats, places of worship (esp. ones with significant immigrant populations), Melrose Housing Authority
 - **Action items:**
 - Commissioner Bergsten: contact Melrose-Wakefield Hospital
 - Commissioner Barr: contact clergy liaison for help ID'ing best churches for red card distribution; reach out to laundromats
 - Commissioner Bergsten: contact Melrose Housing Authority re: red card distribution
 - Update Intake/Referral Process
 - Intake/Referral Process
 - Discussion around intake form; extent HRC role in such triaging
 - Commission to continue refining the process offline
 - [Melrose Human Rights Commission Complaint \(Large Font\)_Updated.pdf](#)
 - [Agencies & Protected Classes](#)
 - Resource Guides
 - [MHRC LGBTQ+ Resources.pdf](#)
 - [Immigration Resource Guide](#)
- New Business
 - [Transgender Sanctuary City Proposal \(Redacted\).pdf](#)
 - Commissioner Kowal spoke to City Councillors, who also received email
 - Councillors have reached out to letter authors re: next steps
 - Website updates
 - Commissioner Phillips moves to respond, acknowledging receipt and deferring to City Council's decision; seconded by Commissioner Kochanowski
 - Motion passes with: 4 yeas; 2 nays; 1 abstention
 - Commissioner Bergsten moves to respond to letter writers including option of citizen petition; seconded by Commissioner Stapp
 - Motion fails with: 2 yeas; 4 nays; 1 abstention
- Other and/or Unfinished Business
- Adjournment
 - Commissioner Carter moves to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Stapp
 - Motion passes unanimously
- Meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm

